

# SafetyBeltSafe News

Volume 35, No. 2

March 2014



## ■ Reminders for Caregivers

Horrific tragedies focus on risky behaviors, sometimes unsuspected. A 39-year-old Virginia mother of three was killed by a dump truck as she stood outside the back seat of her van to remove a child on a side road near school. It may be inconvenient to enter from the passenger side but it is much safer.

Reports about a tragic Utah incident in 2006 in which a 15-month old died while sleeping in her safety seat in a caregiver's bedroom and in 2009, of a colicky Canadian infant lost while sleeping in his safety seat placed in his crib personify the data collected in New Zealand about 9 infants who stopped breathing while sleeping in safety seats *not* installed in vehicles. Their heads fell forward, obstructing the airway. These appear to have been suffocation incidents, not strangulations.

The New Zealand study, *Apparently Life Threatening Events in Infant Car Safety Seats*, by Shirley Tomkin, MD et al in the British Medical Journal, 12/06, noted all were under 6 months, and 5 had parents who smoked, which is a factor in breathing issues. The infants were monitored going forward; none exhibited a 2<sup>nd</sup> incident over the next year. The strong recommendation is to avoid extended sleep in semi-reclined safety seats. The Canadian Pediatric Society recommends no more than an hour without arousal.

A third issue is harnessing children wearing bulky snowsuits or coats in safety seats. A Maine infant was hurled 25 ft. from the crash site, fortunately into deep snow, from the harness of his allegedly buckled-in rear-facing safety seat which also flew from the vehicle. Unless the child was simply placed on top of the buckled-up harness, it seems likely that it wasn't snugly on the child. Hospitalized with a skull fracture, the 6 month old was found by the other vehicle driver who had two uninjured children in her vehicle.

## ■ Coming Very Soon:

**Safety Seat Checkup Week, 3/30-4/5/14.**

SBS USA offers posters, donated by ColorGraphics, free to alert communities about child passenger safety (CPS). Those for use in the Los Angeles area feature Safety Seat Checkup Day, on April 5, 10 am-2 pm, at Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles; the other posters simply list the Week itself. We encourage cities and counties to proclaim the Week to raise awareness; suggested formats are available.

Checkers and families wanting safety seats checked are invited to register at 310/222-6860. Free or reduced-cost museum visits are included along with the chance to meet Bucklebear. The friendly bear is a welcome distraction for kids whose safety seats are under scrutiny. Sponsored by California Office of Traffic Safety (CA OTS) and Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., past events have shown as much as 90% incorrect use.

We invite those who were saved by a safety seat, belt, or helmet to join us at 11:30 am to share their experiences in the recognition ceremony. Technician Instructors will be on hand to sign off recertifying Technicians. Lunch for checkers and volunteers will be provided.

To reduce the incidence of injuries, Peace Officers Association of Los Angeles County will focus on citing those who put children at risk in cars during Special Enforcement Week, 3/23-29. Let us know if your agency will participate! Request citation reminder cards for every officer in the field and plan for a roll call training by SBS USA for your agency.

■ **RECALL**

Last September, SBS USA added a replacement buckle notice for Graco safety seats to our recall and replacement part list. Graco is recalling buckles that stick, despite cleaning with warm water. The recall covers 14 models made between 2009 and Sept. 2013.

The models include Argos 70 and Elite; Classic Ride 50; ComfortSport; Cozy Cline; Head Wise 70; My Ride 65, 70, 65 with Safety Surround; My Size 70; Nautilus 3-in-1, Elite; Ready Ride, Smart Seat.

Call 800/345-4109 or apply online for the replacement buckle.

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■ **Calendar**

**TRAINING OPPORTUNITY:**  
 Register at: [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org) or  
 310/222-6862 (fax).

\* **4/2-5:** Certification Training,  
 Pomona, CA.

Submit application form to  
 J Stubbs, [i0680@hotmail.com](mailto:i0680@hotmail.com).

**SAFETY SEAT CHECKUP**

Sponsored by CA OTS, TMS  
 USA, and Pomona PD:

10 am-2 pm for public;

9 am-3 pm for checkers

Register: 310/222-6860

\* **4/5:** Petersen Automotive  
 Museum, Los Angeles, CA

**2014 CONFERENCES:**

\* **4/14-15:** Injury Prevention  
 Symposium. CA Endowment, Los  
 Angeles 90012

**4/13:** Pre-conference Technical  
 Update in CPS. Coordinated by  
 SBS USA. For details of hours,  
 location, & costs, visit & register:  
[www.chla.org/IPALAC](http://www.chla.org/IPALAC).

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

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

\* **8/26-28:** Kidz in Motion  
 Conference, Albuquerque, NM  
 with 8/25 preconference. To  
 register: [www.kidzinmotion.org](http://www.kidzinmotion.org).

■ **Tech Corner:**

General Motors introduced a  
 dynamic locking latchplate *usually*  
 in vehicle front seating locations.  
 It tightens the belt on the pelvis  
 when loaded in a crash to reduce  
 leg injury.

It is *not* suitable to hold a safety  
 seat in place for stability in  
 ordinary driving.

■ **Thank You to:**

**\$20,000:** Toyota Motor Sales,  
 U.S.A. (TMS USA)

Thanks to Program Sponsor  
 Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. as the  
 \$20,000 gift will enable SBS USA  
 to reach out to the agencies serving  
 refugees arriving in Los Angeles  
 County with tips on CPS and access  
 to brochures in 11 languages.

Versions of *Keep Your Children  
 Safe* in Armenian, Farsi, Arabic,  
 and Spanish should be of special  
 use as the three largest groups  
 coming to Los Angeles County hail  
 from Iran, Iraq, and Cuba.

The gift continues support for  
 Safe Ride Helpline services outside  
 California and pursuit of SAFE and  
 GREEN recycling goals.

**\$500:** Graco Children's Products

**\$400:** Clarkstown Police Dept.

**\$200:**

Avera St. Anthony's Hospital  
 Children's Hospital of the  
 King's Daughters  
 Lane Fire Authority  
 Nationwide Children's Hospital

■ **Misuse Pictured by  
 U S Air Force**

National Association of Social  
 Workers distributes a newspaper to  
 professionals in the field. The  
 January issue contained a full-page  
 ad from the United States Air Force  
 to attract social workers by showing  
 a "worker" smiling at an infant in a  
 safety seat.

Either the seat was European or  
 incorrectly used as the harness had  
 no retainer clip and very long  
 harness covers!

NHTSA, Come to their aid!

**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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 SPECIAL GIFT:              \$5,000 Benefactor      \$2,500 Patron      \$1,000 Sustaining      Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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 Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail\* \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: Cell (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Work (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

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, 2013)

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

Payment: Check/Money Order (enclosed) \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card (Visa / MC / Discover / Amex) # \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code (on front or back) \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Exp \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

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*Federal Tax ID #95-3676040*

■ **Safety Seat Update**

The Britax 70 G3 seats (Advocate, Boulevard, Marathon, and Pavilion) were discontinued in December, 2013, and replaced by seats of the same names (minus the G3) certified to 65 lbs. forward facing. Weight limits are 5-40 lbs. rear-facing and 20-65 lbs. forward-facing. Each has an infant insert that must be used when a child, 22 lbs. or less, is facing rear but must *not* be used forward facing or for those over 22 lbs.

■ **New Training Curriculum:**

Released this winter, the new National CPS Technician training curriculum stresses key concepts, leaving new Technicians to seek deeper knowledge from National CPS Board resources online or from peers. Designed for a 3-day format, including a checkup, the curriculum will be honed by feedback from experienced Instructors.

SBS USA recommends both a preliminary workshop and checkup experience before taking the course and significant mentoring by experienced CPSTs afterwards. The CPS Board offers <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CurricFeedback> to report concerns.

SBS USA is holding a class 4/2-5/14. *See Calendar, pg 2.*

■ **Deadline Approaching!**

The deadline for Comment on Proposed Side-Impact Testing of Safety Seats is April 28. An overview of the proposed regulation appeared in our January issue; however, Denise Donaldson, Safe Ride News Publications, has pointed out that, despite low use of top tether straps, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) had not included testing forward-facing seats without the tether attached, despite their estimate that 30%\* do not use them and other research results which put their use even lower.

NHTSA has requested input on this issue as well as on restricting side-impact testing to the seats attached with lower anchors, not safety belts. Their preliminary testing indicates that method of attachment had negligible effect on performance in this test. To comment: <http://www.regulations.gov> and enter NHTSA-2014-0012. (\*National Child Restraint Use Special Study. DOTHS811679)

SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.  
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Altadena, California 91003

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child passenger safety  
since 1980*

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**SafetyBeltSafe News**

**March 2014**

## ■ LATCH: Proposed Changes

On 2/27/14, NHTSA released Docket #NHTSA-2014-0026 in response to petitions\* for reconsideration of the Final Rule of 2/27/12 concerning labeling of safety seats equipped with lower anchors. All changes were denied except for modification of the labeling format, which now incorporates a 5-lb. range for child weights for installation with lower anchors.

Initially, each seat was to have a specific top child weight, based on the exact difference between seat weight and 65 lbs. NHTSA has evaluated Alisa Baer, MD's contention that this introduces a degree of exactitude that will worry users and Technicians and found it safe to have a range of 5 lbs. Thus, if the difference between a 19-lb. seat and 65 total lbs. is 46 lbs., the seat manufacturer could round up to 50 lbs. for the child weight; NHTSA sees no risk of failure, although the total weight could be 69 lbs., not 65 lbs. for seats forward facing.

To use the range-formula for seats in rear-facing mode, the difference will be based on 60 lbs. tops since, without tether installation, the full force will be placed on the lower anchors. Manufacturers have until 2/27/15 to put this information on the diagram(s) of LATCH installation on the safety seat; in the interim, they may use the original label configuration from 2012 which requires a precise child weight.

From a practical standpoint, NHTSA states no "infant carriers" (i.e. rear-facing-only seats) are heavy enough to exceed 65 lbs. with a child of the stated top weight so they will not require labels. However, there is concern about overloading lower anchors for 3-in-1 and convertible seats in the rear-facing position; thus, using the 5-lb. interval system, the top weight of child and seat is 60 lbs.

The regulation is not retroactive; however, many auto companies already have printed the 65-lb.-total rule in their manuals so all will need to take care to check both. SBS USA has listed safety seat weights on the Summary Sheets in the '14 DVD of Child Restraint Manufacturers' Instructions to assist Technicians.

CPS advocate petitioners asked for data on LATCH bar failures; although NHTSA asserts it didn't need to show examples as they were trying to prevent such occurrences, they did find a failure in a Transport Canada test. The inner bar holding a tethered Dorel Apex 65 with a 77-lb. test dummy (total 90 lbs.) failed in a 30-35 mph crash test in a '10 Kia Forte. NHTSA contends current vehicles tend to have greater peak accelerations than in the past, leading to more potential issues. Sled tests showed loads on lower anchors increased 30-60% when tethers were not used.

The standard finalizes the 10-year-old dummy use in tests of safety seats with published child weights above 65 lbs; the tests will be done with safety belts alone and with top tether attached, not with lower anchors at all. SBS USA notes that some seats previously labeled to 70 lbs. will be superseded by models labeled to 65 lbs.

Those checking seats in future will need to establish policies for obtaining child weights, and clearly, national campaigns to encourage tether use for all forward-facing seats will be needed to increase their use.

*\*Petitioners included Diono, Dorel, Safe Ride News, SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A., Joe Collela, Ben Hoffman, MD, and Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association.*

## ■ Research Points to Goals for CPS Field

The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia team, led by Jessica Mirman, released *Caregivers' Confidence in Performing Car Seat Installations: What Matters Most?*, Injury Prevention, 8/13, a study of the CPS prowess and confidence of caregivers who transport young children, exploring sources of their knowledge and testing their ability to install a safety seat correctly and confidently. The data reveal a source for the continuing incorrect use rate: over-confidence.

The in-depth study of the behavior and attitudes of 68 parents, eight grandparents, and seven other caregivers correlates with earlier findings from mass telephone interviews with parents, which showed high confidence in their safe transport of children, when asked to assess their competence. Meanwhile, continuing high levels of incorrect use are seen at the many diverse sites where safety seats are checked.

In the Mirman study, when given the choice of installing the selected combination seat, using specially summarized instructions, in their own or the rear seat of a provided minivan, all but one chose the experimental vehicle. All did so or gave up in less than the 30-min. limit; indeed the median length taken was three minutes!

When asked to assess the accuracy and security of their installations and of crash and injury risk to their children, they asserted the children were well protected and at low risk despite the observed lack of accuracy and security in their installations. The less confident they were that the risk of being in a crash was low, the less confident they were in how well they were protecting their children. The less confident they were, the more sources of formal (active) resources they reported using to learn how to buckle up their children. Interestingly, of this group of experienced caregivers, 53% had an accurate installation.

Only 16% got the seat in securely, regardless of attachment method (77% used the belt; 14% used LATCH, and 8% used both).

Of great interest is the corroborating evidence of the disconnect between confidence and correct installation from a detailed laboratory study, *The Effects of Child Restraint System Features on Installation Errors*, conducted by Kathy Klinich et al, published in Applied Ergonomics #45, (2014), in which subjects doing 4 complete installations showed no correlation. (These averaged 28 to 33 minutes.)

Because there is a consistent disconnect between caregivers' incorrect and/or insecure installation and their accurate assessment of their abilities and thus, the risks to the child, it seems less likely they will seek help because they don't see a problem. As Klinich et al write, "More research is needed to identify ways of designing feedback into child restraint products." It is critical to stress the high likelihood of incorrect use in public campaigns to encourage more families to seek aid and concurrently, to offer more persistent outreach to first-time expectant parents who are more likely to be receptive to the idea that they might not "do it right."

SBS USA encourages programs to consider *Ride Safe from the Start*, an online teaching program for this target group which provides short segments on choosing and using safety seats with tests on which an 85% score is needed to move on to the next topic and which offers an exercise in learning about equipment to secure safety seats in one's own vehicle.

## ■ From the U S DOT:

Since July, Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx, previously Mayor of Charlotte, NC, from 2009, has led the 55,000-employee US Department of Transportation, bringing both a background in transportation at the city and regional levels and as a law student at New York University, (a named Root-Tilden Scholar, for those interested in public interest law). His children are young enough to encourage CPS focus!

In mid-December, David Strickland, NHTSA Administrator, announced his coming departure. We'll be hoping for a new leader with the same commitment to our field that David showed from Day 1.

### ■ Note to California CPSTIs:

California Department of Public Health, Vehicle Occupant Safety Program invites you to qualify for funding when teaching Technician Certification and Renewal courses. Once accepted, Technician Instructors remain eligible for 2 years to apply for funds as Instructors if the sponsoring agency covers Instructor #1.

*SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A.

# Safety Seat Checkup Day

**Saturday, April 5 • 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 March 30 to April 5, 2014

***Sponsors: California Office of Traffic Safety, Pomona Police Department, 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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