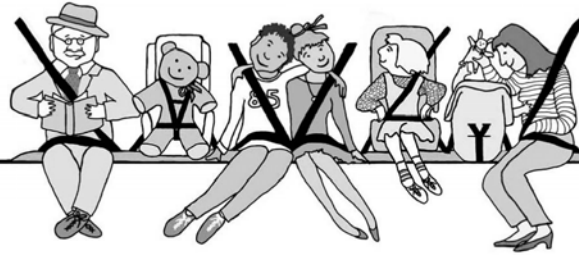


SafetyBeltSafe News

Volume 30, No. 2

March 2009



Safety Seat Checkup Week Follows Special Enforcement Week

The annual focus on protecting children by publicizing both the need to follow the law and to find out if one is making errors in buckling up begins in April. **The Peace Officers Association of Los Angeles County (POALAC)** will be focusing on child-related violations from April 12-18 and invites others to join in. SBS USA invites all readers to promote Safety Seat Checkup Day, at **Petersen Automotive Museum** parking lot, sponsored by **California Office of Traffic Safety (CA OTS)**. [See the flyer, p.6, for details.]

We are seeking checkers, both first timers who take advantage of the 4/14 Educator Workshop in Altadena and Technicians, to serve the families who attend the event from 10 am to 2 pm on Saturday, 4/25.

Besides the opportunity to ensure that their children are riding safely, families will be able to visit, at a reduced cost, the Museum exhibits appealing to all ages. Volunteers will be permitted to tour free after the event concludes.

Each year, SBS USA sends invitations to the California Governor, Legislature, every county, and in Los Angeles County, every city to proclaim Safety Seat Checkup Week and use the opportunity to remind the public of the risks of neglecting this aspect of child protection. Posters, both with and without the 4/25 event listed, are donated by **ColorGraphics** and are free on request to post in public locations.

Each year, we invite those who have been saved by safety seats, belts, and/or helmets to join us for the 11:30 am Ceremony of Recognition. Losing a child is a lifelong sorrow; saving a child's life and health, a joy. Join us in promoting this lifesaving message.

Warning! Babies At Risk

Safety seats reduce the risk of death by 71% in motor vehicle crashes. However, many use infant-only seats to carry children out of vehicles, and too frequently, one sees babies in seats with loose or completely undone harnesses as one passes by.

A newly released study, "Infant Carrier-Related Falls, An Unrecognized Danger," by Drs. Robert Greenberg, R. Bolte & J Schunk of Primary Children's Hospital, Utah, gives one facts to use with parents unknowingly putting their children at risk.

Falls are the #1 cause of injury for children and the primary cause of head trauma. In the study, about 1/3 of the cases were "Other," which included falls from strollers, bouncy seats, etc; however, almost 8% or 62 cases specifically covered infant carriers.

Published in *Pediatric Emergency Care*, 2/09, the data showed 87% of these cases were infants *unbuckled* in their safety seats; only 5% were buckled up. When compared with 741 patients of varied fall mechanisms, the infant-carrier falls led to more intracranial injuries, hospitalizations, and pediatric ICU admissions.

The seriousness of the consequences in the study group, even for infants who fell while being carried and *not* at a great height from the ground, led the authors to recommend 1) CT brain scans for all infant-carrier-fall patients; 2) strict warnings on the safety seats of the risks; and 3) educational campaigns about always buckling up children in carriers and never placing carriers on high surfaces. The importance of this study for child passenger safety (CPS) educators as well as all who provide proactive counseling for expectant, parenting, and care-giving adults is clear.

THANK YOU

- \$7500 ('09 member year)
American Honda Motor Company
- \$1800 - Oregon Statewide
Membership
- \$500 - Britax Child Safety
Graco Children's Products
- \$200 - Family Resource Centers of
Northeast Nevada
- Little Company of Mary Hospital
Medina County Health Department
- SAFE KIDS Central Valley
- SAFE KIDS Cobb County
- \$150 - Safe Ride News Publications
- \$145 - Alexandria CARES

CALENDAR

- * **4/12-18:** Special Enforcement
Week
- * **4/19-25:** Safety Seat Checkup
Week
- * **4/25/09:** Safety Seat Checkup
Day, Petersen Automotive Museum,
Los Angeles, 10 am-2 pm for public
(9 am-3 pm for checkers), 11:30 am:
Ceremony honoring SafetyBelt or
SeatSaved. Sign up at 310/222-6860

CONFERENCES

- * **3/29 - 4/1/09:** LIFESAVERS,
Nashville, TN. For information:
www.lifesaversconference.org.
- * **4/8-10/09:** CA OTS Traffic Safety
Summit, San Francisco. On 4/09,
Kate Quirk of SBS USA will present
the Roll Call Training Project,
funded by CA OTS.
- * **8/29-31:** Kidz in Motion, Fort
Worth, TX

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

- Register at 310/222-6860
- * **3/23:** Hospital Policy Workshop,
12:30 pm to 5:30 pm, Presbyterian
Intercommunity Hosp, Whittier.
Learn to develop or revise policies
and procedures to provide basic CPS
information to patients, as required
by CA law.
Funded by CA Kids' Plates.
- * **4/14:** 8:30 am-5 pm, Altadena
Community Center. Educator
Workshop, sponsored by CA OTS,
Glendora PD, and POALAC. Learn
the latest information in the field. 6
CEUs for Nurses; 3 CEUs for CPS
Techs.

National Youth Traffic Safety Month Coming in May!

Led by National Organizations for Youth Safety coalition, the focus is on teens 13-18 developing community activities to promote safe teen driving, using The Act Out Loud contest, funded by The Allstate Foundation.

Peer education is viewed as a key aspect of changing teen behavior related to vehicle travel. Teen teams across the U.S. submitted proposals in 2/09 for review by 3/9 when 20 were selected to receive \$1000 to enact and document their projects. From 5/11-22, visitors to www.ActOutLoud.org will be able to vote for their favorite team project as many times as they wish to determine which win the top 3 prizes, \$3000-\$10,000.

Any teen team that missed the 2/09 deadline is invited to consider working on a project and posting it at the Web site for a competition for the top 50 teams, each eligible for \$1000 as a prize.

Teens can be great role models for younger children as well as peers. SBS USA invites teens and adults to consider holding 5-Step Test events in communities across the country to reduce injuries among youngsters by 59% while reminding each other how important it is to buckle up correctly.

Nissan Sponsors SafetyBeltSafe Social in Nashville...

...allowing us a chance for networking and relaxation on 3/30 from 4:30 to 6:30 pm, to be held in Delta Island E, for those attending Lifesavers at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center and those living in the vicinity. The informal event is entering its 6th year of giving CPS enthusiasts a special get-together in the midst of the diverse conference. Let us know you are coming before 3/24, and we'll have your name tag waiting for you!

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* E-mail address is required to receive passwords for access to Recall List and CPS Tech Update.
 All memberships/subscriptions include *SafetyBeltSafe News*, which qualifies for 1 Continuing Education Unit per year for re-certifying Technicians with subscriber code. \$200 or more includes *Safe Ride News*.
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 \$50 minimum: ___ Recall Update Service by e-mail ___ Recall Update Service by regular mail (if necessary)
 \$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 2009 & latest CD of safety seat manufacturers' instructions!
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Please mail this form to: *SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.*, Box 553, Altadena, CA 91003

New seats

Combi Coccoro is a seat for infants 5-33 lbs. with a compact design for smaller vehicles. It has a 5-point harness with 4 sets of shoulder strap slots, front adjuster strap, belt lockoffs, and EPS foam lining.

Dorel has changed the labeling for the infant-only seat known as **onBoard** or **SureFit**, which has a 5-point harness and front adjuster strap. It is now certified for 4-35 lbs. without structural changes. A modified shell has been introduced for most **Dorel Alpha Omega** models, and a new harness is being phased in that allows use of the seats with the harness up to 50 lbs. If neither the instruction booklet that came with the seat nor the label is present, assume that the harness may be used only up to 40 lbs.

Graco Infant SafeSeat, an infant-only seat with a 5-point harness, front adjuster strap, and detachable base, is now called **SnugRide 32**; the new model is certified for 5-32 lbs. **Graco** Toddler SafeSeat, a forward-facing seat for 20-40 lbs. with 5-point harness and front adjuster strap, is now called **CozyCline**.

Sunshine Kids Radian XT has a 5-point harness with front adjuster strap and is certified rear facing 5-35 lbs., forward facing up to 80 lbs. It has a steel alloy frame, adjustable reinforced head supports, and energy absorbing foam. It folds flat for travel and can be carried as a backpack.

Recalls

Dorel will provide a replacement harness for Sceneras (Model #22120-22128, 22160, 22162, 93120) made before 3/24/08 if the webbing is damaged from sliding over pointed guides on the bottom of the plastic shell. Call Dorel (800/544-1108) for a replacement harness and instructions for keeping the webbing in the correct position.

Recaro Signo convertibles made 2/1/08 to 9/30/08 may have a defective harness adjuster that allows the front adjuster strap to slip so that the harness is loose on the child. Consumers should test the adjuster by tightening the harness and then trying to loosen it by pulling on the shoulder straps. If it loosens, call 800/873-2276 for a free replacement seat.

Welcome Aboard, Arkansas

Arkansas is poised to join the 26 U.S. states with primary safety belt laws. The state will permit safety belt scofflaws to be ticketed without officers needing to find another violation before pulling over the unbelted occupant. The fine is only \$25; however, the legislative step has the Governor's support and is likely to be enacted quickly.

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SafetyBeltSafe News

March 2009

2009 Updates for Key Technical Resources

Tools for Law Enforcement

Funded by CA Office of Traffic Safety and Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

The 2009 Color Pictorial Guide to Child Restraints has photos of every child restraint ever sold in the U.S. The seats are grouped by type and labeled by manufacturer, model name, and first and last date made.

This collection of color photos makes it easier to identify child restraints inspected at events when model names are missing. The model name is essential to find the correct instructions and check the recall list. There are several ways to use the Pictorial: (1) View online at no charge; (2) Order printouts at \$50 each plus \$17 shipping/handling; (3) **NEW FOR 2009: Color Pictorial Subscription.**

Download the PDF and print a specified number of copies. Order 1-9 for \$30 each; 10-19 for \$25 each; 20-49 for \$20 each; \$1000 for unlimited copies until December 2009 (to be printed and distributed by your agency only).

It's also time to replace your 2007 CD. The 2009 Child Restraint Manufacturer's Instructions CD has 42 additional sets of instructions for new seats and 46 sets of revised instructions. \$10 each; for more than 100, call for details. CEU quiz available.

LATCH Manual Available from Safe Ride News Publications (www.saferidenews.com).

Look for the vivid pink cover and extensive, detailed information on the manufacturers' recommendations for lower anchors, top tethers, and the myriad of variations in the uses that are acceptable. Don't check seats without it! Quiz-takers earn 1 CEU, too.

SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. staff is providing a series of roll call trainings for police departments in Los Angeles County. Some of the key points of the presentation are recognizing dangerous and illegal restraint misuse, determining the correct Vehicle Code Section, and the importance of including detailed information on the ticket to help the officer and prosecutors if the case goes to court, especially if the driver may be under the influence.

California law enforcement agencies may download the presentation outline and reproducible materials for participants at www.carseat.org. We also will provide a supply of citation reminder cards with a description of Vehicle Code Sections for officers to keep in their ticket books. Call 310/222-6860 for a presentation or to order cards.

It is important officers in the field have a basic knowledge of all types of restraint systems. SBS USA learned an officer cited a family for a 45-lb. 5-year-old riding in an integrated booster seat and wearing the shoulder-lap belt. The officer mistakenly believed the built-in booster did not qualify as a "child passenger restraint system" under California law.

However, that particular system is certified by the vehicle manufacturer for use by children 32-60 lbs., based on federal safety standards, as required by California law. Integrated seats are less common than they were a decade ago, so officers without CPS training may not realize they are legal when they are used according to instructions.

Do Tests in Motor Vehicles Reflect Safety Seat Performance Best?

On March 1, 2009, a breaking news story in the *Chicago Tribune* proclaimed National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) had conducted but not released tests of infant-only seats buckled into vehicles that showed serious flaws in their performance. The reporter ferreted out the unnerving results from “thousands of pages of test reports” in 2008 NHTSA files. Britax was quoted as stating they had no knowledge of the tests; Graco, downplaying the test results, stated the safety seat in question was incorrectly attached. By going to Canada, Combi representative Edward Whitaker explained, his company was able to replicate the event and results shown in the in-vehicle tests and subsequently replaced a spring in their products to change the outcome. New Secretary of Transportation Raymond LaHood has ordered a complete re-evaluation of safety seat testing and regulations as a first step toward a resolution.

What are parents, Technicians, educators, and companies to do? Interestingly, more than a year ago, Evenflo ordered a recall for the Discovery as did Combi for the Centre and Shuttle (see SBS USA recall list at www.carseat.org for details). Their actions were clearly based on the testing the newspaper says it just unearthed. (In fact, the Discovery issue was covered by the *New York Times* in March 2008.)

The problem with this controversy is not that extra testing has been done but that the terms of the tests and the context of the results were not released in a timely manner for review and response by all concerned groups. The last time such dramatic results were released publicly (by Consumers Union), parents flooded retailers with rejected seats, although the tests turned out to be flawed.

SBS USA urges NHTSA to conduct their review quickly so parents can be fully informed. Meanwhile, Deborah Stewart, Publisher/Editor of *Safe Ride News* points out that almost all infant-only seats may be used without the base (check instructions to verify). But is there a real-world problem of infant-only seats separating from their bases that has led to injury and death? If so, is it due to poor design, incorrect use, or the severity of the incident?

Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia has compiled the largest collection of consistently analyzed cases of children in crashes over a ten-year period. They report that the chance of injury of an infant properly

restrained in a *correctly secured* rear-facing seat is less than 1%. It is important to consider that infant seats installed without the base are more likely to be installed loosely or incorrectly.

If the NHTSA review indicates improvements to FMVSS 213 are needed, that process should be initiated in a timely manner. However, unless vehicle manufacturers are ordered to test every safety seat in each model as part of *their* certification process, simply stating that seats should be tested in every car model could lead to inordinate delays for improved seats.

Several years ago, NHTSA attempted to test fit each seat in a series of vehicles. The 30,000 results were almost immediately outdated as both new seats and vehicles emerged. Although testing in vehicles has been recommended for many, many years and now occurs as part of *vehicle* crash tests, clearly the costs of producing a new safety seat will be greatly increased if sled tests are not accepted.

Today, physical test modes are often modeled on computers and conducted virtually long before actual tests with real restraints, sleds or vehicles. Modeling, in science and engineering, is an important part of the mix of making products. Moreover, crash tests at 30 mph with a rigid barrier, as required by FMVSS 213, are the equivalent of hitting another car at 60 mph and more severe than more than 95% of real-world crashes.

The crash force of a similar test at 35 mph is about *a third higher*. In addition, the crash pulses in the rear seats of different vehicles vary considerably, meaning seats would have to be tested in all vehicles, a task safety seat companies are not likely to do without large increases in safety seat costs.

Issues related to dangerous interaction between the vehicle and the child restraint, especially when there is separation of the back seat, also need to be addressed. It is often the field experience of products that determines change. When will regulations be written to reduce the number of vehicle front seats that break and fall on occupants of the back seat in rear impacts?

SBS USA will stay actively engaged in the discussion to seek resolution of this headline news report. Thanks to American Honda Motor Co., Barbara Knapp, and our general membership for unrestricted funding which allows us to pursue such suddenly emerging issues.

SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.



Safety Seat Checkup Day

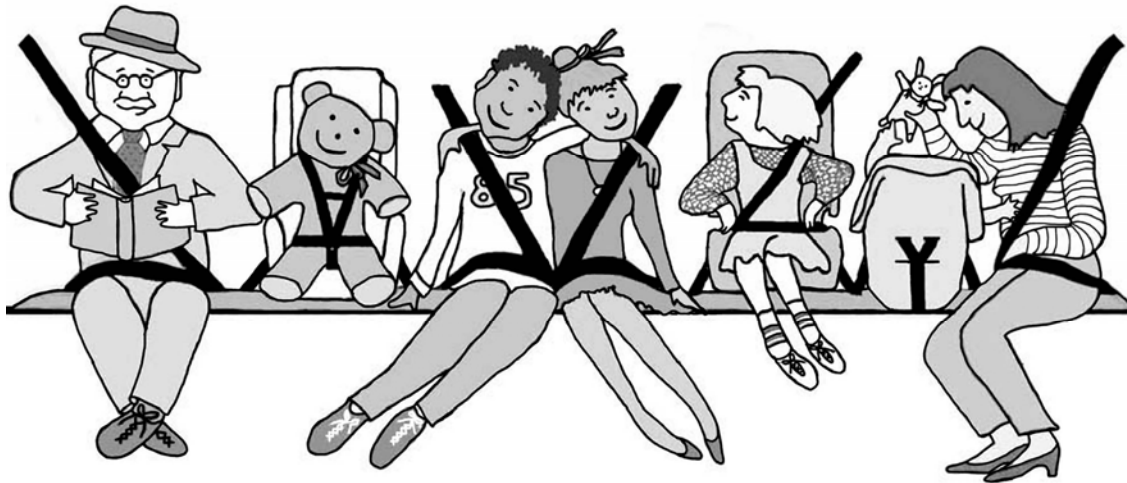
Saturday, April 25 • 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.*

*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 19-25, 2009

Sponsor: California Office of Traffic Safety

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