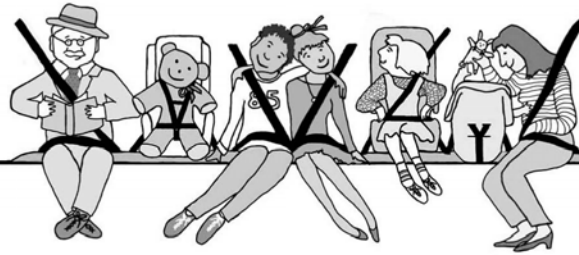


SafetyBeltSafe News

Volume 28, No. 5



September 2007

KIM Conference Rocks in Denver

Leading with a pre-conference on safe transport of preemies, KIDZ in Motion kept the child passenger safety (CPS) crowd hopping with a busy round of workshops and general sessions. Speaking as an exhibitor, SBS USA was very pleased that an initial general session enabled exhibitors, including safety seat manufacturers, to give a brief review of our wares and details of newly introduced items. This helped busy conference attendees to budget time at booths to investigate further items of interest.

The Roundtable, led by Deborah Stewart of *Safe Ride News* and SBS USA Executive Director Stephanie Tombrello, provided a chance to update attendees on issues previously raised and addressed over the past year as well as continuing discussion of gaps in CPS.

Issues that moved forward were the granting of review of the NHTSA petition to eliminate the sunset clause for lockable belts in LATCH locations in vehicles beginning in 2012; indications that Toyota may revise its tether installation cost policy; an announcement on the issue of safety seats bearing model names that Dorel Juvenile with its numerous brands is placing them on its labels and that Evenflo is moving in that direction.

Two issues that re-surfaced were kids strangling or nearly so in unused lockable shoulder-lap belts and the use of 4'9" as a guide for booster use. The former issue has been reviewed in both 3/07 & 7/07 *SBS NEWS*; it appears that a way to prevent the belts from retracting fully when not in use would be helpful in addition to more warnings. The latter was raised by Karen Ahmad, RN, of LA

who expressed concern about writing that figure into law as well as in teaching pieces because of several research papers presented at meetings of the Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine where concern for long-torsoed kids who might strike the ceiling or B pillar has been raised.

Among the technical workshops presented were two excellent LATCH reviews by Deborah Stewart and Kathy Kruger, both of WA. Among the research tidbits shared was that using tethers had a positive effect on all measurements for forward-facing kids: TETHERS ARE, INDEED, BETTER!

Using tethers rear-facing, when permitted by the safety seat manufacturers, also is effective. The Swedish method (attaching to the leg of the front vehicle seat) helped achieve a better recline angle.

Finally, for those attempting to install special tether anchor hardware for seats for heavier children, it is important to know that removing mandated tether anchors is illegal unless done by a member of the National Mobility Equipment Dealers Assn who may replace all but one of the FMVSS 225-mandated anchors. To effect this, start with E-Z-On Products of FL or Safety Angel, both of which have such heavy-duty anchors and if they cannot refer to an appropriate dealer, call 800/833-0427 for a referral. LATCH manual editor Deborah Stewart is seeking more collaboration between CPS advocates and NMEDA.

The excellent, lively pre-conference devoted to preemies gave practitioners from the NICU and other CPS advocates ample opportunity to look at practices and areas needing more research to standardize policies nationally.

State Farm Insurance to Fund Training in '07

California Law

THANK YOU

A \$5000 gift from State Farm allows SBS USA to plan an extra training event to introduce CPS to those who serve the community.

A key need is to expand the number of agencies with staff to provide basic CPS education to clients and to make referrals for additional technical input when needed. Such service is a gap identified by many families using the Safe Ride Helpline.

Without basic education, families may make poor choices, pushing children to ride forward facing too soon or move out of boosters before they fit in belts alone.

AB 881, authored by Assembly Member Gene Mullin, passed the CA Senate on September 6 and will go to the Governor for his signature, due by the end of September. Last year, he vetoed a similar bill.

The bill requires children under age 8 to ride in the back seat 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, Inc.

\$18,000

American Honda Motors
*2007 membership year

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Legacy Emmanuel Children's
Hospital

\$125

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Cindy Humphry, RN
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Driver Safety

CALENDAR

EDUCATOR WORKSHOP

10/25, 8:30-5:00: Altadena, CA.
No class fee. Approved for 6
contact hours for nurses. Three
Continuing Ed Units for CPSTs or
CPST-Is
Sponsor: State Farm Insurance

CHECKUPS

Checkers needed 9 to 3!
11/1, 10:00-2:00: Whittier Quad,
Whittier. Call 310/222-6860 for
appointment. Sponsor: CA Office
of Traffic Safety (CA OTS)

12/4-location to be determined

NATIONAL CPS CERTIFICATION COURSE

11/28-30, 12/3: Altadena,
California. Contact Cheryl Kim
(ckim@carseat.org) for application.

CA TECHNICAL TELECONFERENCE

by SBS USA
11/8, 10-11:30: Sponsored by CA
Dept of Public Health with CA OTS
funding.

SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.

Office: 1124 W. Carson St.

LA BioMed,
Building B-1 West
Torrance, CA 90502

(310)222-6860 - English
(310)222-6862 - Spanish
(800)745-SAFE
(800)747-SANO

FAX: (310)222-6862

Web site: www.carseat.org

Mail: Box 553

Altadena, CA 91003

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

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L.C.S.W.

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Recalls

Several **Dorel** models made 11/1/03 to 12/31/05 have an adjuster strap that may slip in a crash, allowing the harness to loosen. Call 800/219-0509 or go to Dorel Web site to order kit with replacement harness adjuster strap. Models affected: 3 Phase, Alpha Omega, 3-in-1, Alpha Omega Elite, Alpha Omega Deluxe 3-in-1, Deluxe Convertible, Enspira (5-pt, Overhead Shield, or Versa-Fit), Intera.

Graco Comfort Sport models with 5-pt harness made 1/2/07-7/31/07 may have a LATCH strap that is incorrectly routed over, instead of under, the harness straps, allowing excessive rotation of seat when rear-facing in a crash. Call 800/345-4109 or view drawing on Web site and correct strap routing before installing with LATCH.

If the harness adjuster strap of **Britax** Decathlon made 2/12/05 to 7/31/07, is pulled from the side, the plastic housing around the release button may come loose, allowing the adjuster to move out of position and making the harness difficult to tighten. Obtain a repair kit by calling 800/683-2045 or go to www.DecathlonRecall.com.

New Products

Britax Diplomat, a convertible seat for 5-40 lbs., up to 35 lbs. rear facing, has a 5-pt harness, front adjuster strap, belt lock-offs, harness-headrest adjustment knob, and click-on lower LATCH connectors.

Chicco KeyFit 30, certified for 4-30 lbs., has a newborn liner for use up to 11 lbs. The original KeyFit (4-22 lbs.) fits in the new detachable base, but the new seat will not fit the old one.

Dorel All in One Deluxe is a 3-stage seat with a 5-pt harness and front harness adjuster strap for 5-35 lbs. rear facing, up to 40 lbs. forward facing, up to 80 lbs. as a booster. Although similar to the Alpha Omega, it features 2 levers on the front of the seat to adjust the headrest/harness height.

Recaro Como, a convertible seat with a 5-pt harness for 5-70 lbs., 35 lbs. rear facing, has 5 sets of harness slots & an adjustable headrest. The Signo is similar, but a headrest knob allows "infinite adjustment." Both have click-on LATCH connectors. Both Vivo & Vivo Lite, 2 versions of a foldable booster for 30-100 lbs., have an adjustable headrest and aluminum frame.

Roosevelt, a special needs seat for children 35-115 lbs., made by **Merritt Manufacturing**, has a 5-pt harness, 5 sets of shoulder slots, 2 crotch strap locations, optional positioning pads, & seat extenders (2 sizes) to support longer legs. Conventional tether use is recommended but not required with the long routing of a lap-shoulder belt and use of the provided EZ-Tether Connector Strap.

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SafetyBeltSafe News

September 2007

LATCH Anchor Loads

Proposed LATCH Education Campaign

After the 2/8/07 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) meeting generated by the 12/06 LATCH use study findings by TransAnalytics, the group stressed the need to know if certain “misuse modes” actually were likely to cause negative outcomes. At a May industry meeting with NHTSA, Miriam Manary presented the results of testing to look at the effect of completing the usual FMVSS 213 testing of safety seats when attached to lower anchors spaced farther apart than the 11 inches mandated in FMVSS 225.

After measuring the distance between non-standard bars in 52 vehicles, the team tested 5 safety seats (2 facing rear, 3 forward) with attachment to locations 11, 16 and 22 inches apart. Most vehicles had “inner bars” 13.2 inches to 19.2 inches apart, 8, less than 11 inches, a few, slightly more. Loading at 16 inches showed little variation in loading from 11 inches; at 22 inches, the loading was 3% to 14% higher but had neither structural failures nor unusual effects on the dummies. With the widest spacing, the forward rotation of the rear-facing seats was *less*. Head excursion was less for 2 of the seats, higher for 1 but always within regulatory requirements; head injury and chest measures were lower or equal to standard tests except with the widest spacing and 1 seat. All findings were within appropriate range and appear to fit with the findings of Suzanne Tylko of Transport Canada.

The preliminary advice is to continue to follow the recommendations of the companies involved while not making the misuse issue of using LATCH in the center location the focus of major educational campaigns until the data have been fully reviewed.

In mid-August, NHTSA released Federal Register Docket No. NHTSA–2007–28934, with a formal deadline for comments of 8/30; *post-deadline comments, however, are encouraged*. The result of the working group selected by NHTSA, focus group testing, and advertising agency input can be seen at <http://dms.dot.gov/search/searchResultsSimple.cfm> by putting in 28934 under Search. The pictograph of a floating reclined baby above a forward-facing seat on a vehicle seat shows a line with ball end at the seat top and a line with ball end going into the vehicle seat. To the right is Anchor Tether - LATCH - The next generation of child safety.

SBS USA, *Safe Ride News*, and Consumers Union agreed that the campaign should be divided in 2 segments, with the first one on tethers to stress the importance of using a tether with forward-facing seats, whether or not safety belt or LATCH attachments were used and to recommend adding tether anchors for vehicles pre-’99. The major reason for dividing the effort is that the tether message is clear and ready for transmission; the lower anchor message is not only different as anchors are not the best choice for every child but also some major issues are not yet resolved.

Deborah Stewart implored NHTSA to study the possibilities carefully, with no attempt to introduce the campaign in conjunction with CPS Week, for instance. Advocates for Highway & Auto Safety pointed out that committees to advise government need to follow certain guidelines. In short, those commenting tended to have multiple questions about the product shown. Given NHTSA Administrator Nicole Nason’s desire to advance this issue quickly, all anticipate that comments will be reviewed in a timely manner.