

## Malaysia: Learning about Technical Challenges

When Kate Quirk, Heidi Heflin, and Stephanie Tombrello spent two weeks in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, providing certification training with colleagues Jchanet Tan and Louis Tan of CPS Malaysia (CPS MY), preparation for the classes and the two safety seat checkups was instructive for the SBS USA team. Sharing some of these experiences can lend perspective to U.S. issues.

Faced with safety seats and vehicles meeting a variety of safety standards from around the world in a country which has yet to set rules for recalls, CPS Technicians need to figure out multiple compatibility and safety challenges. Rarely do safety belts manually lock. The European (EU) influence means that seats are often designed for the shoulder belt to wrap around the back of rear-facing seats, called EU-style in the U.S., with the lap portion threaded under the seat pan, sometimes with lock-offs, designated with blue for rear-facing use, red, for forward-facing. Others simply have belt guides, requiring locking clips. Again, based on EU history, most seats do not have retainer clips because that standard allowed for only a single point of harness release, i.e. the buckle. Moreover, most seats have long chest pads on harness straps, some of which are connected to the seat with their own separate harness.

Many seats have easy-to-use ISOFIX, called “rigid lower connectors” in the U.S. Yet sometimes the seat is ISOFIX-usable only, but the car lacks the bars. Other seats, such as those from Australia, require tethering rear facing to an anchor in the rear of the vehicle, but the vehicles may lack the anchor point which often cannot be retrofitted. As in early days in the U.S., before Canadian regulations led vehicle manufacturers selling in both countries to add at least predrilled holes or weld nuts long before U.S. regulations required first, tether anchors and then, lower anchor bars, the only solution was to get the hardware from the safety seat company and have a mechanic drill a hole. Unfortunately, frequently in Malaysia, the hole is drilled into plastic, not metal, meaning it would fail. Ms. Tan reported that for many years, she could not find out the purpose of the tether strap. She ended up buying an American seat over one from the EU because there was a place to hook the unused strap to the seat!

Only some American-based brands come with locking clips as we know them in the U.S. The Asian locking clip, sold separately, is plastic, curved like a barrette, and is placed on the shoulder belt only. Loose harnesses and installations are seen, of course, but also some seats are used or labeled inappropriately as if they actually meet EU standards, leading CPS MY to investigate and seek test data. Indeed, U.S. locking clips are purchased by CPS MY with some difficulty. There is no recall system, but the SBS USA list came in handy when the U.S. team spotted a buckle that was in a massive U.S. recall across seat brands. Naturally it was on the list used in class so the checkers could alert the family.

Boosters are not very commonly in use; seats in general tend to be high-priced, but CPS MY is working hard to publicize the issue and arranged with the Ministry of Transportation for the SBS USA team to meet the man who manages crash-testing of vehicles and seats and his associate tasked with child passenger safety (CPS) publicity. As we noted in *SBS News*, 5/18, the CPS MY team is working with government and safety seat companies as well as the public to get more children buckled up right.

## VW Recall Update:

Volkswagon Group of America asked SBS USA to help parents with questions about the recall on the VW Atlas 2018, involving damage to a safety belt buckle. SBS USA has a CPSTI colleague who discovered her own Atlas had a damaged safety belt buckle while performing 5-Step Testing.

VW is providing buckle covers and a short booklet meant to address the issue. Once asked by VW, SBS USA began testing seats in our colleague's Atlas to gather more information about how to fit three children into Row 2 of the 3-row vehicle. The SBS USA Helpline is available to assist with these queries.

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## Rear-Facing:

Our readers know SBS USA is keen to keep occupants facing the back to the max. At Lifesavers, Dr. Richard Kent, University of Virginia Biomechanics and Engineering Professor, shared two reports that dramatize the message.

Many know of Col. John Stapp, who subjected himself to change-in-acceleration forces on sled tests in early research on human tolerances. Decelerating from 630 mph, he absorbed 46.2 Gs, nearly extruding his eyeballs. But another test was done inadvertently with Capt. Eli "Lack" Beeding. To evaluate sonic wind, Beeding was strapped into a test rig meant to exert 40 Gs, but a malfunction stressed him with 83 Gs!

Horrified investigators rushed to his side and hospitalized him.

However, he was discharged just five days later. The forces had been absorbed while traveling rear facing.

The back of the head can take 2000 lbs. of force vs. the nose, only 70 lbs., before breaking; the lumbar spine and lower pelvis also can withstand more force from the back than from the front. Adult passengers would do better in crashes if they, too, rode facing rear.

## Special Edition:

Mississippi Safety Services worked with SBS USA to produce a version of our low-reading-level brochure, *Keep Your Children Safe*, with a summary of their state law.

Organizations in other states may want to explore this approach to sharing the buckle-up message.

Get in touch for more details.

## Calendar

### Training Opportunities

Sponsored by California Office of Traffic Safety and Pomona P.D.

### Educator Workshop

**9/18:** 8:15 am- 5 pm  
Torrance Airport, Torrance, CA  
4 CEUs for CPSTs; 6 CEs for nurses. Major Supporters: Torrance Fire Department, AWHONN of CA. Register: [i0680@hotmail.com](mailto:i0680@hotmail.com) or 310/318-5111

### National CPST Certification

**9/26-29:** 8 am-5 pm  
24 CEs for Nurses, courtesy of Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center. Register: National SAFE KIDS: \$85  
Pomona Police Dept. Training Center, Pomona, CA (9/26,27,28; see Safety Seat Checkup for 9/29)

### Safety Seat Checkups:

**9/29:** National Seat Check Saturday. Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center, Medical Plaza Parking Lot, Pomona, CA.  
10 am-2 pm: families.  
Register at 310 318-5111  
9 am-3 pm for checkers.  
Register at 626/660-9887.  
Major Supporter: Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center.

**10/13:** Police Museum, Highland Park, CA. Museum Parking Lot  
9 am-1 pm: families.  
Register at 310/318-5111.  
8 am-2 pm for checkers.  
Register at 626/660-9887.  
Major Supporter:  
Chris' Auto Service

### CA CPST Technical Webinar:

**10/11:** 10 am-11:30 am  
Save the date! Watch for sign-up e-mail or go to [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org).

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## New Seats:

**Goodbaby International** has introduced two new seats. The Cybex Aton M, a rear-facing-only seat for kids 4-35 lbs., features an 11-position, no-rethread harness, a linear side-impact protection device, and a belt guide, called a lock-off, which requires the belt be locked manually. The Aton M base has a load leg and adjusts to 4 recline positions. The infant support must be used for a child under 11 pounds.

The Evenflo EveryStage Dlx/Lx convertible/combination seat has a 10-year expiration and serves kids 4-50 lbs. rear facing, 22-65 lbs. and at least two years old forward facing with the harness, and 40-120 lbs. and at least 4 years old in booster mode. The harness adjusts to 10 positions, the crotch strap is adjustable in position and length, and it has five recline positions. Models with the EasyClick connectors have a ratcheting feature to tighten the lower connector strap. Lower anchor use must be discontinued at 40 lbs., regardless of its orientation.

The Nautilus SnugLock Lx/Dlx and SnugRide SnugLock Extend2Fit 35 are available from **Graco**. The Nautilus is a combination seat, for kids 22-65 lbs. with the harness, 40-100 lbs. in high back booster mode with cupholders attached, and 40-120 lbs. in backless

mode with cupholders removed. There are four recline positions; the most upright position must be used in booster mode. Lower connectors may be used to 45 lbs. in harness mode and to 100 lbs. in booster mode. The seat expires 10 years from date of manufacture.

The SnugRide SnugLock Extend2Fit 35 is a rear-facing-only seat with a 7-year lifetime for children 4-35 lbs. The anti-rebound device may be extended outward from the base to 4 positions for more leg room. The base has a lock-off but is not certified for aircraft use. The restraint has a no-rethread harness and four recline positions.

**Merritt Manufacturing** plans to provide AngelRide, a preemie travel bed, this fall.

The Primo Viaggio Convertible Kinetic from **Peg Perego** is for kids 5-45 lbs. rear facing and 22-65 lbs. forward facing. The “lock-off clips” are not true lock-offs – the safety belt must be locked manually. The no-rethread harness adjusts to 10 positions – seven for rear facing and three for forward facing. There is an anti-rebound device for rear-facing use, with an extender for the device to provide more leg room. Lower connectors may be used to 40 lbs. rear facing and 45 lbs. forward facing. The seat expires 10 years from date of manufacture.

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***SafetyBeltSafe* News**

**September 2018**

## **Tethers Again**

The April Lifesavers Conference featured varied aspects of the effort to increase tether use. Overall, the findings show parents are more likely to use the top tether strap when they attach a forward-facing safety seat with lower connectors but to ignore it when using a belt. Data presented by Lorrie Walker of SAFE KIDS showed frustratingly low levels of tether use, down to 36% in 2016. To combat this, the workshop presenters Walker and Terry Emerson, engineer with Dorel Juvenile, shared data that indicated if parents are taught about tether use, they retain usage (93%). Also, when research on “that strap” was conducted with 1,350 families, 46% of parents could identify it but only 24% called it a tether. Since it is so identified in instructions, it is important to use the correct name. Education stuck with 98% of the recipients.

Additional ideas included more “must use” in manuals from both safety seat and vehicle manufacturers and finding ways to combat the reasons parents state they don’t tether. Tethers are important in their own right; however, they also can mitigate the effects of other incorrect use, another reason to help parents to retrofit older vehicles when possible. For example, Toyota/Lexus vehicle retrofits are managed by SBS USA, substantially reducing costs for parents. Emerson shared symbols in use to direct parents to tethers; however, new ideas are “blooming.” KidsEmbrace has a bright orange tether strap; Goodbaby Evenflo has not only added red to the tether adjuster but reduced its size which should improve ease of use in vehicles with tighter quarters.

Paula Raymond, Toxcel LLC, reported a study of restraint use for children in 4,167 families observed and interviewed in 2011. Usage was evaluated without removing children or seats so was a visual assessment rather than a full checkup. However, even under those circumstances, incorrect rates were 24% for rear-facing-only seats; 22% for rear-facing convertibles; 31% for forward-facing harness seats; and 4% for boosters. For rear-facing seats, 42% were at an incorrect angle, 15% had more than 2 inches of harness slack, and 29%, greater than 2” of slack in installation. Nine percent of forward-facing seats were not attached to the car; 47% had a loose harness plus other errors. Of the 4% incorrectly used boosters, 59% had the safety belt on the abdomen or ribs while 14% had an unbuckled belt! Drilling down more on tether usage, they found that families who knew about it used it. Reasons given included 26%, the instructions; 7%, for improved safety; 5%, to obey the law, providing leads on how to push for more usage. Of the 56% not using the tether, 29% thought it was unimportant, 19% found it too hard, 14% couldn’t figure out how to use it, and 2% couldn’t find it. Again, there are leads to pursue! Tethers, yes, again and again, until our field finds a strong path to success!

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## **Special Edition:**

Governors Highway Safety Association, Ford Motor Company, and Ford Driving Skills for Life stepped up to fund 1,000 sets of our 4-poster series, “No Excuses,” to remind parents to never transport children unrestrained, the status of 44% of kids fatally injured in crashes.

Pick the posters up free, or, for \$5 per set, we can ship them.