

Is the Safety Seat Tethered?

At the 2016 Kidz In Motion conference, Sarah Haverstick and Eric Dahle of Goodbaby (Evenflo) presented data to guide which ends to seek when confronting an untethered child seat. Clearly, if the parent just hasn't attached the tether, use is the goal. But what if an older child under 40 lbs. or a child age 3 or more is riding in an older vehicle that lacks tether anchors? Head protection is the priority in crashes.

Haverstick and Dahle explained the significance of the data aggregation on head excursion and the distance allowed by National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) for self-certifying seat manufacturers. Testing of forward-facing seats must include both tethered and untethered results, based on massive misuse in the 1970s which informed FMVSS 213 and ultimately led to requiring vehicle tether anchors by 2002.

FMVSS 213 testing is done by manufacturers at various crash-test sites. There are two goals for child head excursion testing (how far forward the dummy's head is permitted to travel and still meet the standard) for seats with harnesses forward facing: 28.3" tethered and 32" untethered; for boosters, only the latter is required. Testing is done with 3 dummies: the 3 year old Hybrid III; the 6 year old Hybrid II (5 lbs. heavier and an inch taller than the 3rd dummy, 6 year old Hybrid III). NHTSA may test any seat once it is on the market. The NHTSA test results are posted online and may be searched. Selecting only those seats with harnesses tested forward facing and boosters, Haverstick found 585 between 2010 and 2016 fitting the categories.

Data showed that tethered forward-facing seats kept 3- and both 6-year-old dummies under required 28.3" head excursion (averaging 22.8", 22", and 24"). For the untethered, allowed to 32", the range was from 27.7" to 28.5". Booster tests showed much lower average head excursion, ranging from 18.1" for the 6-year-old Hybrid II to 18.3" for the 3 year old to 19.6" for the 6-year-old Hybrid III, despite being allowed to test to 32".

The takeaway is that a light 7 year old and a heavy 4 year old would be safer in a booster than in an untethered seat with an internal harness. SBS USA recommends waiting until about age 6 to move to a booster since our data indicate that children will need boosters until ages 10-12. However, until a vehicle tether anchor retrofit, as far as forward head excursion, children who need to face forward would be safer in a booster, *if* they can manage the belt.

A safety seat without a tether depends on the safety belt to keep the seat in place in a crash; however, both the safety belt and the harness will elongate somewhat to provide adequate ride-down.

Tethering reduces the forward motion of the top of the seat, keeping the head farther back. Meanwhile, the booster child has stretch of the belt only.

Therefore, not only is the child starting farther back in the booster, but also there is only one stretch, not 2, if the child is correctly positioned. Clearly, child behavior matters. A youngster who cannot manage the safety belt won't be in position to take advantage of the lower head excursion.

NO COATS!

As cooler weather approaches, clothing tends to get bulkier and often fluffier. Sue Auriemma from KidsAndCars was featured on a segment of the Today show reminding caregivers of the dangers of winter coats on children in safety seats.

While many parents and caregivers believe their child is safely secured in a restraint, bulky winter coats compress significantly in a 30-mph crash test, leading to ejection of the test dummy.

Children should be buckled in and then have their coat or a blanket draped over them for best protection.

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Calendar:

Workshop and Checkups:

Sponsors: CA Office of Traffic Safety (CA OTS), Pomona Police Department.

Register for all 3 events at 310/222-6860.

Educator Workshop

✓**9/22:** East Rancho Dominguez Park, Compton, CA. Additional Sponsor: Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. with Supporters East Rancho Dominguez Park & Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation.

7.5 Nursing CE's donated by Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nursing, Southern California; 4 CEUs for CPS Technicians.

Safety Seat Checkups

✓**9/24:** East Rancho Dominguez County Park, Compton, CA. Supporters: East Rancho Dominguez Park, Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation.

Families: 10 am-2 pm;

Checkers: 9 am-3 pm.

✓**10/8:** Highland Park Senior Center, Los Angeles. Supporter: Chris' Auto Service. Event also includes free visual auto checks by mechanics. Families: 9 am-1 pm; Checkers: 8 am-2 pm.

✓ For children with special needs, Children's Hospital/Los Angeles now offers safety seat checkups on the 1st Friday of every month. Call 323/361-4697 for details.

Volunteer to help!

SBS USA, with sponsorship from Volkswagen of America, will hold an exhibit at the national American Academy of Pediatrics conference in San Francisco Moscone Center with exhibit times for volunteers of noon-4:30 pm on 10/22, 9:30 am-4:30 pm on 10/23, and 9:30 am-2:30 pm on 10/24.

Help with set-up or take-down on 10/21 or 10/25 gratefully received! Please e-mail stombrello@carseat.org with queries and commitments.

Recalls:

Combi Coccoro made 1/1/09-6/29/16: Excessive force on the child occupant in the seat forward facing and held in by a lap belt in a crash can be mitigated by obtaining a free seat bottom cover. Call 888/232-3294. Seats seven years old or more are expired.

BMW 5 sedans for 2016: The inboard lower anchor on the left side of rear seat may be bent down, preventing full engagement of safety seat. Caregivers should use safety belt for attachment in that location to avoid risk to the child until the anchor is repaired.

For full list of models and manufacture dates, which can be found inside the door near the VIN, see SBS USA recall list at www.carseat.org.

BMW X3 (1 model) and X4 (3 models), 2015-2017, X3 (3 models), 2011-2017: Lower anchors on these models may be damaged if rigid connectors, such as Nuna Pipa, are attached.

For details: www.carseat.org, recall/replacement parts list, #179.

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More Kidz in Motion Notes:

SBS USA shared our ideas with Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Technicians by presenting in three workshops and engaging with avid professionals in other settings. Heidi Heflin, MN, RN, CNS, CPSTI, described the varieties of SBS USA trainings, especially our Educator Workshops, critical to engaging non-CPSTs.

Stephanie Tombrello served on the Hot Topics team with Denise Donaldson, Safe Ride News, and Emilie Crown, Montgomery County Fire Rescue, to discuss the Consumers Union recommendation to move youngsters from rear-facing-only seats to convertibles at 12 months or younger to avoid head strikes and the issues surrounding teaching safety belt readiness, i.e. children who pass the 5-Step Test (5ST).

At the Manufacturers'/Exhibitors' Panel, Tombrello stated our interest in raising the minimum age for safety belt use only in state laws to age 10 and heard much applause. Let us know if you are ready to work on this. A TN Technician reported that the TN legislature was ready for a law upgrade, but the public was outraged. This shows how important it is to gather data and publicize it. For a copy of our graph of 8,000+ 5STs (see it at Facebook), e-mail stombrello@carseat.org.

Perhaps the most stirring moment was hearing from former National Transportation Safety Board Chair Deborah Hersman, now President/CEO, National Safety Council. Not only did she share five key concepts for sterling leadership, with transportation examples included, but also the new NSC CPS policy statement*, which enshrines goals for a 5-year plan in child passenger protection, not only in the family car but also in buses, planes, emergency and recreational vehicles.

As an example of how to use the guidelines, CA meets the goals of shoulder-lap belts on school buses, riding rear facing to age 2, correct occupant protection for all in cars and trucks, and boosters until the belt fits, all with primary enforcement. But every state varies in the details of its occupant protection laws, giving many mixed messages.

Eliminating the lap-held travel of under 2's on planes has been an SBS USA goal since 1982. And SBS USA has included correct ambulance and special needs transport in our Educator Workshops for decades. We also have reported on the issues of off-road vehicles where children die, either on farms or in recreational settings.

**To read the details, go to <http://www.nsc.org/NewsDocuments/2016/CPS%20policy.pdf>.*

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a safe one.*

SafetyBeltSafe News

September 2016

Check Out What's New

ADDRESS: After 36 years of donated office space, SBS USA must move into rented space. We are pleased to announce our home at Beach Cities Health District, a space with other community service resources for all ages. Our new address is 514 N. Prospect Ave., lower level, Redondo Beach, CA 90277. We look forward to greeting you once we settle in!

RESOURCE: Recent inquiries led SBS USA to compile the following resources for families transporting babies under 4 lbs. The AngelGuard AngelRide, the Team Tex Nania Baby Ride, and the Combi Shuttle 35 are 3 that start at birth. The car bed would be appropriate for those who need to ride flat; the other 2 require sitting semi-reclined.

SEATS: Three new seats from **Baby Trend** include PROtect Elite, a convertible designed for 5-40 lbs. rear facing, 23-65 lbs. forward facing for 7 years of use. From 22 lbs. on, regardless of direction, use of removable headrest is mandated. The no-rethread harness is adjustable in length with 4 shoulder level positions, using handles on the back. The three lowest positions may be used in rear-facing mode, and either top two positions, in forward-facing mode. If the child weighs more than 32 lbs., use the top one. Discontinue use of lower anchors at 45 lbs. The Elite differs from the PROtect Premiere only in that it has lock-offs for both rear- and forward-facing installations.

The Yumi PROtect 2-in-1 booster differs from the Yumi PROtect booster in that the backrest is removable on the Yumi 2-in-1. Weight limits are 30-100 lbs. with the backrest attached, 40-100 lbs. backless. The Baby Trend Secure 35 is a rear-facing-

only seat for kids 5-35 lbs. There are two sets of loops on the harness ends, and the harness is adjustable to three heights, whether it's the fixed back model or the adjustable back model. The base has an adjustment foot and a dual recline indicator. The instructions *erroneously* state that a locking clip must be used for children more than 22 lbs.; this isn't needed with belts on post-1996 vehicles.

The **Britax** Boulevard ClickTight ARB is simply the Boulevard ClickTight shipped with the anti-rebound bar in the box.

Goodbaby has introduced the Urbini Sonti, a rear-facing-only seat for kids 4-35 lbs. There are 4 sets of harness slots and 3 sets of hip strap slots. The base is adjustable to 4 positions, and the crotch strap is adjustable in both length and position. The base features a lock-off. Models may have either hook-on lower connectors or push-on lower connectors.

The **Graco** SlimFit 3-in-1 accommodates kids 5-40 lbs. rear facing, 22-65 lbs. forward facing with the harness, 30-100 lbs. in booster mode. It features a no-rethread harness, four recline positions, and cup holders that rotate inward to reduce the width of the CR by 10%.

Nuna has introduced the AACE, a booster seat for kids 40-110 lbs. with the backrest, or 50-120 lbs. without the backrest. The sides move inward or outward as the headrest is lowered or raised, and the seat bottom is adjustable to three depths. The seat comes with rigid lower connectors and side-impact protection pods on either side of the headrest. Backrest recline is adjustable to eight positions when lower connectors are used. The seat expires 10 years from date of manufacture.