

*Eco-tip of the Week for 3-26-16*

## **Limits to Child Car Seat Reuse and Recycling**

By David Goldstein

Child safety car seats are expensive, and each kid grows out of at least three – rear-facing for infants, standard for small children, and then booster. Parents considering options for reuse may be disappointed to learn of limitations.

I surveyed local thrift stores and found most accept booster seats, but few accept rear-facing or standard seats. Those accepting some seats still discard ones past the stamped “expiration” date, or six years past the “manufactured” date.

An article on [verywell.com](http://verywell.com), reviewed by Dr. David Katz, Founding Director of Yale University’s Prevention Research Center, asks the question, “Do they really expire, or is that a ploy from manufacturers to make more money?” The authors answer the question by supporting expiration claims. They cite technology improvements, tightening standards, and seat deterioration.

Thrift store managers I spoke with also noted the difficulty of researching every recall they must follow and their inability to determine whether donated seats are damaged.

Options are also limited for recycling. In Ventura County, child car seats are accepted in curbside recycling carts only in areas collected by Harrison Industries-affiliated companies. Other programs dispose car seats, due to the high cost of recycling a multi-material plastic item bound together with metal.