

SafetyBeltSafe News

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September 2005

After Katrina, SBS USA to Accept Funds for Safety Seats

In an effort to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina, SBS USA will accept and forward to reputable programs *earmarked* funds to purchase safety seats for children affected by the hurricane.

Since potential donors don't always know which programs are working on such a service, SBS USA will find them and pass along the funds.

SBS USA Begins New Project

Funded by the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), "Safe Transport for Kids in the System" will offer training and educational resources to employees who transport children in Los Angeles County care by piloting a model education and intervention program. With an innovative curriculum and model procedures for using child restraints correctly, *SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A. plans eight 1-day trainings for 150 social workers. Each Los Angeles County regional Department of Children and Family Services office will receive a Child Passenger Safety (CPS) reference manual and Shelness Productions video, "Don't Risk Your Child's Life VII."

The grant supports SBS USA services for California for 2 years: the toll-free Safe Ride Helpline; www.carseat.org resources; and technical teleconferences for county CPS coordinators and others interested. An educational brochure distributed by state legislators will be updated, and a procedure manual will be developed for civic leaders who wish to host a car seat checkup or distribution event. We are resuming Technical Teleconferences in conjunction with the California Department of Health Services. Scheduled for 10-11:30 am on October 20 and December 15, the first two discussions will focus on new issues in CPS. Call SBS USA for the telephone number and access code.

Locally, aid goes for Speakers' Bureau events and four Educator Workshops and safety seat checkups and collaboration with Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. Already the announced grant of \$200,000 has attracted mass media interest from as far away as Texas.

New Products

Compass I 400 LP is a rear-facing seat for infants from 4 to 22 lbs. used only with the detachable, adjustable base. The 5-point harness has a front adjuster strap. Harness slots are moved up or down using an adjuster knob behind the seat. It has vehicle belt lockoffs for installation and is part of a travel system.

The **Comfort Infant Car Seat** by **Dorel** is rear facing only for babies 5 to 22 lbs. The 5-point harness has a front adjuster strap and two crotch strap locations. Using the adjustable base is optional.

(New Products continued, page 3)

THANK YOU

\$25000 Nissan North America
 \$9000 American Honda (for 2005)
 \$3667 Ohio (for 2005)
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 Success by 6
 University Hospital Labor and Delivery
 Vermont Highway Safety Program
 Robert Vinetz, MD
 West Wendover Fire Department
 Linda White

Partners Look at Side Impacts

Partners for CPS, the research project conducted nationally with funds and clients from State Farm Insurance, released findings on side impacts at the Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine conference in September, 2005.

High points of the report follow:

1. 42% of fatalities for rear-seated kids 8 and under occur in side impacts, with worse injuries per crash severity than frontal crashes, according to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), which must address this issue by 7/08, under Congressional mandate.
2. Boosters, compared with belts alone, reduced injury by 58% for kids 4-8; using highback boosters showed a 70% reduction. Both highback and backless boosters reduced injuries to the abdomen and neck/back/spine. However, only highback boosters showed a significant reduction of head injury, a finding not clearly explained by protection by the head rest.
3. Kids 4-15 seated in the rear with another passenger had risk reduced 58%, indicating that limiting side motion may help. Head injury rates were similar for both kids on the struck-side and center. Those on the non-struck side did best.
4. When kids were sitting in the vulnerable location in vehicles struck by light trucks, they suffered twice the injury risk as kids in the center or non-struck side.

CALENDAR

SAFETY SEAT CHECKUP

(Checkers needed 9 am - 3 pm)

*10/27: 10 am - 2 pm, Location TBA

EDUCATOR WORKSHOP

6 CEUs for nurses

*10/26: 8:30 am - 5 pm. Nissan North America, Gardena, CA.

Workshop and Checkup funded by CA OTS. Call SBS USA to register.

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New Products...continued from page 1

Encouraging Figures

The **Alpha Sport 3-Phase Seat** by **Dorel** may be used 5 to 35 lbs. rear facing, 22 to 40 lbs. forward facing with the harness, and 40 to 80 lbs. as a booster. It has an adjustable headrest and a 5-point harness with a front adjuster strap.

SafeGuard Child Seat is a forward-facing-only seat for children 22 to 65 pounds. The shoulder and crotch strap slots are positioned by moving the headrest up or down.

The 5-point harness has an automatic-locking retractor, which also can be tightened by turning a knob on the side of the seat. The webbing attached to the LATCH connectors also has automatic-locking retractors.

The vehicle belt (not LATCH) must be used for a child over 48 lbs.; there is a lockoff for the shoulder belt. Manufacturer IMMI of Indiana says the SafeGuard is engineered to combat the top 5 misuses identified by NHTSA.

The **Graco Safe Seat** is a new infant-only seat for babies from 5 to 30 lbs. It has a 5-point harness, front adjuster strap, and an adjustable, detachable base.

Since the average child weighs 30 lbs. just before their third birthday, this innovative product should encourage parents to keep their children in the protective rear-facing position much longer.

Winter 1996 was the start of the National Air Bag Safety Campaign. This Campaign was born in a snowstorm in Washington DC following the horrific series of deaths of children riding in the front and dying in mostly minor crashes which they would have survived had they not been struck by a passenger air bag.

In 2003, fatalities of children under twelve fell to 1110 from 1345 in 1996 as front seat passenger losses declined from 586 to 314. The coalition and its many supporters have stimulated a "remarkably successful change in societal behavior...rivaling attitudes toward smoking and drunk driving," said Mark Rosenker, acting chair of the National Transportation Safety Board," quoted in the *N.Y. Times*.

Observational surveys in 2002 showed that only 15% of infants, 10% of toddlers, and 38% of "booster kids" were riding in front, a major reduction which can be further improved to save another 100 children's lives annually if all children ride in the back.

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September 2005

Time to Comment on Regulation of Boosters

Docket NHTSA-2005-21245 concerns changes to booster tests under Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) #213. The proposal would extend regulatory coverage to products labeled for use to 80 lbs. and for the higher weights, require testing with the new 10-year-old, 77-lb. Hybrid III dummy with articulated legs and hips. The dummy already has been used to devise test procedures for the proposed standard which chiefly relies on frontal sled testing at 30 mph.

NHTSA will continue exploring shoulder belt adjuster product testing to consider future regulation but for now, is concerned that, as yet, they cannot require test procedures sufficient to determine abdominal injury risks.

Comments about evidence of the effect of product weight on loading of the child's body in a crash are welcomed. The issue of the weight of boosters, which is now in abeyance under current regulations, arises again as an area of greater study. Real-world crash data on injuries have not been brought to NHTSA's attention. For now, the suspension of enforcing this aspect of safety seat construction will continue.

To file comments, send 2 copies to Docket Management Facility, US DOT, 400 7th Ave, SW, Nassief Bldg, Rm PL-1401, Washington DC 20590 by October 31, 2005. Comments also can be filed online at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Tether Conundrums: What Do We Tell Families?

Recently an exasperated father blurted out, "I'm not even a safety nut!" as he related his long saga trying to protect *all* of his children. He was looking for a way to provide his 50 lb. 4-year-old with upper body restraint. His vehicle had no center shoulder belt, and there was no space for a large seat like the Regent in the space between his two older children.

There are several vest/harness systems to fit larger children, but most vehicle manufacturers, except Ford, state that their tether anchors may only be used for children up to 40-48 lbs. (Consult the LATCH manual from *Safe Ride News* for a list by manufacturer.) Although some manufacturers of harness and/or special needs restraints provide heavy-duty tether hardware, it may be difficult or impossible to identify the proper location in the vehicle or to find someone to install it.

Calls to NHTSA to obtain input in this issue were not returned. *SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A. believes that tether anchors rated to a much higher weight level are required if there is no onus on dealers to replace the lower-weight ones when needed.

Does your child's teacher have all the best CPS resources to help teach his/her students effectively? Contact SBS USA for age-appropriate teaching materials today.