

# SafetyBeltSafe News

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## ***Important Regulation to Prevent Backover Deaths***

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has published, for comment, a final regulation to address the rising backover death risk for young children and the elderly. Significant vehicle “blind zones” masked victims, leaving 228 killed and 18,000 injured in a year, generally struck in home driveways or parking lots. The proposed final rule, to be completed by 3/11, mandates phasing in rearview cameras across the U.S. new car fleet by 2014, exempting no vehicles under 10,000 lbs.

KidsandCars.org has been very effective in pursuing national laws to require NHTSA to study and regulate on issues relating to vehicle design that threatens children’s lives. First was the regulation for mandatory trunk releases which eliminated deaths of children mistakenly trapped inside. Next was the work on power window activation; now such switches must be lifted, and thus, windows don’t start moving if children kneel on the switch. Currently, in the campaign to reduce the injuries and deaths due to backover crashes, Congressional mandate will require rearview cameras so drivers can see what is behind their vehicles while backing. This new regulation also will reduce property damage from backing, given the significant blind zones behind each vehicle.

Research showed this risk is borne significantly by children under 5 years old and adults beyond age 70. Children under 5 are 7% and those over 70 represent 9% of the U.S. population. Of the backover fatalities, 44% are children under 5, and 33%, those age 70+! Over-representation among the backover injured of those over age 70, compared with their population segment, is striking. All other age groups showed up

in numbers close to their proportion in the population; the elderly, at 18% of those injured, were twice as high. Moreover, 26% of victims were under age 2 which would make warnings and education inappropriate preventive measures for them. Given the data, all passenger vehicles need the equipment to achieve rear visibility. The proposed phase-in period is from 9/1/2012, for 10% of the fleet, to 9/1/2014, for 100% of the new vehicle fleet under 10,000 lbs.

Studying possible visual aids, NHTSA considered mirrors, sensors, and auditory warnings as well as rearview cameras. By allowing drivers to see the human at risk, cameras showed the only significant effect on outcomes. In the NHTSA special case study, it emerged that those at risk were impossible to see with current mandatory equipment because of their height (tiny children) or their having fallen (adults). Looking at the 58 cases in the special study, it seems visibility for at least 20 feet is essential.

As of early 1/2011, Federal Register comments run the gamut of recommended interim technology, concerns about divided attention between camera displays and actual looking out the back window, and contention that personal responsibility, heavy fines or jail terms, and parental care would mitigate the problem. At least one 6’ 3’ bike rider reported being backed over and only able to escape injury by striking the vehicle hard enough to gain the driver’s attention.

The proposed rule is in the Federal Register available for comment by 2/7/2011. Go to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and enter the Docket # NHTSA-2010-0162 to comment.

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***What’s 6700 Pages and Round? See page 4.***

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 Among them are 7 Technician Instructors and 5 Technicians; all are dedicated advocates.

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(For 2011 membership year)

**Charles Cho, CiC Consulting, for harboring our Web site and keeping it current!**

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SAFE KIDS Frederick County  
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### Toyota Tether Program!

The SBS USA/Toyota Motor Sales/Lexus program to help customers obtain tether anchors in pre-2001 vehicles is being extended. To obtain Certificates to have the anchor kit installed in such vehicles, go to [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org) to fill out the form, including vehicle VIN, and submit it with a \$5 donation per anchor to SBS USA by mail, e-mail, or FAX. Forms can be passed out by agencies to likely clients as well.

### Calendar

**Lifesavers 2011, Phoenix, AZ: March 26-29.** Register at [www.lifesaversconference.org](http://www.lifesaversconference.org).

To volunteer or register for SBS USA events, call 310/222-6860.

**Safety Seat Checkup Week: April 10 - 16, 2011**

**Educator Workshop:** 3 CEUs for CPST/CPSTI; 6 CEUs for nurses  
Sponsors: CA OTS/Glendora P D  
**April 1**, 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Altadena, CA

**Safety Seat Checkups:**  
 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for the public  
 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for checkers  
**April 7:** Pomona, CA.  
*Sponsors: Pomona Police Dept and CA Office of Traffic Safety (OTS)*  
**April 16: Safety Seat Checkup Day,** Petersen Automotive Museum, Los Angeles  
*Sponsor: CA OTS*

### Half A Life...

is Darin Strauss' memoir of driving a vehicle which struck a bicyclist on a highway, leaving a schoolmate dead. While the law enforcement officer firmly asserted that Strauss was not at fault, he neither absolved himself nor grieved "appropriately."

On the surface, "normal" for his age and stages of life, he carried the conflict submerged until a stable marriage and approaching fatherhood allowed him to fully feel the shock and the strange distance he felt from everyone, as he finally began to process what happened.

CPS advocates may encounter others in this situation. Strauss' book may stimulate ideas of how to reach out to prevent another life from persistent but hidden despair.

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\* E-mail address is required to receive passwords for access to Recall List and CPS Tech Update.

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## Update on Community-Based 5-Step Test Programs

Two additional CA communities, Pasadena and Palos Verdes, have initiated the first steps toward focus on how long kids need boosters to fit in safety belts. Sharon Lefler, Principal of Daniel Webster Elementary, Pasadena USD, is encouraging full participation by reaching out to families using go-home materials translated into Armenian as well as welcoming classroom and 5-Step Test exercises. In PVUSD, SBS USA President Bonnie Oseas is collaborating with school leaders to present the concepts across the district.

Meanwhile, at the suggestion of John Stubbs, CPSTI and Sierra Madre Rotary Club member, the organization has given SBS USA \$1500 to underwrite boosters for those at risk, a sum that has been matched by the Rotary District 5300. The boosters will be distributed to those in need, particularly in conjunction with the communities involved in this program. The CA Kids' Plates-funded outreach is much appreciated. Let us know if your community wants to get involved.

## New Product

Graco Smart Seat is a convertible/combination seat with a 10-year expiration date, used rear facing 5-40 lbs., up to 65 lbs. facing forward, and from 30-100 lbs. as a booster. Harness use is recommended to 65 lbs. unless the child's shoulders are above the top harness level of the 5-point, no-thread harness that moves along with the 6-position adjustable headrest.

Both the frame of the seat and the detachable base are steel-reinforced. The base is required in harness mode and not permitted for booster use. After the base is installed with LATCH or vehicle belt (lock-off required), the seat can be locked into it in either direction.

Both base and seat have indicators to show if the seat is firmly locked in. The seat angle can be changed during travel. It has five recline positions and a bubble indicator to show the correct angle for rear facing.

Other features are flip-up armrests, sewn-in instruction labels on the cover, and color-coding to match instructions for the 3 stages of use.

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*If you don't see 12/11 on your label, your membership for 2011 is not up-to-date!*

**SafetyBeltSafe News**

**January 2011**

## ***Good News/Bad News on the Motor Vehicle Front***

Motor vehicle injuries and fatalities are *down* significantly. And no longer are they #1 for children under age 5. In fact, the 37,261 persons lost in 2008 were the least since 1961. The peak number, reached in 2005, was 43,510. Contributing factors are not only safety belt laws, making child passenger safety (CPS) a social norm, and reducing acceptance of impaired driving but also the continuing improvements in vehicle safety. However, some clues of what might be killing those not "protected" in the new atmosphere point to lack of primary safety belt laws.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) point to the lower average rates of self-identified "always belted" respondents in a national survey for those living in states with "secondary" belt laws, which allow enforcement only when another violation has been committed. Looking at results of a representative national survey of the non-fatal injuries seen in hospital emergency rooms (ERs), self-reported belt use in another national telephone survey, and the types of safety belt laws in the home states of both the injured and respondents, the CDC report points strongly toward the quality of laws as impacting belt usage.

The decline in non-fatal traffic injuries seen in ERs was 15.6% from 2001 to 2009; self-reported belt use was 85%, up 5.6% since 2002. The variability in use ranged from 59.2% in North Dakota to 93.7% in Oregon, 1 of 7 jurisdictions above 90%. For those with primary laws, allowing enforcement simply due to non-use of belts, the usage rate reported averaged 88.2%, far above 79.2% among other jurisdictions.

Given the population coverage, CDC estimated that more than 7.3 million adults would have

reported usage if all jurisdictions had primary enforcement. Nearly half the self-reported non-users live in secondary enforcement states, an over-representation, since only 35% of the U.S. population lives in those states. Moreover, NHTSA estimates 20% lower belt use in states that cover the front seat only for mandatory belt usage, a legal position that ignores the physics of motion which propels unbuckled rear seat passengers into the front.

Wyoming ranked highest in vehicle deaths, at 24.6 per 100,000 population, and had the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest proportion of single-vehicle crash deaths (70%), following South Dakota (71%). Other states with high risk rates (11 is the national average) were Mississippi, Montana, Arkansas and Oklahoma; below-average risk sites include Washington, DC, Massachusetts, New York, and Connecticut. Hawaii had the highest rate of motorcycle deaths; Washington, DC, of pedestrian deaths.

Reflecting the general finding that the #1 source of occupational death is the motor vehicle, law enforcement officers, also, are at risk on the road. After 2 years of declining deaths on duty, 2010 reflected a major uptick, with motor vehicle incidents taking 73 of the 161 officers dying on duty, continuing a 13-year trend. Fifty were car crashes, 6, motorcycle incidents, and 1 on a bike; 16 more were hit outside their vehicles.

***ANSWER to the Quiz: The 2011 Child Restraint Manufacturers' Instructions on DVD. \$15 for 1, including shipping; for orders of 100 or more, check [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org) for pricing. Also available as print-out: \$260 + shipping.***