

# *SafetyBeltSafe* News

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September 2012

## *Ending the Crash*

Along with developing technology devoted to minimizing occupant injury, much research is focused on stopping crashes before they occur. A fascinating panel, chaired by Nat Beuse of National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), presented data gathered by Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), Consumers Union, a heavy-truck company, a passenger vehicle manufacturer, and an after-market product maker at Lifesavers in June.

Regulatory decisions should be influenced by early-research predictions of the reductions in injury anticipated along with monitoring of outcomes; NHTSA suspects some innovations were not made mandatory so soon as would have been optimal. Anti-lock braking systems remain the basis for many improvements. Electronic stability control, now required, has shown even more reductions than the anticipated 10,000 deaths annually and is an example of how technology, responding to vehicle motion, can change its trajectory, preventing rollover, without driver involvement.

However, discussion of current and future technology focused on the interaction of driver and technology in ways that assist, but do not replace, driver involvement. Warnings cannot give too many “false positives” so they become annoying, leading drivers to turn them off. However, warnings can influence driver behavior for the better, thus reducing overall risk. For example, observations on good truck drivers produced an interesting pattern. Two weeks of a following-too-close system led drivers to seek adjustment to the system; the company made no changes, but the drivers reported later that the “changed” system was much better. Indeed, even sideswipes, rear-end collisions, and fuel consumption

were reduced, as the drivers, responding to the following-too-closely indicator, improved their overall performance all unaware.

Worries that driver complacency would lead to more risky behavior have not been borne out. Studies have included community focus, long-term video camera monitoring, and comparisons of insurance claims related to vehicle features, and none have found increased risky behavior. After-market sales of innovative technology, such as back-up cameras and GPS systems, have helped to bring down costs of technology and hastened its integration into the national fleet. The long lead time to equip the fleet, through regulatory action alone, with new protections is daunting—often at least 20 years for a majority. Thus, in a 2006 magazine picked up at random, ads from Mercedes Benz touted their brake-assist and crash-avoidance technologies as reasons to buy their then-new vehicles.

The tension about mandating new aids early will be key in considering the newest crash-avoidance effort: “v to v.” The system will allow “communication” between vehicles to warn, e.g., of impending red light running or to help manage 4-way stops, to reduce the chance of driver error. If after-market systems can be produced, the time to full coverage of the fleet will fall. Meanwhile, introducing the innovative aids in large-size private and public fleets, as with energy-reducing technology, will contribute to enlarging community protection while bringing down costs for companies.

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### *Thank You:*

\$5000 - Musk Foundation

\$200 - Injury Prevention Center

## Color Pictorial of Safety Seats, 8/12

... is a 38-page collection, sorted by seat type, for the past 10 years, to identify unlabeled seats to enable correct use of the recall list and instructions. Manufacturing date ranges are listed.

Order printed copy (\$50, s/h \$17) or electronic copy for single printing/single use on electronic device (\$30); check with SBS USA for multiple use or one-year subscription details. 310/222-6860.

Renewals and new memberships for 2013 credited from October 1<sup>st</sup> on.

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## Calendar

### ■ Technician Update

6 CEUs for CPST/CPSTI  
 \* **9/19:** 8:30 am-4:30 pm  
 Children's Hosp/L.A. Hollywood  
*Sponsors: CA Office of Traffic  
 Safety (OTS) & Pomona PD.*  
 Register at 310/222-6860:

### ■ Educator Workshop

3 CEUs for CPST/CPSTI;  
 6 CEUs for nurses.  
*Sponsors: CA OTS & Pomona PD.*  
 \* **9/11:** Altadena, CA.  
 8:15 am-4:30 pm

### ■ Safety Seat Checkup:

10 am-2 pm, 9 am-3 pm for checkers.  
 \* **9/22:** Harbor-UCLA Med Center,  
 Torrance, CA. *Sponsors: CA OTS,  
 Pomona PD, and Harbor UCLA  
 Medical Center.* Call 310/222-6860  
 for checkup reservations or to  
 volunteer to check seats.

## Injuries in Small-Overlap Car Crashes

Both IIHS and NHTSA looked at injury data of the vehicles they rated most highly, finding still too many. IIHS noted a major difference in vehicle performance when two vehicles, hitting head on, contacted less than 40% of the vehicle fronts. With the smaller overlap came 24% of injuries because the A-pillar moved into the occupant compartment, and the driver may miss contact with the air bag, causing head injury.

IIHS tested 11 luxury sedans, and only Acura TL and Volvo S60 earned "good" ratings. If this class of vehicle does poorly, observers expect worse results with other vehicles. Based on results from other innovative tests by IIHS, changes might lead to better future results. NHTSA is planning a similar test.

## New CPS Effort

When a parent calls SBS USA, a thorough assessment of how children are traveling is offered, regardless of the initial query of the family. Often one learns that a parent, using an old, used safety seat lacking instructions, is unaware of that risk. At other times, parents call, seeking a way to dispose of an expired or crash-involved seat without burdening the landfill.

To address both needs through CA OTS funding, Technician Kristin Cyprien called 16 recycling companies in Los Angeles County before finding one that would accept safety seats to dismantle for non-landfill disposal! Buoyed by that resource, Kristin located EarthFest LA\*, holding a 9/15 Expo where we were invited to have attendees bring expired, unusable, damaged seats and where EarthFest offered a \$5 discount on tickets to the Jazz Concert held there.

Looking for a way to move the seats to the recycler, SBS USA reached out to Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., already a sponsor of the event, and received help to rent a truck and to use a demo vehicle for displaying correctly used seats. Finally, New Economics for Women, one of two agencies providing LA County Dept of Public Health-funded seat distribution programs, joined in to publicize these resources for those who need help to get new seats.

SBS USA invites Techs to share news of the recycler, TMC Horizon in Pomona, and hopes their example will lead to more companies joining the effort to get expired or crash-involved seats which are no longer useful out of circulation, while responding to parents who want to lighten the load on the environment.  
 \* See [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org) for details.

**You can help SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. save children's lives with your membership or donation.**

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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.  
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■ **A Sample of Kidz in Motion (KIM)**

The August Kidz in Motion Conference in Orlando provided much time for manufacturers of safety seats for cars and buses as well as some of those making basic components of those products to share their newest offerings. Child passenger safety (CPS) advocates from across the U.S. offered technical, regulatory, and program news and discussed hot button topics.

Dr. Kathy Klinich of University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) provided a summary of the excellent paper she, Miriam Manary, and Kathy Weber created to update Weber's classic on CPS best practice. "Crash Protection for Child Passengers: Rationale for Best Practice," in the UMTRI Research Review, 1-3/12, (find link at [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org), What's New), provides in photos, drawings, and words a thorough, clear summation of reasons for the succinct recommendations in the field. By covering the "whys" and citing the many research papers forming the basis for choices, the trio offers advocates ways to convince the public to follow through. The paper also offers brief summaries on some of the special areas of concern, such as school bus, ambulance, and wheelchair travel.

At KIM, Klinich focused on issues involved in using child dummies, given the lack of cadaver research available, to simulate real-world experience. For instance, given the dummy's minimally flexible spine, neck injury risk appears higher than in real-world crashes, and detailed study went into finding a "normal slouch" for dummies. She stressed ideas to optimize the rear seats of vehicles for child travel, exemplified by the struggles for comfort in the deep rear seats in most vehicles, leading children to fail the 5-Step Test for belt fit as soon as they sit back against the seat! For testing reasons, dummies facing rear measure higher neck loads than forward facing, although children really do better rear facing!

UMTRI research also is focused on improving rear seats to protect kids. For instance, a less deep vehicle seat advantages children without harming adults or even affecting rear-facing convertible seats. Padding regulations currently are aimed at areas above window level, but children may strike lower areas. Perhaps the biggest reported change is that the CDC no longer lists motor vehicle crash deaths as #1 for those 1-4 years old as, in the past 10 years, they have fallen 41%. We must maintain the success and expand it to those 5 to 14!

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**SafetyBeltSafe News**

**September 2012**

## **Safety Seats Introduced and Modified**

■ New to the U.S. market is **Kiddy**, a company very familiar in Europe, introducing the KiddyWorldPlus, a combination seat listed for 22-40 lbs., using a snug shield only with the safety belt or LATCH attachment wrapped over it, and then as a booster with adjustable headrest and side impact protection for 40-110 lbs. with lap-shoulder belt. Kiddy CruiserFix, booster for 33-100 lbs, has Kiddy Shock Absorber, deforming crumple zone material, on both sides of the shell to absorb impact, adjustable height, width, and seat length, and lower LATCH attachments.

■ **Britax** replaced current convertibles with the G3 series of Marathon, Boulevard, Pavilion, and Advocate with the buckle moved farther forward for easier access. Safe cell technology has been added into the HUGS pads for all but the Marathon. The Pavilion and Advocate also feature the Click and Safe Snug Harness indicator. All cover 5 to 40 lbs. rear facing, to 70 lbs. forward, and are usable with Ford inflatable rear-seat belt.

■ **BubbleBum** booster can be used from 40 to 100 lbs. on a retroactive basis and with the Ford inflatable safety belt *without* the shoulder belt adjuster.

■ **Graco** has added Safety Surround to Highback TurboBooster (30-100 lbs with back, 40-100 lbs. without it) and My Ride 65, which now has an infant insert to start at 4 lbs. ColorZ version of the backless TurboBooster, 40-100 lbs., may be used without a seat pad; its feature is that kids can choose among 14 different pads to personalize it.

■ **Merritt Manufacturing** ([www.eztether.com](http://www.eztether.com)) has introduced and modified elements of the Hope Car Bed, listed with a 10-year plastic lifetime and replaceable interior components, for children 4.5 lbs.-35 lbs. It takes 2 seating positions, using 2 safety belts. It may be leveled with a leveling wedge and also a pair of leveling straps to attach to the front seat frame. The bed comes with 2 restraint bags for babies over and under 10 lbs. and a 3-point harness for 10 lb. plus babies; a restraint bag with cut-outs to match cutouts in the shell is available for spica-casted infants. A cummerbund holds the child in place.

If medically permitted, additional features are an incline wedge to have the head higher than the feet, methods for restraining infants prone and side-lying, and attachments for medical tubes. Merritt has additional products soon ready for sale to reduce risk for those with emotional and/or physical challenges. Already the EZ Guard Buckle is available for the Roosevelt forward-facing seat for 35-115 lb. youngsters; it can be released by a caregiver sliding a thumb under the guard to press the button.

■ **Orbit Baby Update:** Infant G2 can be fitted with a free Low-Birth-Weight Kit, including an under-cover foam pad for better harness fit, a smaller chest clip, and side wings to attach to the cover for more support for 4 to 11 lb. infants. Toddler G2 uniquely fits on a stroller and is certified from 15-35 rear facing, to 65 lbs. facing forward. Covers are certified for non-bromide fire retardant materials. For quick access to instructions, SmartPhone users can use QR code on the seat label.