

SafetyBeltSafe News

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January 2008

New Program for Pre-2001 Toyota/Lexus Owners

Don't underestimate the power of a child passenger safety (CPS) volunteer-advocate! **Bonnie Oseas**, SBS USA Board member, has been active in promoting our goals for many years but with a houseful of children, couldn't volunteer as actively as she wished until the past year. As we discussed the many issues that confronted the organization or CPS advocates, we mentioned the problem of helping families with older vehicles who could not afford tether anchor installation.

Bonnie decided to approach a Toyota executive she knows well, and the result is a new effort to reduce barriers to this important protective tool.

Toyota has formed a partnership with SBS USA to get the word out that the company will provide tether anchor installation to any owner who registers with SBS USA, making a voluntary donation of \$5 or more per anchor to SBS USA. The anchor installation will be done by any dealer in the U.S. (excluding Hawaii) when the person named on the certificate presents it to the dealer. These tax-deductible donations, along with \$3500 in start-up funds from Toyota, will defray administrative costs. The new program is an ideal way for individuals or agencies to help less fortunate families increase protection for their children by donating on their behalf.

This project is directed particularly toward those who might not follow through on recommendations to use tethers because they do not have the funds available. Although all of the information will be at www.carseat.org, we especially are eager for agencies serving those with limited resources to publicize it by passing out the registration forms, which can be downloaded from our Web site. Take along forms to safety seat checkups and give them to families with pre-2001 Toyota or Lexus vehicles.

The information about tethers and the registration form will be available in English and Spanish. The availability of this program will make it easier for advocates and others to recommend harness systems or high-weight harness seats which need tethering to those whose rear center—or perhaps all rear seats—are equipped with lap belts only. This also should extend protection to children who are too big for typical harness safety seats and not ready for boosters.

The issue of tether costs for Toyota owners had been raised at the second KIM Conference in Orlando. Now, before conference #4 (see page 2), the issue is being addressed. Please help us make this exciting new program a big success.

Why are Tethers Important for Safety?

Data show that children in forward-facing safety seats are at increased risk of head and brain injury compared to those in rear-facing seats, especially in side impacts.

Although a tether cannot eliminate all of that risk, it mitigates it, making it less likely that the child's head will be hit by an intruding object or come in contact with the front seat.

CALENDAR

CONFERENCES

***4/13-15:** Lifesavers: national traffic safety conf. Portland, OR.

www.lifesaversconference.org

***7/9-12:** Kidz in Motion, Denver.

www.kidzinmotion.org

CA TECHNICAL TELECONFERENCE

***3/20, 10-11:30:** Sponsored by CA Dept of Public Health with CA OTS funding.

SAVE THE DATE!

***4/13-19:** Special Enforcement Week for Child Passengers

***4/20-26:** Safety Seat Checkup Week

***4/26:** Safety Seat Checkup Day

THANK YOU

\$21,000*

American Honda Motors
(*2008 membership year)

\$10,000

Barbara Knapp, honoring Emilie Crown, RN, CEN, CPSTI

\$3500

Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A.

\$1000

Bill and Sonja Davidow
Lori Jacobs/Hinricher & Crasnick LLP

\$500

Aprica Kassai Inc
Britax Child Safety
CA State Auto Association
Will & Ashley Jerro

\$200

American Family Children's Hosp
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Rainbow Injury Prevention Center
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To Your Health

Free Locking Clip

Recaro Como, made before 9/17/07, has a shoulder belt guide (previously called lock-off) which may not prevent loosening of the lap portion of the belt in the forward facing position. Recaro will provide a locking clip free on request: 800/873-2276 or www.recaro-nao.com.

School Bus: NHTSA Proposes Changes

January 22 was the closing date for comments on National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) proposals for school bus design.

Safe Ride News (SRN) Publications and *SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A. again submitted a joint response, praising the idea of shoulder-lap belts in small school buses. They noted that, with California and, by 2010, Texas requiring shoulder-lap belts in school buses, this was the time to make it a national goal with reasonable phase-in.

Using belts on school buses reinforces learning from home; can improve passenger behavior, essential when an adult must manage road and student issues simultaneously; and clearly is available without reducing fill levels of buses. (*See SBS News, 11/07*)

Reducing slots on school buses because of the cost of belts would not be a good idea. School districts could be helped with targeted funding to move to "belted buses" taking a page out of an old California law.

In 1988, California passed a law to offer funding for those districts which moved from pre-1977 buses, primarily to reduce air pollution but also to encourage replacement of the old buses which did not meet the 1977 NHTSA safety requirements. A joint Department of Energy-NHTSA collaboration could address energy issues of today as well as the belt situation.

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Comment to NHTSA on "Ease-of-Use" Ratings

The Federal Register listed NHTSA-2006-25344 as closing on 12/24, and *Safe Ride News* (SRN) publisher/ editor Deborah Stewart and SBS USA Executive Director Stephanie Tombrello beat the deadline by commenting on Christmas Eve!

The "Ease of Use" (EOU) rating system emerged from the 2000 Tread Act, requiring NHTSA to publicize the qualities of all safety seats meeting FMVSS 213. At the 2/07 DC meeting on the Decina LATCH use study, Nicole Nason, NHTSA Administrator, voiced concerns about implementation of the service because most ratings were high, not really discriminating between products.

SRN and SBS USA focused on only a few issues. Most important was tether usage encouragement in instructions. Based on the Decina study and other observations, top tether use is skimpy, even in vehicles with anchors. Tether use reduces head and neck trauma. If more instructions clearly recommended use, parents might realize its value.

When NHTSA was devising the EOU, SBS USA staffers testified in detail about the criteria. A key point was that NHTSA consider adding features, such as EPP or EPS foam lining in safety seats, for

instance, to FMVSS 213, thus improving child survival in crashes.

A new feature not listed is the availability of LATCH attachments for boosters. This may reduce the risk of injury from unattached boosters, making it easier for both kids and parents to manage, and thus, use longer.

The key to all of the recent NHTSA initiatives is balancing which features must be mandated on all products and which are essential to enhancing correct use, without stifling a range of products for every budget.

NOTE: As we went to press, NHTSA announced a 5-star rating, usually a designation of safety status; however, NHTSA wants us to forget that association and focus on a link to EOU only. Unfortunately, at www.nhtsa.gov, combination child seat/boosters are grouped as if they were convertible seats; since for most children, these are not comparable choices, it is very confusing. The top-rated IMMI SafeGuard Child Seat is criticized for instructions placement, one of the most convenient features of the seat! There should be a full description of how EOU ratings are done.

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SafetyBeltSafe News

January 2008

New Products

Recalls

Combi: Zeus Turn is a convertible seat for 5-22 lbs. rear facing, 20-40 lbs. forward facing, with 5-point harness and belt lock-offs. Installed, the seat can swivel rear, front, or side, but it won't fit some babies rear facing even to age 1. The **Shuttle**, a replacement for the **Centre**, is rear-facing-only for 5-22 lbs. and may be used with or without the base. It has a 5-point harness, front adjuster strap, and anti-rebound bar.

Dorel: SureFit or **onBoard** is a rear-facing seat for 4-22 lbs. that has a 5-point harness, four sets of strap slots, three crotch slots, and front adjuster strap. **Pronto** is a booster for 30-100 lbs. with an adjustable headrest and removable back. **Alpha Luxe** or **Echelon** is a convertible/combination seat for 5-35 lbs. rear facing, up to 40 lbs. forward facing, and up to 100 lbs. as a booster. Similar to **Alpha Omega Elite**, it has a 5-point harness, front adjuster strap, and three crotch slots. Levers on the front are used to move the shoulder harness and headrest up and down. The base may be removed when used with the harness and must be removed when used as a booster.

Graco: Nautilus is a combination seat for 20-65 lbs. with a 5-point harness, four sets of shoulder slots, two crotch slots, and an adjustable head support. It may be used as a booster with or without the back up to 100 lbs.

Jane: Team and **Team Plus** boosters, for children 30-80 lbs., have replaced **Indy** and **Indy Plus**. The back and headrest are adjustable in width and height. Team Plus may be used with rigid lower LATCH connectors and lap-shoulder belt or with a lap-shoulder belt only.

Peg Perego: Primo Viaggio SIP 30/30, a rear-facing seat for 5-30 lbs., replaces the previous SIP model. It has a 5-point harness, front adjuster strap, and may be used with or without the base.

Dorel Touriva and Regal Ride with 5-point harness, 9/28/04 to 9/20/07, have elastic straps securing the cover to the shell that could come loose and get wrapped around a child. For repair kit: 888/698-6681 or www.djgusa.com.

Evenflo Discovery infant-only models #390, 391, 534, 552 (3-point or 5-point harness), made 4/27/05 to 1/29/08, could separate from the base in a high-impact side collision. For a dual-hook fastener for the shell: 800/356-2229 or www.evenflo.com/Discovery.

Evenflo's precautionary recall stems from testing, not reports of actual incidents. By 6/08, newly designed Discovery models will be available.

Graco SnugRide, 8/1/06 to 6/30/07, has seat pads with foam backing that could be pulled away and swallowed by a child. For kit with replacement cover: 800/345-4109 or www.gracobaby.com.

Mia Moda Viva, 12/19/06 to 2/6/07: The adjuster assembly for lower LATCH attachment strap may interfere with connection of carrier to base, which could result in detachment in a crash; registration cards were missing.

Vehicle belt must be used for installation until strap is replaced. For repair kit with new LATCH strap and registration: 866/642-6632 or www.miamodainc.com.