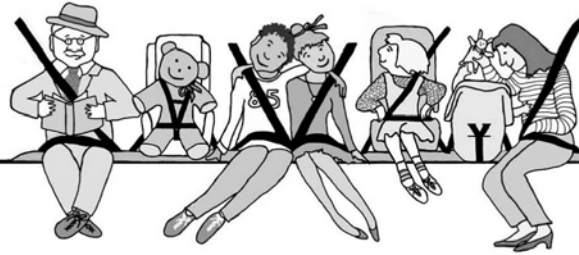


# SafetyBeltSafe News

Volume 29, No. 2



March 2008

## SAFETY SEAT CHECKUP DAY

It's time for our annual major checkup—and you may wonder how to participate if you don't live in the Los Angeles area. Because we develop updated posters, Proclamations and Resolutions, news releases, and Media Alerts, we offer the templates for anyone wishing to stir up awareness of the importance of buckling up right.

The posters come in two versions, with and without the details of the 4/26 Safety Seat Checkup Day, thanks to **ColorGraphics**. In California, we send along requests for Proclamations to County Supervisors; however, you can take the sample and approach mayors as well.

Your law enforcement agencies can join in Special Enforcement Week, April 13-20, to concentrate on violations of the Child Passenger Safety (CPS) law. Law enforcement agencies, with the commitment of the Peace Officers Association of Los Angeles County, will focus on CPS violations during that week. Join in to reduce risk of injury in motor vehicle crashes. Publicity about their focus will remind families that they must not become lax in protecting their children.

Safety Seat Checkup Week culminates April 26 when families are invited to the Petersen Automotive Museum, Los Angeles, from 10 am to 2 pm, for thorough inspection of how their children ride. Teams of trained checkers will offer their services before they tour the museum.

Thanks to California Office of Traffic Safety and Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., our key sponsors, we are offering a half-day checker training to introduce the hands-on aspects of cps to the newly interested and provide a refresher for "old hands." [See Calendar.]

Checkers are needed from 9 am to 3 pm; volunteers of all ages from 8 am on to help set up and clean up the site. Usually, we find more than 90% incorrect use so checkers feel much satisfaction in helping parents keep their children safe. Checkers enjoy a free lunch, too.

What can you do? Put up posters, pass out flyers [see master copy in this issue], and refer families to 310/222-6860 to sign up for a checkup. We also invite anyone who was saved by a safety seat, belt, or helmet to join in the 11:30 am Ceremony at the Checkup to be honored. Let us know in advance so we can have a personalized certificate on hand. Remind your community that buckling up is a family affair.

## ***Nissan Sponsors 5<sup>th</sup> Annual SBS Social at Lifesavers!***

Lifesavers is being held in Portland, OR in April, and *SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A. is hosting a Social at the Convention Center on the Skyview Terrace (4th level) to provide some "down time" during the busy conference.

Come on 4/14, 5:15 pm to 7 pm, for a chance to meet advocates from across the United States and to have a few treats before fanning out for dinner.

Thanks to **Nissan North America** for making this possible. RSVP to [safetybeltsafe@aol.com](mailto:safetybeltsafe@aol.com) to have your name tag available at the door!

## **Tell Parents About Automatic Recall Notice**

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) will e-mail recall information to those who register their safety seats at [www.safercar.gov](http://www.safercar.gov) and click on "E-mail" or "RSS."

Be sure to register the seats with the manufacturer, as well, either directly through the company or through the special link on [www.safercar.gov](http://www.safercar.gov).

## THANK YOU

- \$24,000** American Honda Motors  
(2008 membership year)
- \$2500** Christine Ford
- \$1125** Darren Qunell
- \$1000** Patrick & Sonja Seaver
- \$500** Graco Children's Products  
Volkswagen of America, Inc.
- \$450** IMMI/SafeGuard
- \$445** Clarkstown Police Dept
- \$250** Westerville Division of Fire
- \$200** Dynamic Research, Inc.  
Habush Habush Rottier  
John Muir Health  
Little Company of Mary  
Hospital  
St Vincent Infirmary  
Kernersville Fire Dept.

## Mom of Tech Helps SBS USA Efforts

**Barbara Knapp** is happy to see her daughter Emilie Crown, RN, CEN, thriving as a CPS Technician Instructor and decided to make a charitable gift in honor of Emilie's CPS efforts. She asked Emilie for help in checking out options before choosing SBS USA.

Barbara's gift of \$10,000 qualifies for Program Sponsorship and will support technical efforts to improve regulations affecting CPS and help to pursue new leads as they surface.

SBS USA often recognizes an opportunity, such as appearing at a hearing or exploring pros and cons of regulatory approaches, the kinds of options that are rarely funded under grant proposals but take time and funds to follow up.

We thank Barbara and congratulate Emilie as a sterling example of a CPS advocate.

## Pediatricians Can Help Correct Misinformation

The article by Bull and Durbin (see p. 5) in Pediatrics 2008 stresses, among other things, the important role health care providers have in correcting misinformation and myths many parents believe about child passenger safety.

Many parents wrongly believe their child is at greater risk for lower extremity injury while riding rear-facing.

This myth contrasts sharply with documented rarity of this outcome and the documented reports of such injury, along with even more devastating head and spinal injury, in forward-facing configurations.

## CALENDAR

- \*4/13-19:** Special Enforcement Week for Child Passengers
- \*4/20-26:** Safety Seat Checkup Week
- \*4/26:** Safety Seat Checkup Day  
(see pg 1 for details)

## CONFERENCES

- \*4/13-15:** Lifesavers: national traffic safety conf. Portland, OR.  
[www.lifesaversconference.org](http://www.lifesaversconference.org)
- \*7/9-12:** Kidz in Motion, Denver.  
[www.kidzinmotion.org](http://www.kidzinmotion.org)

## SBS USA TECHNICAL TELECONFERENCE

1 CEU for Techs and Instructors  
(CA only)

- \*5/15, 10:00-11:30:** Sponsored by CA Dept. of Public Health with CA OTS funding. For details, contact  
[annette.dipirro@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:annette.dipirro@cdph.ca.gov).

## CHECKER TRAINING

- \*4/17, 12:30 - 5:00:** Altadena, CA  
310/222-6860 to register.

## HOSPITAL POLICY WORKSHOPS by SBS USA

*Funded by California Kids' Plates.  
310/222-6860 to register.*

- \*6/16, 1:00-5:00:** Little Company of Mary Hospital, Torrance.
- \*6/18, 1:00-5:00:** Hoag Hospital Conference Center, Newport Beach.
- \*6/23, 1:00-5:00:** Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital, Whittier.
- \*6/27, 1:00-5:00:** Cedars Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles.

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I can help with \_\_\_\_\_

\* E-mail address is required to receive passwords for access to Recall List and CPS Tech Update.  
 All memberships/subscriptions are for calendar year and include *SafetyBeltSafe News*, which qualifies for 1 Continuing Education Unit per year for re-certifying Technicians with subscriber code. \$200 or more automatically includes *Safe Ride News*.  
 \_\_\_ Check here if you are a Certified Technician or Instructor and want information about CEUs for subscribers.

**Check below** if you want to receive the following special subscriptions:

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\$100 minimum: \_\_\_ CPS Tech Update (online access to new instructions since January, 2007)

*Special for \$100 members: Add \$25 and receive Safe Ride News thru 2008 & latest CD of safety seat manufacturers' instructions!*

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**Recalls**

**Teens at Risk from Age 12 On**

Another manufacturer has announced that some infant-only seats could separate from the base in certain collisions. Recalls for the **Combi Centre and Shuttle** (10/19/05 to 12/15/07) are the more recent ones, joining the **Evenflo Discovery** recall (See 1/08 issue). Call 800/543-7734 or go to [www.combi-intl.com](http://www.combi-intl.com) for a retrofit kit.

Both manufacturers state that the seats should be used without the base until modifications are completed. They also assert that the seats pass FMVSS 213 requirements but may fail at higher speeds.

For **Recaro Como or Signo** made before 12/18/07, looped ends of the shoulder harness may become disconnected from the harness connector (metal splitter plate) when a child is placed in or removed from the seat. Call for a kit with two rubber caps to prevent harness loops from slipping off by closing gaps.

**Graco** combination seats--including **CarGo** and **Platinum, Treasured, and Ultra CarGo**, made 1/9/07 to 3/3/08, have a sticker with an incorrect NHTSA phone number. Call 800/345-4109 for a new sticker.

Parents worry about teen drivers. For years, the death rate for child passengers has risen abruptly as they reach their teens. It had been speculated that riding with newly licensed drivers, i.e. their near-peers or peers, was a major contributor.

The research team at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, collaborating with State Farm Insurance, has examined 45,560 crashes with 8-to-17-year old passengers, 9807 of whom perished. As **Flaura Koplín-Winston, MD, PhD**, founder of the Center for Injury Research & Prevention, notes, pre-learner's permit, these youngsters mimic the high fatality rates of teen drivers.

More than half the passengers killed were riding with a driver under 20; 66% were unrestrained; 75%+ died on roads posted at more than 45 mph. Moreover, alcohol use loomed large in 20% of the crashes.

Parents need to know who is driving, under which circumstances before allowing kids to ride with younger drivers, especially toward the lower end of the over-represented age range involved in crashes. In some states, these kinds of studies have stimulated graduated licensing for teens, substituting specific rules for parental judgment alone for the youngest new drivers.

## What's The Most Important Message?

SBS USA stresses four messages when asked to boil down our advocacy for kids.

1. Sit in back until you are learning to drive.
2. Ride rear facing until at least 2 years in a convertible certified to at least 30 lbs.
3. Ride in a safety seat with a full harness and tether as long as possible.
4. Use the 5-Step Test to check for safety belt fit, with or without a booster.

Data-based messages are important. So jolt your audiences out of the 1-year-and 20 lbs. MINIMUM standard for rear facing and the I-can't-wait-until-the-law-ends-safety-seat-use excuse by sharing *why* these choices can make the difference.

Here are a few key pieces of research supporting these simple messages.

**1.** A team of well-known cps researchers, led by B Henery, published "*Car safety seats for children: rear facing for best protection*" at [www.injuryprevention.bmj.com](http://www.injuryprevention.bmj.com). The report is based on data collected on child injury by NHTSA between 1988 and 2003 on children under age 2 riding either rear- or forward-facing in safety seats when in a crash. Forward-facing children were much more likely (75%) to be injured than those rear facing, with special emphasis on the difference when the car was side impacted. It has always been clear that having one's head, neck, and spine supported effectively under crash conditions is a superior form of protection. However, the research puts numbers to the benefits.

**2.** Building on Henery's paper, Drs. Marilyn Bull and Dennis Durbin published "*Rear-Facing Car Safety Seats: Getting the Message Right*" in *Pediatrics* 2008. It calls for pediatricians to help parents understand the huge benefits of riding facing rear until at least age 2 and especially the risks of side impacts which, although less frequent than frontals, are highly lethal. Particularly useful in this commentary is the authors' addressing the need for this counsel at the 4-, 6-, and 9-month visits, when parents are likely to have infants whose heads are too close to the top of the infant-only restraint system and when parents might be tempted to move to a forward-facing-ONLY seat. The need for a convertible seat certified to 30 lbs. or more facing rear also can be tied to the advice that many children will do better later on if they stay in a harness-equipped seat that is labeled for use above 40

lbs. *with* the harness.

Pediatricians can help parents to make the best choices by giving information about the positive outcomes documented in papers and biomechanical analyses.

**3.** Ford Motor Company reports progress in developing a pediatric dummy that can duplicate the injury patterns of young children. A team with expertise in cps from hospitals, companies, and universities developed a pediatric abdominal insert similar to that of a 6-year-old child. By inserting it in a test dummy, ways to prevent the serious injuries now found in this age group can develop.

If more parents and professionals realized how the lap belt cuts through the abdomen when the bone structure has not matured, they would understand better why it is critical to use boosters to position belts properly and even more, why a safety seat with a harness that is designed for higher-weight children is an excellent investment.

The silicon shell insert is layered liquid silicone with LED and optical sensors with silicone fluid surrounding them. The sensors monitor the penetration of the belt. Serious injury often comes from the belt slicing through the child's abdomen, sometimes to the spinal cord *or* from the child's submarining under the belt.

Through testing, it was determined that 70% penetration of the abdomen led to life-threatening injury; 40%, to serious injury, such as perforation of the bowel. Most parents don't visualize such injury nor know that this is the major consequence of not fitting well in the lap section of the shoulder-lap belt.

Developing such test tools is critical. A recent analysis, *Lapbelt Injuries and the Seatbelt Syndrome*, by O. Achildi, and Drs. R. Betz and H. Grewal, all of Philadelphia, indicates that car crashes are the commonest source of pediatric spinal cord injuries in kids under age 20, comprising 20% of the patient group. Missing symptoms of this can lead to serious consequences.

This helps to visualize the outcomes and comprehend the risks, given the difference in injury between use of a shoulder-lap belt with or without a booster is 59%, based on research from studies conducted through Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP).

*SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A.



# Safety Seat Checkup Day

**Saturday, April 26 • 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.\***

\*For a checkup appointment, call 310/222-6860. If you do not have an appointment, there may be a wait of more than one hour or you may be turned away.

11:30 a.m. Welcome Ceremony and Recognition of Notable Guests

## Petersen Automotive Museum

6060 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles 90036 (Wilshire at Fairfax parking lot)



Buckling up is a family affair.

**Safety Seat Checkup Week April 20-26, 2008**

**Sponsors:** California Office of Traffic Safety  
Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A.

**Major Supporter:** *Peace Officers Association of Los Angeles County*

### **FREE SAFETY SEAT CHECKUP**

More than 90% of the car seats we check have one or more errors.

Meet Bucklebear and his friends.

Petersen Museum discount coupons available for families participating in the checkup.

**Help save children's lives with your tax-deductible support.**

**SafetyBeltSafe** U.S.A. Box 553 Altadena, CA 91003 310/222-6860 [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org)  
SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. is the national, non-profit, member-supported organization for child passenger safety.

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*“Spring is a heart full of hope and  
a shoe full of rain.” ... and a freshly  
renewed SBS USA membership!*

**SafetyBeltSafe News**

**March 2008**

## **Congratulations to Kids and Cars!**

## **Question of Law and Safety**

With major support from Consumers Union and Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, Kids and Cars celebrated the new law focusing on preventing deaths and injuries to kids around vehicles not traveling on “official” roads.

The federal government now has deadlines to address three horrific issues: non-crash deaths from backover/frontover incidents where the child was invisible due to vehicle blind zones; from inadvertent rollaways due to gear changes without depressing the brake; and from being caught in automatic-closing power windows. The technologies to address these are available as optional, upgraded, or occasionally standard equipment, meaning the technology is here.

Besides establishing a tracking database for such incidents, the federal government will be required to publicize the problems. Another source of risk is being left, inadvertently, in the vehicle. However, backover incidents are now the leading cause of death in non-traffic incidents, having risen to 474 from 2002-2006 compared with 128 from 1997-2001.

Is it necessary under CA law to buckle up in a moving motorhome? There is no omission of coverage of these “housecars” in buckle up laws because, of course, the laws of dynamic motion are not suspended because the vehicle has beds and tables, not rows of front-facing seats. All occupants must be *properly* buckled up with fines the same as for passenger cars and trucks.

A frequent problem for protecting passengers is that seating positions may not allow use of safety seats because the seating location is side-facing, not a safe way for anyone to ride. Before renting or buying a motorhome for your family, be sure to count usable seating positions for travel.

## **New High-Weight Child Restraint**

## **Boosters Are For Big Kids-When There is a Shoulder-Lap Belt**

**Learning Curve**, now the parent company for Compass, has introduced the First Years True Fit Convertible Car Seat for 5-35 lbs. rear facing, up to 65 lbs. forward facing. It has safety belt lock-offs and a 5-point “no- thread” harness with front adjuster strap.

Don't be surprised to read that even those whose vehicles have lap belts only should provide boosters for kids riding there. There is a lively debate on the subject among various researchers.

However, recent statistical analyses reviewed by Univ. of Michigan Transportation Research Institute indicate there is no good evidence to change our recommendations.

A child on a booster is sitting higher, so his/her head moves farther forward, risking potentially injurious contact with structures in front or to the side when a shoulder belt is not present.

Follow manufacturers' instructions for booster use.