

# SafetyBeltSafe News

Volume 25, No. 6



November 2004

## ***SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A. Supporters Recognized**

*SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A. Treasurer **John Nisbet** of the Los Angeles Police Department, Traffic Coordination Section, was honored in Washington DC on 10/22 with the top award at National SAFE KIDS for his dedication to the field for the past 11 years. In California, John has been a nationally recognized Technician-Instructor since 1998, after years of serving as a dedicated volunteer. His sense of humor and willingness to handle many of the mundane tasks that enable major events to succeed characterize his service. We salute his recognition!

Another person who has worked hard behind the scenes to make child passenger safety shine is **Terri Hines**, Lifestyle & Corporate Communications, Nissan North America. Her sunny demeanor and can-do attitude epitomize her efforts to put the Nissan corporate program in child passenger safety (CPS) on the map. Terri was recognized by the National Council of Negro Women with the Bethune Award on October 30.

President Joan Jackson was proud to represent SBS USA in nominating Terri and being on hand to enjoy her success. CPS advocates across the U.S. will remember Terri's gracious hosting of the SBS USA Social at Lifesavers 2004 in San Diego.

## **School Bus Fatality Stirs Legislative Action**

The death of a high school freshman in West Palm Beach, FL, suddenly resurrected the long term discussion of how safe school buses should be. The young woman was not wearing the lap belt in her bus, possibly because Florida has no law requiring belt use, although the belts have been mandated since 1999. Like the New York law requiring belts on all school buses manufactured after July 1, 1987, the Florida law left out this crucial step for protection, much like the initial installation of belts in cars in the 1960s not having laws for use for almost 20 years.

Legislators are calling for requiring shoulder belts as well as lap belts and mandatory use. One problem with the current situation is that without regular use, the belts are "stowed" in a tangle between seats.

Despite the lack of belt use, "only" one student was killed when the driver apparently ran a stop sign and hit a pickup, causing the bus to roll over.

Records show school buses to be the safest surface vehicle. However, if your child is the "only" one to be lost, that is not very consoling.

It is important to recognize that the element of risk is greater in passenger vehicles, which lack the crush space and size of the school bus, even if one is working on improvements. As of 2005, all new school buses in California must be provided with upper and lower body restraints.

*A brief report of the fatal encounter between a 10 year old and air bag brings to mind the comments at CPS trainings about what can happen when front seat passengers are not sitting properly buckled up. The unrestrained child seated in front was killed apparently by chicken he was eating being forced into his throat from the close proximity of the child to the air bag. The collision occurred at mid-day on a city street.*

*How many have seen front seat passengers with their feet on the air bag cover or with books and other hefty items in launch position on the dashboard?*

**CALENDAR**

**CONFERENCES**

**\*3/13-15/2005: Lifesavers 2005**, Charlotte, NC. 703/922-7944 or www.lifesaversconference.org

**\*8/4-6/2005: Kidz In Motion (KIM)**, Orlando, FL (see page 3) email: kimconf@hiwaay.net

**SAFETY SEAT CHECKUP**

**\*4/16/2005:** Safety Seat Checkup Day at Petersen Automotive Museum, LA

***E-Z-On Harness Update***

Lori Crouzillat, Safety Advisor for E-Z-On Products of FL and President of Safety Angel International, reminds that the Kid Y 43 is the only E-Z-On harness that *must* be used with the Ride Ryte booster.

The harnesses with crotch straps and the 86-Y harness are designed for use without the booster, unless desired. With future changes in safety seat rules, the 86 Y will be recommended for use with the Ride Ryte.

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**Save the Dates!**

Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. has announced a \$10,000 contribution toward Safety Seat Checkup Week '05 and to underwrite a special Campaign 25 brunch celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of SBS USA.

The brunch is scheduled in Los Angeles for March 5 at Petersen Automotive Museum, site of a SBS USA exhibit and the April 16 Safety Seat Checkup Day.

Put the dates on your calendar and watch this spot for more details!! Volunteer help to make both successful happily accepted. Call us.

**Roundup of Safe Ride Helpline Data**

With the compilation of 21 months of activities to promote the correct, consistent use of safety seats, *SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A. is happy to report a few key findings.

The Speakers' Bureau listing included 151 talks, exhibits, and mass media interactions. Many could not have been presented without the active involvement of volunteers. We salute you—and our indefatigable Telephone Clerk, **Dorothy Stoner**, who was the major recruiter!

Four types of training provided 161 slots for participants. More than 250 slots were filled with checkers from 76 different agencies for the 16 checkups held in southern California.

Between Internet, mail, and telephone, SBS USA documented 5000 personalized responses and coverage in 59 mass media venues.

Consultations with follow-up packets were shared with 2034 companies, organizations, and agencies from social service sites, schools, health and law enforcement agencies to large corporations.

**THANK YOU**

**\$1,500** American Honda (for 2004)

**\$325** ARCCA, Inc.

**\$125**

Center for Advancement of Transportation Safety, Purdue University

ME Injury Prevention Program

Mark & Bonnie Oseas

Ride Safer Now!

Michelle Taylor

USA Baby

**\$100**

Nancy Lang

Preble Co. General Health District

Turlock City Fire & Emergency

Services

Kim Wilson

Winnemucca Police Dept.

**Tips for CPS Advocates**

Queries on correct use are often received by SBS USA staff, who carefully evaluate the details to determine the best answer. Can a forward-facing safety seat attached with lower anchors be used without a top tether attached? Yes, if one is satisfied with meeting the lower federal "head excursion" standard.

Safety seats must meet both a 32" and 28" standard. To achieve the latter, the standard allows the use of a top tether. For seats currently on the market, tether use is required to achieve the more stringent measure. Because tether brackets have been required in vehicles only since 9/99, it is critical that a basic level of protection can be met without the top tether.

However, no vehicle with LATCh is missing the top tether bracket. Indeed the T in the acronym refers to the tether. Best practice certainly is to use the "T" along with the "lower anchors."

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

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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: \_\_\_ Recall Update Service by e-mail \_\_\_ Recall Update Service by regular mail (if necessary)

\$100 minimum: \_\_\_ CPS Tech Update (online access to new instructions since December, 2003)

*Special for \$100 members: Add \$25 and receive Safe Ride News through  
2005 & CD of safety seat manufacturers' instructions 1996 - 2003!*

Payment: Check/Money Order (enclosed) \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card (Visa or MC) # \_\_\_\_\_

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*Federal Tax ID #95-3676040*

## What is "Electronic Stability Control"?

Vehicles with the crash-avoidance technology "electronic stability control" (ESC) have a small computer that activates the brake in a wheel not going in the direction the driver is steering and if necessary, reduces engine power. In tandem with anti-lock brakes, the system can reduce rollover risks significantly.

Costing \$300-\$500 extra, the system, known by a variety of names, was credited by National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) with reducing single-vehicle fatalities by 65% in SUVs and 30% in passenger vehicles.

The system is popular in Europe where half of new vehicles sold have ESC. The systems appear to halve the number of fatal single-vehicle fatalities when identical models with and without it are tracked, according to Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

In the U.S., since the system is unfamiliar and often optional, only 10% of new vehicles are equipped. In 2003, SBS USA collaborated with a company demonstrating this technology and was dismayed by the limited interest of the mass media in observing how it worked. With the new research findings, it is likely that more new-car shoppers will want to ask about this addition to the equipment in their vehicles.

## KIDZ IN MOTION (KIM)

The Kidz in Motion National Child Passenger Safety Conference is scheduled for August 4-6, 2005, in Orlando, FL.

This conference, designed for experienced CPS professionals, will be highly technical, focusing on special needs and new technology. There will be ample time set aside for question and answer sessions with vendors as well.

Organizers stress that this conference differs significantly from Lifesavers, as the KIM conference focuses specifically on newborns to 8 year olds.

SBS USA was the first to reserve exhibit space. Others include federal and state CPS coordinators, medical professionals, fire and rescue professionals, manufacturers, and retailers.

The abstract process for choosing speakers for the KIM conference has already begun, and abstracts must be received by January 28, 2005, to be considered.

Further details about the conference, including exhibitor information, hotel accommodations, conference schedule, registration information and cost, etc., are available on the Internet at <http://www.kidzinmotion.org>, or e-mail [kimconf@hiwaay.net](mailto:kimconf@hiwaay.net). Due to staffing shortages, it is requested that all communication be via e-mail.

## Do You Trust Your Child's Carpool Driver?

Nissan North America sponsored a study of mothers' attitudes toward the carpool exposure of their children. With the wide range of activities to which children are driven, many families need to double up with others to cover all of the driving.

Almost 70% of mothers expressed worry about the carpool exposure with the highest level of concern (84%) focused on how their children were buckled up. Other issues are the effects of rushing, children's behavior, and cell phone use on the safety of their children.

Proper buckle-up choices are likely to reduce distraction from children's behavior. Bob Yakushi, NNA Director of Product Safety and CPS Technician, recommends buckling up before "take off," joining the 66% of parents who use music or soft toys to reduce children's antics that might distract, and rewarding children for "good passenger" efforts. Trying to solve behavior problems on the fly while driving adds risk. Pulling over to mediate, handle misbehavior, or to use the omnipresent cell phone is a key safety tip.

SBS USA offers a flyer that parents can use as a way to approach their carpooling peers. With more awareness of the need for boosters until children can pass the 5-Step Test (about 8 to 10 years old), parents need to work out systems to assure that carpooling includes this important safety tool for each child.

Some families seek solutions for protecting children in the center lap belts still present in a majority of vehicles. SBS USA lists sources of products to address that issue as part of a listing of booster models offered in conjunction with the 5-Step Test.

## MEDIA WATCH

Disney/Pixar's newest smash hit, "The Incredibles" features a family of super-heroes (mom, dad, and three small children) who take on the bad guys to save the world, in true super-hero style. They risk life and limb in daring escapades which thrill the intended young audience.

*SBS NEWS* hopes that, as youngsters around the country try to emulate the little Incredibles, they will avoid trying the most dangerous stunt in the movie, that of riding in the car with their mom with the whole family unrestrained.

## SIDE AIR BAGS

The NHTSA Web site has added a new list of FAQs on side air bags (SABs) that includes new federal recommendations regarding placement of and possible interactions with children ([www.nhtsa.dot.gov/airbags/pages/SABFAQs.htm](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/airbags/pages/SABFAQs.htm)). Unlike front air bags, SABs are not required in vehicles or regulated by NHTSA.

A group of experts representing the automotive and insurance industries, known as the Technical Working Group, has developed voluntary SAB testing procedures to minimize the potential risk of injuries for out-of-position occupants, especially children, who are seated very close to a deploying SAB. Manufacturers report to the government if the SABs in a given vehicle model have met these voluntary testing procedures. NHTSA informs consumers on the Web site and in the "Buying a Safer Car" brochure.

According to NHTSA, many chest (torso) and head/chest combination (combo) SABs showed a potential for serious or fatal injury to children seated very close to the deployment of the bag. However, very few cars sold in the U.S. have these types of SABs in the rear seating positions.

To minimize injury risks, NHTSA recommends that children not lean or rest against chest-only or head/chest combination SABs. Consumers can find out which type of SAB a vehicle has by looking in the owner's manual, checking with the dealer, or searching the SAB database at [www.safercar.gov](http://www.safercar.gov).

The first head SABs were introduced in model year 1998, but did not become widely available until recently. Head SABs are usually mounted in the roof rail above the side windows and are designed to help protect an adult's head in a side-impact crash.

There are two types of head SABs, curtain and tubular. Typically, curtain SABs help protect both front and rear occupants in a side-impact crash; some also may provide unrestrained occupants protection from ejection if the car rolls over.

NHTSA has not seen any indication of risks to children from current roof-mounted head SABs. There have been no reports of moderate or serious injuries to children from SAB deployments. So far, 92 cases have been investigated; of these only 6 involved children.

NHTSA states that the new recommendations supercede the 1999 Consumer Advisory warning not to seat children next to activated SABs.

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***SafetyBeltSafe* News**

**November 2004**

## **Improved CPS Laws Protect Kids on Both Coasts**

As of January 2005, California law requires that children ride in a child restraint in the back seat until they are at least six years old or weigh 60 pounds. The back seat provision was passed in 2003 (AB 1697, Pavley), but implementation was delayed to allow time for public education efforts.

A child under six who weighs under 60 pounds may ride in front if there is no forward-facing rear seat in the vehicle or the child restraint cannot be properly installed in the rear seat or all rear seats are occupied by other children under age 12 or for medical reasons. The current exception for older cars stays in effect--a lap belt may be used for a child who weighs 40 pounds or more if there are no shoulder belts in the back seat.

The fine for failing to *properly* secure any child under 16 riding in a passenger vehicle (including RVs) or truck is more than \$350 with penalty assessments. The fine may be waived or reduced by the court only if the defendant is economically disadvantaged. A portion of the fine is allocated to local health departments for child passenger safety (CPS) education and distribution programs. If the fine is reduced, the violator must attend an education program that includes inspection of the child restraint.

Several reproducible pieces about the California law can be downloaded from [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org) > Tools for Programs > Reproducible Materials. A brief flyer for parents summarizes all of the buckle-up laws in English and Spanish; it meets California Health and Safety Code requirements for hospitals and clinics.

For professionals, there is a more detailed summary of the laws and two companion pieces: Responsibilities of Health Departments and the Courts, Guidelines for Educators and Law Enforcement. For law enforcement, there is an updated citation reminder card for officers' ticket books, originally developed by *SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A. in 1992.

New York has expanded the protection of the state child restraint law to cover children under age 7, but the details of the law are confusing. Children under 4 years and under 40 pounds must be restrained in a "specially designed seat" (not a booster or safety harness/vest). Children who are at least age 4 and under age 7 or who are under age 4 but weigh 40 pounds or more must be restrained in a "child restraint system" (may be a booster or harness/vest) appropriate for their size and weight. Children under 16 must wear a safety belt, regardless of seating position. The fine for failing to restrain a child according to these guidelines is \$25-\$100, but the fine for a first offense is waived if the child is under 7 and the violator shows the court proof that a child restraint has been purchased or rented before the court appearance date.

New York implemented the first U.S. safety belt law in 1985. Drivers and front seat passengers 16 and older are required to wear safety belts; the maximum fine is \$50. Bills are under consideration to require rear seat passengers 16 and over to wear safety belts (A 903/S 118) and to prohibit transporting children under 18 in the cargo area of a truck (A 601).

# *SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.*

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Dear SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. Member,

January 29, 2005 marks our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, a milestone we never expected to reach when 15 volunteers in Los Angeles County decided to organize to save children from preventable death and injury. We continue to pursue that goal, proud of our contributions in the past and aware of the current needs of parents and professionals for assistance in achieving higher reductions in these tragic losses.

As one who is part of the band who want to reach that goal, renew now to keep the ongoing flow of our services to you through December 2005. 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 funding cuts, many agency programs are limited or eliminated. This impacts the revenue that we receive to provide both outreach and ongoing resources for those committed to this critical effort for injury reduction. SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. staff continually seeks 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 demonstrate that our organization has a wide range of users.

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

The special Web access service is available *on request* in 2005 for supporters at the \$100 level or above: the password-controlled subscription Web page with the new and revised manufacturers' instructions received since 12/03. 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. At this level, if requested, 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 if no e-mail service is available.

The now bimonthly *Safe Ride News* will be included routinely to those who renew or subscribe at the \$200 level and above. For 2005, 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 12/03 for an additional \$25.

If your employer matches contributions to tax-deductible organizations like ours, please encourage them to equal your support. Help us make our 25<sup>th</sup> a banner year.

Sincerely yours,



Karen Proctor, CPNP

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