

SafetyBeltSafe News

Volume 24, No. 6



November 2003

g g In Memoriam: **ELAINE HOUSMAN SACHS**, November 12, 1961- October 10, 2003 g g

The totally unexpected loss of Elaine, a stalwart promoter of child passenger safety for many years, generated an outpouring of grief and wealth of tributes, for she gave of herself freely and genuinely in every phase of her life. Devoted to husband Michael Sachs, MD, who serves on the SBS USA Advisory Board, and their daughters Rebecca and Sydney, Elaine served her community on numerous fronts.

Elaine provided leadership throughout her tenure on the Board of Directors of *SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A., whether she was President, Secretary, or Member-at-Large. Her mark was made not only with her astute, supportive leadership but also with her willingness to take on the mundane aspects of any program. A true social worker, she was adept in linking people and increasing the positive effect. She made a major commitment to advancing the project to place two exhibitions, created by the Board-Staff team, opened in January 2002 and still present at the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles. Along the way, she devised child-friendly aspects of the annual Safety Seat Checkup Day and trained to become both a member of the Speakers' Bureau and a safety seat checker as well as interjecting child passenger safety into virtually any venue she entered.

Elaine's cheerful, kind, and no-nonsense approach to resolving issues, her community commitments, and her unbounded hospitality always were set in the context of providing a fine environment for husband Mike and daughters Rebecca and Sydney to thrive. We miss her now and for the future and are honored by the gifts in her memory.

Center Shoulder-Lap Belts: Where NHTSA is Headed

Although the comment period on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) proposal for requiring rear center shoulder belts in motor vehicles by 2007 ended on 10/6, if time permits, more opinions will be considered. [Refer to Docket #NHTSA-03-15817, notice 1.] Making the belts mandatory was a key element of the federal "Anton's Law" pursued by a safety coalition, including SBS USA, in 2002.

Review of the U.S. fleet for 2002 showed that 120 models already have rear center shoulder-lap belts. The group of products lacking them are the light trucks and vans. There, only a third are now so equipped. The proposal also includes mandating this equipment for rear-facing vehicle seats but not side-facing seats. After a cost-benefit analysis, NHTSA has decided to omit this protection in center front seats of pickups with a single row of seats, although their own arguments appear to favor the opposite position since shoulder belts tend to increase usage and are necessary for booster-size children. Most of these seating positions are in vehicles that have few other options and also are not convenient locations for safety seats with built-in harnesses, due to size and potential interference with the driver.

The Federal Register filing includes a list of 20 questions to be addressed before the final rule is issued (by 12/04); the proposed phase-in would be from 9/05 to 9/07. One intriguing query is if frontal impact crash test requirements of FMVSS 208 need to be extended to rear seating positions. Since SBS USA originally proposed shoulder-lap belts in all rear seating positions in 1986, it is ironic to see the issue will be finalized 20+ years later! However, customers can purchase many vehicles already equipped *if* they recognize the need.

RECALLS

Safeline Kids Sit'n'Stroll

model #2003, manufactured 9/1/02 - 10/21/03: Use of lower forward-facing belt path (labeled for 20-28 lbs.) may allow excessive forward head movement in a crash. Harness pads may interfere with tightening the straps.

Use only the top belt path for forward-facing installation and do not use shoulder and buckle pads included with seat. Call 800/829-1625 for revised label and instructions dated 10/03.

The **Britax Super Elite**, manufactured: 4/25/01 - 2/15/02: Harness may allow excessive forward head movement in a crash.

Call 888/427-4829 for a harness replacement kit with HUGS (friction pads, chest clip, and D-rings for adjustment).

Give the gift of safety this holiday season! Give someone you love a membership in SBS USA!

SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.

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\$25,000 - Eleven Twenty Seven Foundation

\$9750* - American Honda Motor Co.

\$1000 - Health Net

\$500 - Habush, Habush, & Rottier

\$250 - Physician's Computer Co.

\$200 - Eugene Flaum

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\$150 - Becky Thams

\$125 - Health Services Agency
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\$100 - Frances Bents

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MD Kids in Safety Seats, DHMH

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Advertising

Tri-Cities SAFE KIDS

Tucker Associates

Drs. Susan & William Tully

VT SAFE KIDS Coalition

Kelly Wearstler

& Bradford Korzen

*Annual total

CALENDAR

CONFERENCES

***3/28-30/04:** Lifesavers 2004
www.lifesaversconference.org -
San Diego, CA. Call 703/922-
7944.

***9/1-3/05:** Kidz In Motion
Conference, or K.I.M., Orlando, FL
www.kidzinmotion.org

Safety Seat Checkup Week
April 18-24, 2004

Safety Seat Checkup Day
April 24, 2004
Petersen Automotive Museum,
Los Angeles

WORKSHOPS

***12/3/03:** 8:30 am-5 pm, Gardena
at Nissan North America. \$30 fee
Sponsor: State Farm Insurance.
6 CEUs for nurses

***12/4/03:** Technical Update &
Refresher. 8:30 am-5 pm, Gardena
at Nissan North America. \$30 fee
See page 3 for details.

(Attendees may come to both 12/3
& 12/4 for one fee of \$50.)

SAFETY SEAT CHECKUPS

Call SBS USA to register
Trained checkers are needed!
Parents: Register at 310/222-6860

***12/6:** 10 am - 2 pm. Pasadena,
CA. CA Institute of Technology
Co-sponsored by Caltech Women's
Club; Caltech Campus Life Office,
and State Farm Insurance Co.

***12/13:** 9 am - noon. West
Covina, CA. Chamber of
Commerce. Co-sponsored by
Assemblyman Ed Chavez, 57th
District, State Farm Insurance
Companies, and West Covina
Chamber of Commerce

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

All memberships/subscriptions are for calendar year and include *SafetyBeltSafe News*.

\$200 or more automatically includes *Safe Ride News*.

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

\$50 minimum: ___ Auto Update Service by e-mail ___ Auto Update Service by regular mail (if necessary)

\$100 minimum: ___ CPS Tech Update (online access to new instructions since 12/2002)

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Eleven Twenty Seven Foundation Opens Doors

Program Sponsor Eleven Twenty Seven Foundation has made a special, \$25,000 unrestricted contribution for SBS USA services. The funds allow for moving on previously unfunded projects that are important for achieving the organization mission.

A primary project is the Update session planned for 12/4 in Gardena. Based on the National SAFE KIDS curriculum, participants will review basics and learn about leading edge issues that confront those who want to teach others about CPS. Along with some newer safety seats, SBS USA will display tools useful for serving the public and a few puzzlers that participants might confront at events.

The date scheduled, immediately after the Educator Workshop on 12/3, along with a reduced registration fee, means that some participants can attend both easily. The 12/3 event includes receipt of the CPS Reference and Teaching Guide and CD for instructions through 12/02 (part of the package given to all Educator Workshop attendees).

Two safety seat checkups are being scheduled (12/6 & 13) so that all participants can have that option to solidify new learning.

The second major area which the 1127 funding addresses is the plan for TV public service announcements (psas) featuring Samantha Babcock, speaking out about the disastrous decision she made to allow her 2-year-old daughter Ysabel to ride unrestrained. The vehicle crashed; Ysabel lost her life. The "Get Educated" spots, 15 and 30 seconds long, can be requested in Beta or DVC-Pro if telecasts can be arranged.

The project grew out of the passion of Nikki Alpert, a mother of twins who was overwhelmed by the misuse of safety seats she saw in her daily life. She recruited Dean Butler of Peak Moore Enterprises, Inc. who generously devoted his time and talents to creating the psas which not only evoke Samantha's anguish but also ask the viewer to imagine children they know flying like the dummies under crash conditions visible on the screen. Watch www.carseat.org for more information on possible national TV coverage of Samantha's story.

As issues arise over the next year, SBS USA will turn, when necessary, to these funds to enable our voice for the protection of children to be heard.

PAINFUL ISSUES IN THE NEWS

Four issues related to child safety and motor vehicles are being pursued vigorously by Kids and Cars, the group that focuses on deaths occurring around vehicles which fall in none of the usual categories of pedestrian, occupant, or bicycle.

Besides the lack of government statistics on incidence, there is the dearth of preventive measures which are taken. Since the issue of young kids getting cars moving and either launching them into others with horrific results or jumping out to their own serious or fatal injury was highlighted, SBS USA has had a policy of not permitting children in the front seat during any checkup event, even sitting with their parents. Not only is the front seat 1/3 less safe than the back seat and thus, not preferred, but also children do what is modeled for them when they are exploring alone. For unrestrained children in front, a crash incident also might deploy air bags with dire consequences.

Janette Fennell of Kids and Cars (www.kidsandcars.org) challenges all to think of clever ways to remember that children are buckled up in back so they are not left behind to die of heat, cold, or lack of oxygen while adults are distracted.

In CA, it is illegal to leave a child alone or with another child under 12; 10 other states have similar laws. Yet many tragic incidents stem from forgetfulness. Research has shown that many, especially when tired, fall into old routines, forgetting about the sleeping, silent child in the car.

CPS advocates can alert parents that having a reminder technique is essential. Until cars or key chains come with sensors to alert drivers that a child is left behind, a goal for which Fennell aims, place

one's purse or briefcase in back, stick a reminder on the steering wheel, or put a teddy bear in front.

Backover incidents have been studied by Phyllis Agran, MD and her team at UC Irvine as part of their assessment of non-crash fatalities involving children. Consumers Union has joined the campaign to inform the public about how easy it is to *not* see a toddler when the car is backing up. The 4/03 *Consumer Reports (CR)* article shows, with both short and average drivers in 4 types of vehicles, that it can be impossible to see a 28" tall traffic cone unless it is anywhere from 13 feet behind a Honda Accord with an average-sized driver to 51 feet behind a Chevrolet Avalanche with a short driver. Toddlers pursuing departing parents and heedless of the dangers haven't a chance. A bill to track the incidence and to review the preventive options will be introduced in Congress.

Besides teaching children to stay away from vehicles, it is important to walk behind one's vehicle before getting into it, use all aids, from physically turning, checking all mirrors, and if available, responding to audible warning buzzers or built-in video cameras now in some vehicles. An evaluation of some of the technology is in the 10/03 issue of *CR*, a follow-up to their initial report.

Finally, Kids and Cars has petitioned NHTSA for a power window switch in vehicles that does not lend itself easily to misuse by children. Once again, Consumers Union is involved in the issue and has recommended lever switches which require the user to pull up in order to close the window. The August 2003 issue covers the differences and lists the vehicle manufacturers by type available today in the U.S.

Rear Seat Legislation Signed in CA

Gov. Gray Davis signed AB 1697, sponsored by Assembly Member Fran Pavley, requiring rear seat use by children until they are at least 6 years old or weigh at least 60 lbs., barring specific reasons requiring front seat travel.

Citations will begin on 1/1/05 to give time for educational activities to lift awareness. SBS USA strongly supported the bill and provided technical assistance to Assembly staff as it developed.

Many parents allow their children to ride in front and neglect other safety recommendations and laws, thus increasing their risk of injury or death even beyond the overall statistical one-third increase. Parents who fail to properly buckle up their children are more likely to let them ride in the front seat, where there is a greater risk of permanent brain injury and ejection. With air bags in place, these children have an increased fatality risk of 53%.

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Dear 2003 *SafetyBeltSafe News* Reader,

Renew now to keep the ongoing flow of our services to you through December, 2004. We look forward to receiving your gift or subscription to assure we continue to share the most up-to-date information and aid with both public and professionals through the Safe Ride Helpline and award-winning Web site.

With child passenger safety no longer receiving earmarked funds or high priority for federal and state funders, many agencies are reducing or eliminating their programs. This also impacts the revenue that we receive to provide both outreach and ongoing resources for those committed to this critical campaign of injury reduction. SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. staff continually seek funding sources for the Web site, technical consultation, training, and other essential services. Members and subscribers, however, are crucial both to provide funds and to show that our organization has a wide range of users.


All supporters will receive a complete annual packet, bimonthly *SafetyBeltSafe News*, access to the Audiovisual Library without a rental fee, and a 10% discount on metal buckle-up signs.

A new service will be available *on request* in 2004 for supporters at the \$100 level or above: a new password-controlled subscription Web page with the new and revised manufacturers' instructions received since 12/02. We shall continue to offer Recall Update Service at the Supporting/Community Organization (\$50) level and above *on request*. Notification of new or revised materials, including our List of Recalls and Replacement Parts for Child Restraints, will be sent by e-mail to reduce costs of mailings. At this level, each will be given a password to download and print the list from our Web site at any time. We will send a paper copy of the recall list on request.

The cost of the now bimonthly *Safe Ride News* has risen. Although it will still be a bargain, we only can include it routinely to those who renew or subscribe at the \$200 level and above. However, for 2004, we are offering a CPS Tech Special for those at the \$100 level and above: *Safe Ride News* and a CD of the Manufacturers' Instructions to 12/02 for an additional \$25.

If your employer matches contributions to tax-deductible organizations like ours, please encourage them to equal your support. Every dollar helps.

Sincerely yours,



Karen Proctor, CPNP
Secretary, Board of Directors

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*A happy holiday is a safe holiday.
Renew for 2004 today!*

SafetyBeltSafe News

November 2003

Books to Check Out

We are impressed with the thrust of *Every Woman's Quick & Easy Car Care*, by Bridget Kachur, which includes 16 pages on restraint use with drawings, tips, and descriptions, reviewed by SBS USA for the publisher, Storey Publications. Although our expertise is not car care, the diligence of the company on our issue makes us cautiously optimistic that the rest is of similar caliber.

How to Save Your Child's Life: What to Do After You Call 911 (St. Martin's Griffin; \$13.95), by paramedic Debra Brady addresses the need to prepare to assist children after a collision.

Evaluate one's own physical condition first and then decide if the circumstances warrant removing children from the vehicle (often the first impulse) vs. staying put in the usually safer confines of the vehicle.

Brady considers a cell phone a must for those who drive with children and notes the important factors to relay to 911. Important to remember is that the whole safety seat should be removed with the child in it unless this is completely impossible, both to reduce physical movement before all potential injuries are diagnosed and to have a safe spot to keep the child if leaving the vehicle is important. It is critical to assess how easy it is to detach the tether strap holding the seat. For instance, if it is difficult, it is reasonable to carry a strap cutter.

Passersby who come to help after a crash should remember that often an older child has buckled in the younger sibling. This can increase the child's anxiety about the outcome; calm words are needed to soothe such situations.

IN LIVING COLOR!

The 2003 Color Pictorial of Child Restraints by SBS USA is available for \$40 plus \$5 shipping and handling. It may be previewed at www.carseat.org.

There is a color photo of almost every child restraint made from 1981 to the present, and a caption has been added with manufacturing start/end dates. The photos are arranged by the type of seat, then by manufacturer.

The original Pictorial is a popular tool at checkups to identify old seats without labels, and now that many manufacturers don't put the model name on their seats and/or their instruction booklets, the new Pictorial is even more useful.

If the parent does not keep the manufacturer's instruction booklet with the seat, it is difficult for car seat checkers to figure out if there is a recall and find the proper instructions to use during the inspection.

The Pictorial also may be used as a quick reference to compare features of seats. It helps to show the pictures at checkups to parents who have other safety seats at home or at exhibits when visitors want to ask questions about the seats they own.



Call the office today to hear about great gift ideas for your child's school or preschool, including Bucklebear materials, "Boosters Are For Big Kids" kit, signs, etc.

