



SBS News

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SBS USA Files Response to NHTSA Proposal

The 11/20 release of a proposal in the Federal Register by National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) came with a 1/4/21 response date. On 12/30/20, we learned a requested extension was granted to 4/5/21, allowing readers time to consider sharing their opinions with NHTSA.

As to the proposed changes in the vehicle bench for testing products to FMVSS 213, the main factor in safety seat design, SBS USA was supportive except that we recommend continued testing of safety seats with lap belts when tethers are not in use and a vehicle floor be included to enable official testing for products with load legs as part of the assessment. With vehicles before 1989 usually missing shoulder-lap belts in rear seats and especially in the center rear and, before 1999, rarely having tether anchors in place, seats should not allow for head excursion beyond 32 inches with lap belts alone. *Average* passenger vehicle age in the U.S. is 11.9 years. The vehicle floor can be important for encouraging more widespread use of load legs on rear-facing safety seats. Even if that test is not required for all rear-facing safety seats, it would give an official evaluation to this useful feature.

While denying increased test speed from 30 mph to 35 mph, NHTSA noted the unlikely prospect of children striking their heads on their knees because it is more likely that they would hit the back of the front seat instead. SBS USA suggests the new vehicle bench include a simulated front seat since head strikes can be a serious crash outcome for kids in back.

SBS USA expressed support for the request from Evenflo and Safe Ride News to eliminate total height from decisions about children's use of safety seats since two children of the same height can be very different in key proportions. The NHTSA post referenced research by Klinich et al. at University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute showing a disconnect between height and weight listings.

We are interested in new ideas for getting parents to register safety seats so recall information gets to owners; only about 25% now do so. Our support goes to any aspects of the new proposal that reduce incorrect use by increasing the intuitive features of safety seats to come. The proposal asks for ways for others, like SBS USA and retailers, to engage in this promotion so we shared our approach to those with new seats at SBS USA checkups in which we collect cards and submit registrations.

School bus safety is critical, and indeed, such buses are the safest form of surface transportation. However, some riders need specialized restraint systems that are designed for these vehicles. Given the differences between school bus seats and those in ordinary passenger vehicles, clearly visible labels linking them to use on the buses only are essential.

In the course of research, several issues were raised with NHTSA for exploration. One intriguing issue is the banning of inflatable boosters in Canada. SBS USA does not have a strong opinion on these products; however, this is a category of safety seat that invites a study. A serious issue is that of counterfeit and inappropriate products allegedly for child passenger safety (CPS) sold through online retailers extensively used by the U.S. population. This is an area that NHTSA needs tools to address actively and soon so we have included it as an area for regulatory action.

Dedicated to improving child passenger safety since 1980

Thank You

Especially during this time of focus on COVID-19, we appreciate our members at every level.

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Calendar

TECHNICAL WEBINARS:

Registration is offered via e-mail.
Send suggestions for topics to
stombrello@carseat.org.

2/4: For CA Technicians/
Instructors: 10 -11:30 am. 1 CEU.

3/4: CPS Malaysia Technical
Webinar, 10 - 11:30 am. 1 CEU.

VIRTUAL CONFERENCE:

4/26-28: Virtual Lifesavers
Conference
<https://lifesaversconference.org/>
SBS USA will have a virtual exhibit
and a virtual panelist!

SPECIAL FOR NURSES:

CPS Basics

Choose 2/24 or 3/24: 10 -11 am
1 CE for nurses. Ask for the link.
Arrange a special session for the
nurses in your facility.
stombrello@carseat.org

Rescue the Children!

California, Colorado, and
Nebraska joined 21 other states to
legally protect rescuers of children
alone in vehicles.

The laws began appearing in
2015. Coverage varies. CA also
protects pet rescuers; CO covers
rescuers of adults as well while NE
covers children only.

The impetus: the high numbers
of children dying when forgotten or
who are trapped in a vehicle
unnoticed. Rarely are the car
owners doing this intentionally.

In 2020, despite reduced vehicle
travel, 24 children died in parked
vehicles, with a higher percentage
than usual having entered the
vehicle on their own and unnoticed.

New Seats

Graco introduced two new
seats: The **SnugRide SnugFit 35**
is a rear-facing-only seat for kids
4-35 lbs. The crotch strap can be
shortened for a smaller baby. The
seat has a seven-year life.

Earlier manufacturer's
instructions referenced a lockoff,
but the manufacturer confirmed
there is no lockoff on this seat.
The shoulder portion of the
safety belt may be either routed
around the carrier or rest against
the vehicle seatback if installed
without the base.

The **SlimFit3/True3Fit** is a
convertible/combo seat that
accommodates kids 5-40 lbs. rear
facing, 22-65 lbs. forward facing,
and, as a booster, 40-100 lbs. and
at least four years old.

The seat features a 4-position
recline, a no-rethread harness,
and a lockoff for forward-facing
mode with harness. Discontinue
lower connectors at 45 lbs.
Cupholder use is optional.

LATCH may be used in
booster mode if approved by the
vehicle manufacturer.

Resources:

Two online resources in CPS
have moved with the demise of
Yahoo groups. The CPS-in-
Healthcare group is now at
https://groups.google.com/g/cpsi_nhc.
To receive an invitation, let
Heidi Heflin at SBS USA know.

The general forum for anyone
interested in CPS, moderated by
Merritt Nenneman and Jennifer
Matlock, is now at
CPSPList@groups.io. Please join
for a chance to swap information
with colleagues when questions
arise or issues call for discussion.

You can help SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. save children's lives with your membership or donation.

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I can help with _____

* E-mail address is required to receive passwords for access to Recall List and CPS Tech Update.

All memberships/subscriptions include *SafetyBeltSafe News*, which qualifies for 1 Continuing Education Unit per year for re-certifying Technicians and Instructors with subscriber code. \$200 or more includes *Safe Ride News*.

Check here if you are a Certified Technician or Instructor and want information about CEUs for subscribers.

Check below if you want to receive the following special subscriptions:

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What Do Parents Think of Inspection Stations?

A study by Levi, Sharon et al., in *Traffic Injury Prevention*, 2020*, focused on learning the visibility among the general public of CPST-staffed resources; the views held by the public about such help; and barriers to using it. Using a web-based sampling system, 1565 respondents who drove with children 9 and under at least twice monthly were queried. Awareness of such services was reported by two-thirds of the sample; 44% had been users; and 91.5% expressed confidence in their correct transport of their child passengers, citing use of instructions as the reason. A quarter didn't see this as a service they needed in huge contrast with what CPSTs see but typical of previous studies of misuse risk perception.

Other interfering issues shared by many respondents were long wait times, distance to the sites, or schedule conflicts. Yet, of those who went for a checkup, 73% didn't need appointments and more than half were within 15 minutes of the site. Two-thirds of folks surveyed were parents; 21.7% were grandparents. Among the key features of users was knowing a prior user. Online sources, such as mobile apps, social media, and websites, were a major referral source while pediatricians were the most common professional source. Of non-users of checkups, 26% said their installation "seemed right." Of those who went for checkups, 80.2% were pleased.

More than half the respondents named police and fire stations as good places for checkups; interestingly, they also note a play area (36%) or safety seat sales (35%) were preferred features. It isn't surprising that there is overlap between those with higher education and economic levels, women, parents, and non-Latinx whites among those most likely to know of checkup resources. Knowing someone who has gone to a checkup is a likely facilitator to generate attendance. Like many aspects of child-rearing, peer spread is an important spur to action. Therefore, along with engaging professionals and community volunteers with ongoing access to key demographic groups, it is important to empower checkup users to share their experiences in their networks.

**Reducing child restraint misuse: national survey of awareness and use of inspection stations*
Sharon Levi, Hyunshik Lee, Weijia Ren, Shawn McCloskey & Adele Polson

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Renew today!*

SafetyBeltSafe News

January 2021

Coming Attractions for 2021!

How are U.S. Children Riding?

SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. Tools for Programs

Child Restraint Manufacturers' Instructions with Summaries:

More than 400 sets of instructions, 2011-2020 with a 1-3-page Summary for each. Available online or as a USB. \$25. Or included with memberships for 2021 at the Tech Special level or above. Never be confused about the key points again.

Color Pictorial, 2021:

The full-color compilation of all seats made since 2011 by category, including dates of manufacture.

To find the right instructions, one needs to know which seat is on tap. If the date label is obscured, find the picture to check for age and name to be able to research recall status.

Available as print-out: \$50 plus \$17 shipping *or* order printing license, starting at \$30 each for up to 9 copies; reduced rates for larger orders.

Keep Your Children Safe, Buckle Them Up Right

Tri-fold brochure for 2021 in English or Spanish. With or without California laws. Lower reading level. \$.20 each plus shipping/handling.

From Safe Ride News: LATCH Manual 2021:

Single copy starts at \$46, including shipping.
<https://www.saferideneeds.com/product/2021-lm/>

The national usage survey*, established by federal legislation in 2000 aimed at reducing deaths and injuries of 4-7 year olds who did not use boosters, is a biennial statistical analysis of usage that also includes interviewing the adult drivers for demographic data.

The 2017 report, authored by H. Li and T M. Pickrell, had some good news, although because of its inception in 2000, it focuses on children that today we would prefer to see in seats with harnesses. However, since the data are collected overall on those under 12, changes in parental behavior are encouraging.

Available from NHTSA, a few of the study findings bode well for kids' well-being. Data showed rear-facing safety seat travel increased from 9.4% to 13.7% for 1-3 year olds; for 4-7 year olds, 68.5% used child restraints, including 28.4% in forward-facing seats (up from 17.9%), 40.1% in boosters while only 7.6% of 1-3 year olds used boosters, down from 13.6% 2 years earlier. Of interest is that for kids 4-5 years old, forward-facing safety seat use went from 27.1% to 42.5%.

Progress is being made as seats accommodate larger, older children at each stage, encouraging parents to stick with best-practice recommendations. Still with only one state, Louisiana, requiring boosters until kids actually fit in belts, the U.S. still has a long way to go.

*Li, H. R., & Pickrell, T. (2018, September). *The 2017 National Survey of the Use of Booster Seats* (Report No. DOT HS 812 617). Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.