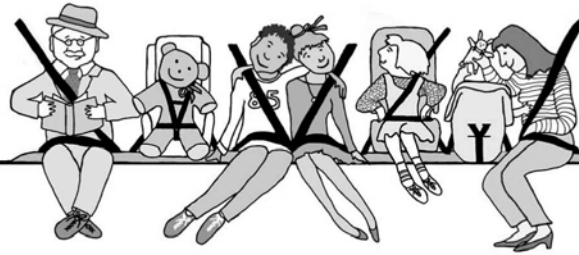


SafetyBeltSafe News

Volume 28, No. 4

July 2007



Kids' Plates Projects End

June saw SBS USA staff wrapping up two pilot projects that were made possible by funding from the California Kids' Plates program.

'Protecting Day Care Kids and their Caregivers' was an ambitious project to offer child passenger safety (cps) training to child care providers who transport children in their care. Traditionally, this sector has been hard to access with cps information due to their limited time away from their work, but experience from the Safe Ride Helpline indicated a real need for a targeted program.

SBS USA was able to pilot the program through full-day classes organized in partnership with Los Angeles-based child care resource and referral centers. The resulting curriculum is now on DVD, with 1000 copies distributed to child care providers across Los Angeles County. Staff await the return of evaluation cards eagerly; however, early returns, both in English and Spanish, have been positive.

The staff reviewed ways to focus the attention of providers and parents on good transportation practices, devising a brief form which providers should be willing to provide to their families and which will remind parents of key questions to ask when children are riding with others. We are encouraging linkages between all Resource & Referral Web sites and www.carseat.org to avoid the problems of other agencies trying to keep up with the frequently changing world of cps.

Working with Crystal Stairs, Los Angeles, and Connections for Children, Santa Monica, was a pleasure; the entire network of R & Rs in L.A. County became involved as SBS USA was represented at 5 area conferences and in offering the DVDs to the providers who transport.

Our second Kids' Plates-funded project extended

a collaboration with L.A. County Department of Children and Family Services, initially funded by California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), to train professional staff in safe transport of children in care. Being responsible for transporting kids of all ages, often in emergency situations, DCFS staff have an acute need for cps training. Kids' Plates funded the Model Program for 10 more classes for 178 attending to learn how to install safety seats for four different kids in their own cars. The classes were a great success, both in terms of learning outcomes and evaluations.

Initial pre-tests documented a woeful lack of information, but the class presentation and interaction with technicians armed most to make passing or better grades on the post-test. As a result, cps training has been identified as a priority by DCFS managers, and SBS USA is now working with the department to institutionalize this program for all new staff, with classes scheduled for fall.

Interaction with staff of the Kids' Plates program allowed SBS USA to make major shifts of funding focus during the programs, as we refined appropriate techniques and sought ways to overcome barriers to meeting objectives. Flexibility and willingness to hear interim findings led to greater achievements than could have occurred under the original plans.

These programs were funded with proceeds from sales of the 'Kids' Plates,' vehicle specialty license plates that generate funds for child injury and abuse prevention and child health and safety programs. California residents can call 1-800-HEY-KIDS or go to www.kidsplates.org for more information or to purchase a plate. Others may want to consider starting a similar funding stream in their state.

CALENDAR

TELECONFERENCE

***August 16, 10 a.m.:** Technical Teleconference for Californians Sponsored by CA Dept of Health Services. Participants who submit e-mail for with special code will receive 1 CEU toward recertification.

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CA Child Restraint Law Passes Senate Committee

AB 881, authored by Assembly Member Gene Mullin, passed Senate Transportation and Housing Committee. It will go to the Senate Appropriations Committee next, then the full Senate.

The bill requires children under age 8 to ride in back in a safety seat or booster. Sponsors of the bill are *SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A., Safe Kids California, California Coalition for Children's Safety and Health, and Safety Center Incorporated.

New Products

Compass has added another folding booster, the B530 that fits taller children than the existing B510.

The Clek Olli is a backless booster by **Magna Aftermarket America** for 40-100 lbs. The **Mia Moda Viva** covers birth to 22 lbs. and has a 5-point harness and adjustable base.

The **Dorel enRoute** is a new booster with a removable back and adjustable headrest. Dorel is importing three new Maxi-Cosi seats:

1.) **Priori** is a convertible for children 5-40 lbs., up to 35 lbs. rear facing. It has a 5-point harness, belt lock-offs, 5 harness slot positions, and 3 crotch strap locations.

2.) **Mico** is for infants 5-22 lbs. It has a 5-point harness, front harness adjuster strap, and can be used with or without the detachable base.

3.) **Rodi** is a booster for 30-100 lbs. with a removable backrest and adjustable headrest.

Child Saved! Cap to Kids' Plates Grant

As SBS USA staffers wound up their pilot program to bring technically-grounded cps education to child care providers, we learned from a class participant in June that her 3-month-old Jehú survived a triple rollover on Interstate 5 after a blowout on July 1.

Concern for the children who would be in her care brought Ingrit Sanchez to Center for Community and Family Services (CFS) in Carson. A month later, her husband scrambled through the mangled windows of their car looking for Jehú. Then he saw a tiny foot sticking out of some bedding and found Jehu, unharmed in his rear-facing safety seat.

At the hospital where parents were treated for their injuries, Ingrit re-told her story to anyone who would listen and determined she would share it throughout her network and cooperate with SBS USA in any publicity about the event we wished to do.

La Opinion and KTLA Morning Show plan to cover the story in August. SBS USA provided a new Evenflo Titan, courtesy of CA OTS, to replace the seat which saved Jehú. Others who deserve plaudits include: Lilia Perez of CFS who recruited participants for the classes on 6/2; Cheryl Kim of SBS USA who created the curriculum; CA Kids' Plates which took a chance on funding the project for outreach to child care providers; and Sylvia Perez, Venice Family Clinic staffer, who taught the Spanish-language class on 6/2.

Visit www.carseat.org to read the testimonial in English and Spanish and see photos of the vehicle AFTER the crash.

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Safety Seat Recalls

Britax has modified the Regent (E9L39) to enhance performance and is sending the following to registered owners of seats made before 6/18/07: new instructions and label, a longer LATCH strap, and adhesive slip-resistant strips. The new instructions, effective for all Regents, indicate the long belt path for children 22-40 lbs., the short path for 40-80 lbs., and the recline bar for all installations. Call 888/427-4829 for the instructions and repair kit.

Dorel has announced a recall for Alpha Omega (22150,22151) or Eddie Bauer 3-In-1 (22770) seats made 10/1/ to 12/31/05. A child's finger may get stuck in a small square hole in the shell (near curved area on left side near edge of seat pad). Call 877/639-0659 to order repair kit (black labels to cover the openings).

“Life explained. On film.”

SBS USA Executive Director Stephanie Tombrello collaborated on a series of educational presentations for the online video encyclopedia, videojug.com. Topics include CPS in pregnancy; types of restraint systems; how, when, and why to use them. To view the videos, click on the Resources button at www.carseat.org.

Major 2-Year Project Concludes

SBS USA completed a 2-year CA Office of Traffic Safety-funded project through Los Angeles County Dept of Health Services, Injury and Violence Prevention Program, through which the initial pilot program (*see pg 1*) for Dept of Children and Family Services was developed. The project grew out of an event in Nov. '03 at which L.A. County leaders recognized that children in their care were being exposed to risk when traveling in motor vehicles.

The SBS USA team worked with DCFS Training Section liaison, Susan Vu Pritko, who attended the initial pilot training with her colleagues. As we streamlined the training to fit the demands of inclusion in a series of multi-faceted introductions to the child welfare field, we found encouraging the enthusiasm of the workers as they mastered the resources in their own vehicles and learned to select and install seats to carry kids of all ages.

While our primary focus was on developing that program, SBS USA was able to offer multi-faceted Helpline services. Recently, a Guide to Safety Seat Checkups and a prototype of an updated brochure for legislators to distribute to their constituents have been completed. Given the fluid situation regarding cps law in California, distribution of the brochure awaits the fate of AB 881.

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Safety Belts in the News: Issues Revisited

The switchable retractor, generally located at the apex of the passenger shoulder belts in post-1995 vehicles, is the most common way auto manufacturers meet the requirement that belts be manually lockable to hold safety seats tightly in place during ordinary travel. It has been a boon to parents by reducing the need to attach locking clips and has improved positioning of kids in boosters, reducing slack generated by kids' wiggles.

At the August, 2006 Kidz in Motion Conference, CPS advocates across the country encouraged Safe Ride News Publications and SBS USA to petition National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to stop the sunset of the regulatory impetus for manually lockable safety belts.

Our petition noted the need for lockable belts for safety seats for children too heavy to use LATCH, kids in boosters, and those whose physical challenges keep them in seats long past 48 lbs. The good news that NHTSA granted our petition arrived in a June 20 letter. We await developments which may require further CPS community activism.

Another issue which regained our attention came from the near-strangulation of Quinlan, age 6. The story mirrored the original report in March, 2005, from the *Sacramento Bee* of Kaitlin Sipes, then 3, who was saved because her bunched ponytail gave her mother the space to get her hand between the ratcheting shoulder-lap belt and her child's neck.

Quinlan's story differs from Kaitlin's—she grasped the shoulder-lap belt, unused because LATCH was attaching the seat to the vehicle and wrapped it around her neck—in that he was mimicking a fun exercise often done in school in

which the child makes himself into a mummy by winding toilet paper around face and body. The booster-using child grasped the center shoulder belt which was hanging down from the ceiling as the removable center seat of the family minivan was unused and thus, had been removed.

Luckily, Quinlan's mom Sharon was on a road where she could pull over immediately and get scissors to cut him out. This NJ mom of 4 and kindergarten teacher has vowed to make this issue salient because shortly after this incident, she discovered Lanette Sipes' publicity effort followed by reports from Colorado, Japan where a child died, and another CA case in which oxygen deprivation caused brain injury - totaling 9 incidents since 2001.

SBS USA received a report last winter from Sharon Rengers of Kosair Children's Hospital, Louisville, KY, of a child who was "playing" with the belt. Minutes later, just before they entered a major highway, parents discovered that the 3-year old was strangling. Both parents were needed to cut the belt from around the child's neck.

Two years ago, SBS USA produced a warning flyer, #646 (available at www.carseat.org in Spanish as well), suggesting that when LATCH is used, parents place the shoulder-lap belt BEHIND the safety seat and then buckle and lock it to avoid kids getting hold of it and experimenting.

Valuable as such belts are, these cases call for a simple, skill-based fix that adults can easily activate but kids can't figure out. Inventors, we need your skills! Meanwhile, share "New Warning for Parents" with your networks.