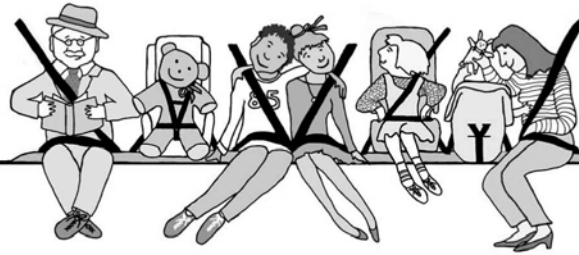


SafetyBeltSafe News

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May 2007



Lifesavers, held in Chicago in 3/07, featured many interesting presentations, including the highly personal speech by new National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Administrator, Nicole Nason, in which she included her commitment to improving child passenger safety.

The conference featured a workshop that linked US advocates with ideas from other parts of the world. NHTSA has been tasked and funded to collaborate more internationally, a critical step since traffic-related deaths are predicted to become a major killer worldwide as more countries move to the private passenger vehicle.

The facts: 1.2 million deaths, 20 million injuries annually worldwide with traffic injuries predicted to become the 3rd highest contributor to worldwide injury by 2020. With increases as high as 80% in middle- and low-income countries and decreases of 30% in high-income countries, this adds another debilitating differential internationally.

Sweden has been highly successful in achieving low death rates, but its strategy now is to embrace Vision Zero, supported unanimously by Parliament. Starting with the concept that road use is not voluntary but essential for all, Sweden takes primary responsibility for designing to reduce mortality, focusing on management of kinetic energy.

Crosswalks and traffic lights are replaced by diversions and roundabouts. To avoid the differential in impact of larger vs. smaller vehicles, lanes are literally separated to avoid disastrous outcomes. The death rate dropped 90% on the 2-1 rural highways; to go further, side barriers are being added.

Government-funded safety education in Sweden is directed toward adults as protectors of kids, rather than making kids the responsible parties. With nine million residents, Sweden has ten fatalities annually for kids under age 14, less than one per 100,000.

The Swedish approach assumes that errors will be made so that traffic safety solutions must be tolerant and focus on reducing the severity of the outcomes. In ten years of Vision Zero, their fatality rate went from 6/100,000 population to 4.7.

In another workshop, the motor vehicle industry represented by Toyota, NHTSA, and Consumers Union focused on the effect of good vehicle design features on reducing fatalities. NHTSA administrators admit it has taken them 10 years to act on recognition of the positive outcome of electronic stability control. Various studies indicate 10,000 lives per year can be saved with this technology. The agency is devising ways to focus on future effective new technologies faster.

Through presentations and discussions, the future use of interactive technology to “drive” vehicles is clear. Already one Lexus parallel-parks itself; following distance from the car in front can be pre-set; and traffic patterns, already managed in some urban settings through data-collecting cameras on roadways, could be more controlled.

Consumers Union reviews many of these aspects when assessing vehicles. However, one focus is CPS-specific issues for car-related, non-traffic deaths, which have doubled since 2000. Backing over unseen kids, due to the huge blind spots of larger vehicles, is now 50-60% of these. At the national level, Senate Bill 694 to advance federal safety standards addressing rear blind zones, dangerous power windows that can strangle small children, and vehicles that can be knocked into gear because they lack a brake transmission shift interlock, has moved through its 1st major legislative hurdle; companion bipartisan legislation is in the House of Representatives as well.

Humans are fallible; design needs to take this into account. Safety seat manufacturers, take note!

The Tools of Our Trade

CALENDAR

THANK YOU

CONFERENCES

(catch the SBS USA exhibit)

***August 1-4 Kidz in Motion (KIM) Conference – Denver.** Go to www.kidzinmotion.org for details and registration info.

Technical Teleconferences

Recordings of the March and April Technical Teleconferences presented by SBS USA, approved for one CEU each, are still available.

Register at www.carseat.org, click on Tools for Techs, then CEUs for Recertification. Fees are \$30 (toll-free phone) or \$25 (listen online) per person. California Techs may earn one CEU by participating in the OTS/CA DHS-sponsored teleconferences on June 14 at 1:55 p.m. and August 16 at 10 a.m.

LATCH COMMENTS

As follow up to the 2/8/07 meeting, called by NHTSA in Washington DC, Docket #26735 was opened for responses to the LATCH study commissioned by NHTSA. By the 5/4/07 closing date, fewer than 15 separate comments had been filed.

Safe Ride News Publications and SBS USA sent excerpts from the new LATCH manual, current findings, and the 6/00 letter on LATCH issues submitted to the agency by SBS USA.

A number of experienced Technicians/Instructors have shared excellent suggestions, including the color-coding of LATCH bars and the adoption of the mini-connector style of lower attachments on safety seats. Go to <http://dms.dot.gov>, Simple Search 26735 to read more.

- \$25,000** Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A.
- \$12,000** American Honda Motors *(2007 membership year)*
- \$1,125** Darren Qunell
- \$500** Volkswagen of America, Inc
- \$452** Washington Mutual Bank
- \$400** Michael Sachs, MD
- \$373** Fremont Investment & Loan
- \$250** Anonymous
- Indiana Mills & Manufacturing Inc.
- The Queen's Medical Center
- \$200** Avera St Anthony's Hospital
- Clarkstown Police Department
- Exempla St Joseph Hospital
- Goleta Valley Cottage Hospital
- Habush, Habush Rottier SC
- Jacksonville Beach Fire Dept
- Morristown Memorial Hospital/SAFE KIDS New Jersey
- Rainbow Babies' & Children's Hosp
- Richland Hospital
- SAFE KIDS Chapter
- SAFE KIDS Cobb & Cobb Public Health
- SAFE KIDS Douglas
- St Francis Medical Center
- Ventura Co Fire Protection District

Great News for KIM Conference:

As the 3rd Annual Kidz in Motion conference approaches, its organizing team was happy to announce receipt of a message: NHTSA “has reconsidered our earlier recommendation that no Federal funds be spent for registration and travel to National Child Passenger Safety Conferences other than Lifesavers. We want to offer flexibility to States to fund conference and other program travel needs based on the requirements of the State highway safety program. Please share this information with your States and other CPS advocates in your Region.” Join SBS USA there!

Three tools stand out as essential: 1) a current recall list (the latest date on the SBS USA version was 5/10); 2) the LATCH manual—the current edition is purple & available from Safe Ride News Publications, 800/403-1424; & 3) the '07 Child Restraint Manufacturers' Instructions with Summary Sheets, now available from SBS USA.

Using instructions and owner's manuals brought by parents is important, but one misses the detailed updates & consistent formatting of the reference materials, including corrections & changes since the date the original printed materials were released.

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Safety Seat Checkups: April 28 & May 9

SBS USA was able to establish an integrated series of training opportunities and publicity-rich checkups between 4/16 and 5/9 which kept us hopping but allowed both parents and professionals multiple choices. The outcome included well-attended trainings and plenty of checkers for the public.

Safety Seat Checkup Day, culmination of the Week, was enhanced by live coverage on KTLA TV 4/25 of West Traffic, LAPD, roving checkups and SBS USA promoting the 4/28 checkup. With a full reservation sheet, the 50+ checkers affiliated with 26 different agencies, whose skill levels ranged from newcomers to seasoned veterans on each team, found six children, including infant twins of a Toyota employee who had gone through SBS USA training in past years, riding correctly out of the 74 youngsters (20 unborn) from 55 families from 22 different cities whose 82 safety seats in 62 cars were evaluated.

As for the rest, 161 errors, with as many as six on one seat, were documented. Evaluations from the families were enthusiastically positive.

The official ceremony for Safety Seat Checkup Week was graced by the SafetyBeltSaved family, Ynira Falcon and her children Jania, Maiza, Amarion, and Janizza Rojas, who were ages five months to five years when the collision occurred. Ynira expressed how important it is to be buckled up properly close to

home where their crash, like so many others, occurred.

We recognized Gene Mullin, CA Assemblyperson who introduced AB 881 (*see p. 4*) to improve the CA CPS law, and then CHP Capt. Bill Dance, representing the Peace Officers Assn of Los Angeles County, shared some thoughts. POALAC has been a sponsor of Special Enforcement Week for many years, asking member agencies to focus on CPS violations as Safety Seat Checkup Week approaches.

Bucklebear prowled the Petersen Automotive Museum parking lot where we were hosted; CA Office of Traffic Safety and Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. sponsored the event with support from ColorGraphics, our poster maker, Michael Sachs, MD, who donated lunch for the checkers, and Dydee Diaper Service whose employees distributed 100's of flyers to families. See you next year!

Statistics for the May 9th checkup in Pasadena, staffed largely by the May "graduating class" of Technicians, found 41 checkers serving 51 children (nine unborn) from 39 families with 56 safety seats. Only one child, using a booster, was correctly buckled up; 143 errors, up to eight per seat, were documented. One parent had attached LATCH connectors to a single tether anchor bar; another had created homemade LATCH connectors.

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May 2007

New Products

All 3 current variations of the **Dorel Designer Infant Seat** fit 5-22 lbs., with 5-point harness, 4 sets of shoulder harness slots, & two crotch strap slots. The institutional model, the Cosco Designer, has 2 shoulder strap adjusters on the back of the shell & no base. Version 2, with the same harness system but including a detachable base, may be labeled First Ride, Designer 22, Starter, or Deluxe Infant. Type #3 has a front harness adjuster strap & also may be labeled Deluxe Infant or Designer.

The **Dorel Portable Car Seat** fits 22-40 lbs. It has a 5-point harness attached to a thin plastic shell behind & under the child. There are no shoulder slots; the straps are routed over the top of the shell. The ends of the crotch strap and lap straps must be carefully threaded in & out of a metal slide in a design like seats made in the 1980s. The vehicle belt is threaded under the cover, through slots in the sides of the shell, more than halfway up the back of the seat. The seat has no LATCH straps and cannot be used on aircraft.

The **Dorel Uptown**, a convertible for 5-40 lbs. (up to 35 lbs. rear facing), has a 5-point harness with front adjuster strap, 4 shoulder strap slots, 3

crotch slots, and a pull-down recline stand. The **Dorel Prospect** is now available as a backless booster for 40-100 lbs.

Evenflo Confidence is a booster with height adjustments for both the backrest and headrest, depth adjustment for the base, & activity lights on some models. It can be used with the back for 30-100 lbs. & without the back for 40-100 lbs.

Evenflo has announced that convertibles **Titan** and **Triumph** will have a stronger, taller shell starting this June. Both convertible seats will be certified for children up to 50 pounds. The Triumph will have a special harness system to fit right at shoulder level on all users.

Graco Air Booster has a removable backrest & adjustable headrest for children 30 to 100 lbs. The seat pad was designed to increase comfort by eliminating pressure points.

Team Tex America previously distributed imported seats under the name Car Seat Specialty. Current models are the infant-only **Baby Ride**, certified to 22 lbs., & **Dreamway SP**, a booster with a removable back & adjustable headrest for 33- 100 lbs.

Recall: **Evenflo Embrace** (Model #317, 320, 397, 398, 540, 548, 549, 550, 556, 597, 598, 599) made before 4/8/06. When used as a carrier, the handle can unexpectedly release, causing seat rotation, allowing infant to fall out. Call 800-490-7497 for a repair kit. Do not use the carry handle until repaired.

California AB 881 passes Assembly
Authored by Assembly Member Gene Mullin and co-sponsored by SBS USA, AB 881 requires use of a safety seat or booster in back until age 8. The bill will be heard next by the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee.