

# SafetyBeltSafe News

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November 2013



## ■ Lawsuit Filed to Force NHTSA Action

The U.S. Congress completed work on a law in 2008 instructing National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to issue rulemaking by 2011 to prevent backover deaths, especially of children under age 5, caused by lack of driver visibility of large areas behind their vehicles. (See *SBS News*, 1/11, for details; 3/12 for follow-up story.) Sadly, this headline marks yet another postponement, this time to 2015, of action to require backup cameras in all vehicles to prevent this deadly situation. Usually this involves a relative killing or seriously injuring a youngster, but the second largest group of victims are those over age 70 who fall and cannot rise in time for the driver to perceive their presence.

Led by Public Citizen lawyers, the suit to force action was filed by two New York parents who backed over their young children, seriously injuring one and killing the other. Consumers Union, Advocates for Highway & Auto Safety, and KidsandCars are engaged in the suit. The group reported that based on NHTSA estimates, between 237 and 280 deaths and thousands of injuries have occurred since the unmet 2011 deadline with between 118-140 preventable deaths expected even if the deadline isn't moved again. Ironically, at least half of vehicles now have backup cameras; it's those who drive cheaper cars who miss this feature.

NHTSA conducted detailed research, which, they announced in 2011, showed that only backup cameras affected driver behavior. Despite warning bells or other indicators, if the driver could not see the "obstacle," most continued backing up.

To demonstrate the horror, recently, a 6 year old from San Bernardino County, California, was backed over in her grandparents' driveway by her aunt although her grandmother and mother exited the aunt's Jeep with her. The child died at a nearby hospital. One imagines the happiness of 3 generations out together, ending with the loss of the youngest.

NHTSA has decided to include presence of a backup camera as a positive factor in the safety rating of vehicles under their New Car Assessment Program, dropping electronic stability control, now a mandatory feature. But getting vehicle manufacturers to respond to such a system isn't the same as mandating it.

## ■ Plans for 2014!

Thanks to Pomona Police Department and California Office of Traffic Safety (CA OTS), *SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A. will be contributing technical and program information for Californians through the Safe Ride Helpline. In addition, training sessions, safety seat checkups, 5-Step Test education and events, and special in-services for pediatricians will be offered. Finally, we will be developing a network for improving resources for kids with special transport needs.

We plan to hold a Certification training in the spring. SAFE and GREEN needs further development. We are eager to share our assessment forms to help donors (and possible recipients) evaluate potential hand-me-down safety seats to find the unusable among them. Would you like to partner with us, or perhaps engage a speaker for any of these aspects of child passenger safety (CPS)?

*SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A. is eager for suggestions of topics to cover in a planned Technical Update for 2014. We have our own ideas but would welcome your input to [stombrello@carseat.org](mailto:stombrello@carseat.org).

## ■ Surveys, surveys:

Share your thoughts about special needs resources at Los Angeles County area facilities. The surveys can be downloaded at [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org) and sent to us to catalog what is needed and available.

**Law enforcement officers** are invited to share ideas to understand the big dip in citations for CPS violations, reflected in funding levels for safety seat distribution programs and in numbers of families referred to violator classes after receiving reduced fines. Send your e-mail to receive a survey form.

*SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A.

Office: 1124 W. Carson St.

LA BioMed,  
Building B-1 West  
Torrance, CA 90502

(310)222-6860 - English

(310)222-6862 - Spanish

(800)745-SAFE

(800)747-SANO

FAX: (310)222-6862

Web site: [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org)

Mail: Box 553

Altadena, CA 91003

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Stephanie M. Tombrello, LCSW,  
CPSTI

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## ■ Calendar

### TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES:

**3/7/14:** 8:15 am - 4:30 pm.

Educator Workshop for newcomers and Technicians. Altadena, CA.

Sponsors: CA OTS and Pomona Police Department.

**3/11-12/14:** Special Needs

Workshop for CPS Technicians.

Details to be announced.

Interested in Certification Training in CPS? Submit your name to [i0680@hotmail.com](mailto:i0680@hotmail.com) for personal notice of SBS USA training dates.

### Safety Seat Checkup Week 2014

includes Safety Seat Checkup Day

**4/5/14:** Petersen Automotive

Museum, Los Angeles, 10 am to 2 pm for families, 9 am to 3 pm for checkers. Register: 310/222-6860

### 2014 CONFERENCES:

**4/14-15:** Injury Prevention

Symposium, Los Angeles:  
Coordinated by Injury Prevention Alliance of L A County

(IPALAC). Early registration rate ends 1/17: go to

[CHLA.org/IPALAC](http://CHLA.org/IPALAC)

**4/27-29:** Lifesavers, national highway safety meeting, Nashville, TN. Visit SBS USA exhibit. Early registration ends 1/24. For details and registration:

[www.lifesaversconference.org](http://www.lifesaversconference.org).

## ■ Thanks for 2014 to:

\$1000: Car-Seat.org/Darren Qunell

\$500: Vermont Dept of Health

\$300: Diane and Michael Poryes

\$250: Karen Proctor, RN, PNP

\$200: New Economics for Women

Pomona Police Department

St Vincent Infirmary

San Luis Obispo Department  
of Public Health

## ■ Recalls Announced

### Dorel Juvenile Group

announced labeling errors for Alpha Omega Elite; Deluxe 3 in 1; Complete Air LX (CC050), and Complete Air SE (CC051) which might lead users to put the safety belt through incorrect path. Call 877/675-2355 for a kit with modified labels and installation instructions for models made from 7/20/10 to 5/18/11.

The SBS USA recall list was updated on 9/17/13 with new seats, a replacement part for Graco seats (see 9/13 issue), and the recall.

In 10/13, **Orbit Baby** announced some StrongArm Knobs in G2 bases either detach or spin without tightening the base. Call 877/672-2229 for a repair kit for bases made 3/20-7/20/13. Use the safety seat without a base until repaired.

## ■ Wild Ride Turns Deadly

Mystified drivers called 911 in Phoenix as they saw a car moving erratically at 10:15 pm. The 8-year-old driver struck a fence and crashed, killing his little sister.

Kids do what they see adults do, and sitting in an adult's lap in front of the steering wheel seems like a game. SBS USA refuses to let families sit in the front seat with children at safety seat checkups because mimicking parents' behavior is typical and can lead to these sad endings.

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

GROUP SUBSCRIPTION:	\$500 Major Corp.	\$200 Hospital	\$100 Small Bus./Prof Grp	\$50 Community Org.
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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 include *SafetyBeltSafe News*, which qualifies for 1 Continuing Education Unit per year for re-certifying Technicians and Instructors with subscriber code. \$200 or more 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:

\$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 December, 2012)

*For \$100 members: Add \$35 and receive Safe Ride News thru 2014 & current DVD of safety seat manufacturers' instructions!*

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**■ Status Report, free!**

Did you know that you can subscribe free to *Status Report*, the glossy Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) newsletter? By mail or online, it summarizes key research affecting safety on the road. The annual booster analysis in the 11/7 issue generated many mass media stories. Since the 2008 IIHS study of booster fit for kids, manufacturers strive to achieve Best Fit or Good Fit ratings for their combination seats as boosters and both highback and backless booster modes. The 2013 ratings of 31 new products show 19 Best Fit and one Good Fit with another 11 rated as “Check Fit” since they don’t position the belt correctly on the test dummy, a 52 lb. 6 year old, in all vehicle configurations. Overall, including previously rated seats still on the market, there are 58 Best and 5 Good Fit models ranging from \$18 to \$300.

The meticulous testing focuses on key features any parent or child can replicate with the 5-Step Test\* not only to figure out if a booster is needed but also if the booster in hand is suitable: does the lap belt rest flat on the tops of the thighs and the shoulder belt center on the shoulder? Among industry changes to achieve better fit is the move to attach the shoulder belt adjuster for backless boosters to the center rear of the seat, rather than on either side where it often allowed the shoulder belt to slip off.

A change in the armrest design resulted in a surprise downgrade to Check Fit status for Britax combination seats. They will be revised in 1/14. Britax points out their combo seats, Pioneer 70, Pinnacle and Frontier 90, are meant for use with a full harness to 70-90 lbs. Should a smaller child be in booster mode and not properly fitted, the Secure Guard (a part of the Parkway SG and SGL models) can be obtained to prevent lap-belt submarining.

Boosters are fit-tested in both highback and backless modes and may receive different ratings in each. However, the two not recommended models, on the market since 2009, Dorel Safety 1<sup>st</sup> All-in-One and Alpha Omega Elite, have poor shoulder and lap belt fit as boosters in all 4 vehicle configurations tested.

Mass media comments included surprise that boosters might be used to age 12; SBS USA 5-Step Testing shows less than 50% of 10 and 11 year olds “pass”; age 8 is not the ideal time to stop booster use.

\* *For 5-Step Test details, visit [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org).*

SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.  
P.O. Box 553  
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**SafetyBeltSafe News**

**November 2013**

## ■ New Seats

**Baby Trend** introduced the Hybrid 3-in-1, 22-50 lbs. with harness, 40-100 lbs. in backless booster mode, 30-100 lbs. in high back mode. Safety belt or LATCH belt routing depends on whether or not tether is used. Backless booster expires after 9 years; harness and removable back, after 6.

**Britax** introduced three new seats – the Parkway SG 2013 and the Parkway SGL 2013. They're the same as previous models but with additional side impact protection. SG stands for SecureGuard, the lap belt positioner, and L stands for LATCH-equipped. Also new is the Pioneer 70, a combination seat, certified for 25-70 lbs. with harness and 40-110 lbs. in booster mode.

**Dorel Juvenile Group** continues to add their Air Protect technology to more products; the air-filled head protection reduces impact as the child compresses the air-filled areas. Safety 1st Complete Air 70 is certified for 4-40 lbs. facing rear, 22-70, facing forward, has a 5-position headrest, 3-position crotch strap; a hinged plastic foot adjusts the angle.

Products labeled Air Protect **Plus**, signify production with hexagonal cellular material, like that used to protect Indy vehicle racers. Examples are convertible Safety 1<sup>st</sup> Advance 70 Air Plus and convertible/combo seat Safety 1<sup>st</sup> Elite Air 80 Plus. Both feature a 10-position headrest, 3-position crotch strap, 4-position recline with only most upright used facing front, dual level lines, and are certified for 5-40 lbs. rear facing. The Advance covers kids 22-70 lbs. forward facing, and the Elite, 22-80 lbs. forward facing and 40-100 lbs. in booster mode.

Dorel Incognito is a backless booster for children who weigh 60-120 lbs. The shoulder portion of the safety belt is not routed through the belt guides. There is no shoulder belt adjuster strap.

The Dorel Maxi-Cosi Mico AP/NXT is a rear-facing seat for 5-22 lbs. It has an adjustable base, four sets of harness slots, and adjustable crotch strap. The Maxi-Cosi Pria 70 without the Tiny Fit insert is available now, starting at 9-40 lbs. rear facing, 22-70 forward facing. (See 9/11 *SBS News* for Tiny Fit version.) Maxi Cosi RodiFix is a highback booster with a non-removable back. It accommodates kids 30-120 lbs. and is equipped with rigid LATCH and side wings that expand when the headrest is raised.

The new version of **Evenflo** Right Fit, (a.k.a. the Big Kid), is a highback booster with a removable back. There are 3 headrest positions and 4 backrest positions, serving kids 30-110 lbs. in highback mode, and from 40-110 lbs. in backless mode.

**Graco** introduced the SnugRide Click Connect 30, a rear-facing-only seat certified from 4-30 lbs., with an adjustable base.

**Nuna** Pipa, a rear-facing-only seat for 4-32 lbs., may be installed with both LATCH and vehicle belt concurrently, has rigid LATCH connectors, bubble level indicator, and lock-off in the base, an optional load leg, and 7-year expiration date.

**Tomy** The First Years True Fit SI C680 convertible is certified facing rear from 5 to 22 lbs. without the detachable headrest, 5-35 lbs. with the headrest, and 23-65 lbs. facing front with 2 sets of loops on harness straps, 4 sets of harness slots, 2 crotch strap positions, an anti-rebound foot, and 2 recline angles for rear facing; one, for forward facing.

**UPPAbaby** Mesa accommodates children 4-35 lbs. with a no-rethread harness. The adjustable base (*not* certified for use on aircraft) has a lock-off and may not be installed with an inflatable safety belt. The self-tightening LATCH connectors have an indicator that shows green when the seat is correctly installed.

## ■ KIM Conference: Examples Educate and Inspire

Kidz in Motion, the conference held August 27 - 29 in Albuquerque, NM, focused on CPS from many angles-- from detailed technical reports to ways to impact social norms-- and brought advocates together for networking.

Two presentations illustrate the diversity and confluence of the program. Dave Sander, Project Engineering Manager with Evenflo and CPSTI, divulged the multiple factors in the 3-stage development of a safety seat from the initial concept to retail. From inception, designers must adhere to FMVSS 208, 213, 225, and 302, each affecting various aspects, including crashworthiness, belt use, harness width, flame resistance, and LATCH measurements. Moreover, other rules from Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association, ASTM International, Consumer Product Safety Commission, and the states of California and Washington must be met. The results from an in-depth study of child proportions from U.S. Centers for Disease Control as well as the sizes of anthropometric dummies used for testing are key factors. Car show visits reveal the latest vehicle proportions. Studying customer feedback and returns and participating in safety seat checkups help, too. Each company has standards for its "branding" plus internal quality controls.

The next phase of industrial design includes heavy use of computer-aided design (CAD), enabling engineers to see front and rear profiles of the product and eventually, 3-D images. Computer-simulated crash tests showing areas of concern in the design occur long before physical prototypes are "crashed". Mold flow analysis precedes rapid prototyping of a physical model for engineers not directly involved to critique followed by developing the manufacturing tools and producing "first shots" to be crash-tested.

Once the product passes all of the tests, the design engineer hands the project to the plant staff. For final results, the plant leadership must map the plan for putting the product together, considering worker safety and ergonomics and the "line rate" for each step of construction, from label adhesion to the final check of each component, down to each screw.

The plenary session, presented by Ben Hoffman, MD, pediatrician, OR Health and Science University, was Confessions of a Car Seat Junkie, elucidating his 10 Rules for Community Advocacy, the inspiring report of his experience in Gallup, NM, in changing

safety seat use rates where 45% of children, of whom a third each were white, Latino, and Native American, lived in poverty. To change the 29% usage rate in 1998, Hoffman embarked on community organization, learning along the way.

Among his most important points is to follow up one's passion or anger with defining a baseline for the desired outcome, gathering both national and local data. Thus, in 12/98 at the Wal-Mart, the most popular site, he observed 390 kids in 324 vehicles to establish the baseline rate. Third, he scoured research to find out which principles showed significant, durable behavioral effect, from changing laws, educating, providing incentives, etc. Look for those who have had impacts to be "team members" or partners, thus incorporating the health priorities of the community.

Finding out whom one needs to know to impact change means reaching out to the "dreamers," community activists, the doers, and even the opponents who might see a new program impinging on their "turf." Once a starting team is assembled, it is key to determine the mission, vision, goals, and objectives of the Plan to agree on the core values. One example was that local officers issued 1000 citations, but 80% were dismissed for lack of officers available to testify in court. To engage the EMS community, the team "bartered" help with the fire prevention programs to obtain buy-in for CPS.

By training together as CPS Technicians, the local "team" bonded and drew together the Wal-Mart manager to distribute coupons, the Rotarian who was able to broadcast public service announcements on a regular basis in 3 languages, and other Techs as frequent checkups were offered. The team also gathered follow-up data, allowing them to chart the increase to 63% usage. Finally, Hoffman warned of complacency, of forgetting that maintenance is crucial to keep the gains made.

### ■ Breaking News!

American Honda/Acura has updated its policy for use of LATCH bars and tether anchors and for both factory-installed and retrofitted tether anchors with safety belt use to 65 lbs. minus the weight of the safety seat.

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Program Consultant

# SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.

1124 West Carson Street, LA BioMed, Building B-1 West, Torrance, CA 90502

Mailing address: P. O. Box 553, Altadena, CA 91003 www.carseat.org

(310) 222-6860 (800) 745-SAFE Spanish: (800) 747-SANO FAX (310) 222-6862

To: Our Valued Readers

From: Bonnie Oseas, President, Board of Directors

2013 has been a year of opportunity and accomplishment, but the continuing need to share technical and motivational information with both professionals and the public shapes our 2014 agenda.

At a national level, SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. awaits word on our petition with valued peers to improve the LATCH situation. In California, we are pleased to continue to provide bimonthly Technical Teleconferences for Technicians, a chance to summarize new research, new product, and new opportunities, and to pursue a vigorous project with statewide and local services, funded by California Office of Traffic Safety.

The need for recycling unusable seats for materials reuse, not landfill clogging, is underlined daily. We plan to focus on teaching families and professionals how to assess used safety seats so fewer inappropriate ones are passed along.

To serve our varied readers, we have continued our tiered levels of participation as subscribers or members so you can choose the set of services most appropriate for your situation. Every member can qualify for a Continuing Education Unit for Technicians for reading *SafetyBeltSafe News*. Those at the \$50 level also receive a code to download our Recall List, the most comprehensive in the U.S. At \$100, we add a code to reach our special Web page with all of the new instructions added throughout the year. At \$200, members add on the latest DVD of Manufacturers' Instructions, *Safe Ride News*, 100 free brochures, and, to FOUR additional locations, copies of *SafetyBeltSafe News*. However, working with *Safe Ride News*, we are offering a Special Package for Technicians at the \$100 level to receive the DVD and *Safe Ride News* for just an additional \$35. All renewals expire on December 31, 2014, so don't miss a day. Help us continue our campaign to protect every child on the road.

Join our FACEBOOK friends for brief updates!

And invite at least one of your friends—perhaps your whole Friends list—to join you in supporting SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. as members. We would welcome increased support—which helps us reach our goal of zero kids lost in survivable car crashes.

*The national non-profit organization dedicated to child passenger safety since 1980*