

Controversy over Paper

In 11/15, Katharine Shaver of *Washington Post* reported on a paper* in the 10/15 *Journal of Traffic Injury Prevention* by Jamie Williams, C. O'Donel, and P. Leiss and queried other technical experts and Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPSTs) in the field about its ramifications.

In summary, the study investigated the comparative effects on head injury criteria (HIC), using the 6-month-old CRABI dummy in three different safety seats, installed with three different methods, namely lower attachments or automatic locking or emergency locking shoulder-lap belts, in 30-mph rear-end crash tests. The comparison was internal, i.e. each seat with itself, not among the seats, as those readings showed much variation. The researchers concluded lower attachments do not offer the same level of protection for two rear-facing-only seats in rear-end collisions as safety belt use. (The convertible seat used RF did NOT show significant difference in performance.)

Williams points out infants cannot explain feelings of head pain nor nausea after a crash, hints that might clue doctors to check for concussion. Indeed, after the crash, the seat will appear benign, and the adults will not have seen if the child's head hit the seat back.

Discussion elicited comments of concern from CPSTs that this research finding might discourage longer-term use of seats rear facing while many CPSTs are trying to change social norms for "turnaround time."

Other specific feedback from Kathy Klinich of UMTRI** concerned the lack of data on such injury of rear-facing babies in rear-end crashes. She credited the material on the back of the vehicle seat and the enclosed nature of the rear-facing position in a crash. Jessica Jermakian of IIHS*** points out rear-end crashes usually occur at 5-10 mph, not 30 mph, the speed of crash tests for safety seats. Both National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) spokesperson Gordon Trowbridge and Jermakian note that severe rear-end crashes usually destroy the rear area and lead to fatalities, but their rarity mitigates overall. Statistically 45% of safety-seat-riding child injury occurs in frontals, 33%, in side impacts, and 9%, in rear-enders. A 2009 study of fatalities of 1 year olds showed about a third each were frontal or side impacts; 15% were rear-enders.

For parents who feel better if there is less likelihood of head contact with the seat back, choosing a seat with an anti-rebound bar or designed to use a tether Swedish style, attached to a D-ring wound around unmoving metal under the front seat, might be their choice. Be sure to read the instructions for both safety seat and vehicle to see how this can be done without compromising vehicle computers affecting frontal air bag performance.

The final message from all concerned is that riding rear facing increases protection and was shown to be five times safer than even a properly installed forward-facing safety seat for 1-to-2 year olds. (Ed. Note: There weren't enough older children riding rear facing to measure its effect on them. But that is changing.)

**Effects of LATCH versus Available Seatbelt Installation of Rear Facing Child Restraint Systems on Head Injury Criteria for 6 Month Old Infants in Rear End Collisions*

***University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute ***Insurance Institute for Highway Safety*

Special Enforcement Week

We invite readers to talk with law enforcement agencies and community leaders about joining in this special effort to protect kids in cars. Making a high profile splash, emphasizing that officers will focus attention on kids at risk, reminds parents who are not fully convinced that buckling up matters.

For more California citation reminder cards for your department, e-mail stombrello@carseat.org with the number of officers in the field.

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Calendar

March 27 - April 2:
Special Enforcement Week

April 3-9:
Safety Seat Checkup Week

SBS USA Reception:

4/4: 4:45 pm-6 pm. Meet advocates from all over! Light refreshments, sponsored by Mazda North America Operations. Rm 201-B, upstairs, Long Beach Convention Center, CA. E-mail to RSVP or with questions: stombrello@carseat.org

Conference:

4/3-5: Lifesavers Conference, Long Beach, CA. Register: www.lifesaversconference.org Visit the SBS USA exhibit!

4/2: Pre-conference session: National Training on School Buses. Details and register: info@saferidenews.com

Safety Seat Checkup:

4/9: Petersen Automotive Museum, Los Angeles, CA. Co-sponsors, CA Office of Traffic Safety, Pomona Police Department, Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. Families: 10 am-2 pm; checkers: 9 am-3 pm. Register at 310/222-6860.

CPS-in-Healthcare List

Newly revived resource for healthcare providers, CPSTs or not, to share issues and ideas for better services in cps in their practices. Moderated by nurses Heidi Heflin, MN, CNS, CPSTI and Becky Frohock, MSN, NNP-BC, CPST: To join, go to: <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/group/s/cps-in-Healthcare>.

Thank you!

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Randall Children's Hospital

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Yale-New Haven Hospital

Recall

Evenflo Transitions (models #34411686, 34411695, 34411029), made 12/18/14-1/29/16.

Child can reach and release button loosening seat harness, an injury risk.

If child has discovered how to release adjuster, cease using seat. Call 800/233-5921 for new bottom seat pad and front adjuster components. Phillips screwdriver required.

Important: view video at www.transitions.evenflo.com.

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Plan for 2017

NHTSA announced funds sent to the states for child passenger safety (CPS) program grants won't be used, in large part, for buying new seats to distribute to the public. Many projects, such as SBS USA efforts, are not distribution programs but need to have seats on hand for safety seat checkups in case children attend in inappropriate products or without a seat at all.

While SBS USA does not advertise such a resource, it is critical to sending children home safer than when they arrive, especially in under-served neighborhoods. We use our Color Pictorial to ensure we know the seat involved, check for both recalls and correct instructions, and try to use the seat in which the child arrived or even to move children in the family around for better protection.

If a new seat is the only answer and no new seat is available for lack of familial or community resources, we provide a new seat and accept the old one for material recycling to keep it out of circulation if its issues preclude other children in the family from using it. We also provide a once yearly donation of and fitting of boosters for children collecting new school supplies and pre-screened for need. We are interested in the reasons for this policy change.

Closing Loopholes

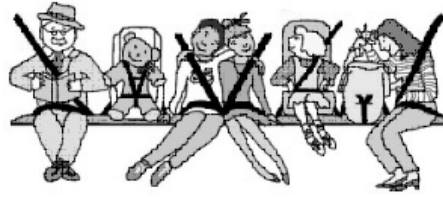
Vehicle recalls have been much in the news, with the spreading Takata air bag risk (see *SBS News*, 3/15, 7 /15 and 9/15) a prime example. Rosemary Shahan of California-based Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety (CARS) worked with a coalition to eliminate the loophole allowing car dealers to sell vehicles with active, unfixed recalls, despite the fixes being free and available.

Cally Houck, whose daughters Rachael and Jacqueline were killed in a rental car with an unrepaired recall, was a persistent advocate. The rental car companies worked closely with CARS to defeat changes as the item was included in the transportation spending bills President Obama signed in December. Now unless the entity rents or lends fewer than 35 cars, recalls must be addressed in advance.

Moreover, the first extension of supervision of recalls for NHTSA since its creation in 1966 will save lives. Cally Houck and her son Greg were invited to the White House for the signing. The bill will make it harder for states to try to enact loopholes as was attempted in California.

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SafetyBeltSafe News

March 2016

Safety Seat Checkup Day Caps Week April 3-9

In the parking lot of the newly remodeled Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles, on April 9, volunteer safety seat checkers will help families ensure their children are riding safely. The museum has expanded, but its commitment to the community remains the same.

Joining with event sponsors, CA Office of Traffic Safety, Pomona Police Dept., and Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., *SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A. welcomes families from 10 am to 2 pm. Make appointments in advance at 310/222-6860 for best service.

As an extra treat, families will be offered two museum entry tickets for the price of one. Bucklebear will be on hand and invite those saved by the safety seat or belt to tell their stories during the ceremony at 11:30 am. We are receiving Proclamations of Safety Seat Checkup Week from cities and counties, including Los Angeles and Stanislaus Counties.

Checkers can register at 310/222-6860 to help us plan and should arrive at 9 am, planning to stay until 3 pm. Advisory Board member Michael Sachs, MD, will provide morning and mid-day food for checkers.

ColorGraphics has donated posters, both with and without the 4/9 checkup date. Choose the type you'd like to post to remind families to buckle up and encourage more to use the Helpline for answers to their queries.

Our checkups find 90% incorrect use.

New Seats for March 2016

Baby Trend introduced the PROtect Yumi, a highback booster with a non-removable back, for kids 30-100 lbs. and at least age 3. It has an 8-position headrest, 3-position shoulder belt guides, a 9-year life, and a backrest adjustable to match vehicle seat contours more easily.

The CloudQ from **Cybex**, a rear-facing-only seat for 4-35 lb. children, has a no-rethread harness, load leg, and a 5-position handle used only in the anti-rebound position in transit. The seat features a belt-tensioning plate which is not a lock-off, so always lock the safety belt. The carrier may be more reclined outside the vehicle. Use with an inflatable safety belt is not permitted.

The **Dorel** 3-phase Easy Elite serves kids 5-40 lbs. rear facing, 22-50 lbs. and at least 2 years old forward facing, and 40-80 lbs. and at least 4 years old in booster mode. The lower anchor weight limit is 40 lbs., and the seat must be tethered in forward-facing harness mode. Features include a three-position crotch strap, a no-rethread harness, a flip foot for recline adjustment. Do not install with an inflatable safety belt. The Continuum has the same features and weight limits as the Easy Elite but has two sets of loops on the harness straps, a 3-position recline, a lower set of slots for smaller infants. Both have a ten-year expiration.

KidsEmbrace has the Fun-Ride highback and Fun-Ride backless boosters. The highback, with an adjustable headrest, is for kids 30-100 lbs. and at least 3 years old. The backless version is for kids 40-100 lbs., at least 4 years old.

The Extend2Fit from **Graco** is a convertible for kids 4-50 lbs. rear facing, 22-65 lbs. facing forward. It features a no-rethread harness, a 6-position recline, a 4-position leg extender for rear-facing use, a 10-year life. Remove harness covers when it is used forward facing. Lower attachment weight limit is 45 lbs. in either mode; lower anchors in vehicle must be 11 inches apart.

NTSB Picks Traffic Goals for '16

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) maintains a list of 10 “wishes” for improved protection for the public. This year it starts with **eliminating “drowsy driving,”** a serious traffic safety concern.

Promoting use of collision avoidance technologies by mandating federal regulations to include them for all highway vehicles is #3. Ten manufacturers have vowed to add 1, automatic emergency braking (AEB), to all their models, and NHTSA, to develop regulations.

Occupant protection improvement is #4; NTSB focused on improving laws in states without belts required on rear seat passengers or having only secondary enforcement. Only 22 states and DC have primary enforcement for all, while not all enforce and educate the public consistently.

Right behind buckling up comes #5, **disconnecting from “deadly distractions,”** a crash cause that has increased as overall deaths and injuries have gone down.

The final category, #8 of the 10, is to **end impaired driving** which, since 2000, has contributed to a third of highway deaths. Alcohol has been the main focus; however, both prescription and over-the-counter drugs, which affect users quite variably, are included.

These can be talking points in community education on TV, in social media, and in training. NTSB has fine investigators with no other purpose than protecting the public.

Technical Paper Underscores 5-Step Test as Key Teaching Tool

Predicting vehicle belt fit for children 6-12 by Matthew Reed and Kathy Klinich, University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) released in Traffic Injury Prevention, 2016, is a detailed study combining measurements of children and vehicles. They conclude, “... relatively few children under 12 years of age can ‘graduate’ from a booster without experiencing a marked degradation in lap belt fit.” By melding findings from a study of 44 children (5-12 years old) fitted in safety belts and/or with boosters and detailed assessment of vehicle back seats, the researchers found even the largest child was fitted less well in a belt than the smallest child in the worst designed booster.

The 46 vehicles were analyzed (mean design year 2004) for seat cushion depth, angle of shoulder-lap belt, and belt anchorage location. Crash data indicated equal exposure for girls and boys for rear outboard seating position. Their analysis found lap belt angle is a major determinant of fit; seat depth, modest. For vehicles with high, rearward belt anchorages, fit was rare. By moving the anchorage forward and shortening the seat cushion, 60% of 12 year olds and 20% of 6 year olds fit. Shoulder belt fit was affected by the D-ring angle, lap belt fit, and buckle location. Seat back angle had less effect.

Comparing fit with or without boosters, the authors report with the best performing boosters, 75% could fit in the belt but without a booster, fewer than a quarter could get good fit of the lap belt. Looking at 8 year olds, 60% could get a good fit of the shoulder belt but for 20%, the belt was rubbing the neck, tempting children to put it under the arm or behind the back and 20% ended up with it out by the shoulder, which could lead to the belt sliding off the shoulder, potentially causing head injury.

Reed and Klinich note that a 2007 study by J. Jermakian et al. indicated with a booster, submarining under the belt was rare, and that seat cushion depth leads to children slumping in travel, making lap belt location on the abdomen even more likely.

In 2000, observing elementary school children demonstrating how they rode in vehicles, the SBS USA team noted a range of incorrect fit of belts, driven by the carefully described factors in the Reed and Klinich paper. Adding a booster made significant differences, including placing children in position to view passing scenery. Developed for kids, the 5-Step Test* gives tools to both children and parents to determine belt fit without recourse to making any specific measurements. Years of “testing” children, especially in cars at elementary schools when using “Boosters Are For Big Kids” (grades K-3) and “Belt Basics (grades 4 and 5),” show that kids need boosters until at least ages 10-12. It seems important as an educational tool to move the explicit age for exiting boosters to at least age 10 when hip bones are fully formed.

*see at www.carseat.org

SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.

Safety Seat Checkup Day

Saturday, April 9 • 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.*

*For a checkup appointment, call 310/222-6860. If you do not have an appointment, there may be a wait of more than one hour or you may be turned away.

11:30 a.m. Welcome Ceremony and Recognition of Notable Guests

Petersen Automotive Museum

6060 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles 90036 (Wilshire at Fairfax parking lot)



Buckling up is a family affair.

Safety Seat Checkup Week April 3 – 9, 2015

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SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. is the national, non-profit, member-supported organization for child passenger safety.

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