

SafetyBeltSafe News

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■ Preventing Deaths with DUI Drivers

Kyran Quinlan, MD, released an original study of child passenger deaths in crashes with impaired drivers which showed that, in most cases, the child was riding with the impaired driver. His follow-up paper, “Child Passenger Deaths Involving Alcohol-Impaired Drivers”, *Pediatrics*, 5/5/14, studies the proportions of such incidents by U.S. state, indicating that prevention efforts in this arena need improvement.

Looking at fatality data, collected by National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) from 2001-10, Quinlan et al noted that Texas and California led in total numbers, but that by rate per 100,000 children, South Dakota, New Mexico, and Mississippi were highest. Of the 2,344 children under age 15 killed in such crashes, 65% were riding with the DUI driver, a third of whom were unlicensed, and of those, 61% were unrestrained! Of drivers, 71% survived the child/ren in their care. These drivers were more likely to be male, have prior DUI convictions, be unlicensed (including 44% revoked/suspended), and unrestrained.

In contrast to children dying with non-drinking drivers, the crashes were more likely to involve one vehicle and occur after 6 pm. As alcohol level and child’s age increased, lack of restraint did, too. Of the 1,354 deceased children generally known to ride buckled up, 61% were unrestrained when they died. Of the 37 jurisdictions with sufficient reliable data to be ranked, New Jersey, New York, and Massachusetts were lowest. Texas and California contrast in that Texas not only had the most deaths but also had the 6th highest rate while California tied with three other states for 26th.

Quinlan recommends increasing use of effective child endangerment charges with DUI, interlocks for convicted offenders, sobriety checkpoints, more safety belt and child passenger safety (CPS) enforcement at night, etc., to reduce exposure. With support from California Office of Traffic Safety (CA OTS), SBS USA continues to focus on introducing these data to professionals who work with families as well as families facing divorce/joint custody and/or including adults with substance abuse issues to pre-arrange techniques to prevent children being forced to ride with DUI drivers. Remember, kids cannot refuse to get into a car with a parent or caregiver; it is another adult who must protect them.

■ Safe Sleep

Children’s health and safety advocates advise that babies sleep on their backs in cribs to reduce the risk of SIDS*. But babies may fall asleep in safety seats when on the road. Of concern is some current car seat literature, often on Web sites, showing newborns with rolled diapers/blankets alongside their bodies, with materials near an infant’s face.

Blankets, stuffed toys, or pillows near an infant’s face can create a small enclosure around the baby’s mouth, trapping exhaled air. Breathing exhaled air leads to a drop in oxygen level and accumulating carbon dioxide, which can contribute to SIDS.

The most common occurrence of death in 1-to-12 month olds is during sleep, and 20% of SIDS cases occur in child care settings. Some infant safe sleep advocates would prefer that infant safety seats be designed with adequate support for tiny newborns, avoiding suggestions that caregivers “jury-rig” with blankets. Many seats now come with infant positioning inserts.

Perhaps advocates for reducing both risks can collaborate in bringing all into compliance with current best practice.

**Sudden Infant Death Syndrome*

■ Thank You to:

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■ New Bookmark

SBS USA introduces the 5-Step Test *bookmark* aimed at kids. In bright colors, it encourages kids to try it and sit in back until age 15.

Congratulations to Joanne Marzolino and Heidi Heflin for creativity!

Available for \$15 per 100.

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■ Calendar

Register: 310/222-6860

CA EDUCATOR WORKSHOPS:

CEUs: 6 for nurses, 3 for CPS

Technicians.

Sponsors: CA OTS and Pomona PD with support from Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services (LBDH&HS) and St Francis Medical Center

8:15 am to 4:30 pm

* **7/25:** City of Lynwood Recreation and Community Services.

* **9/16:** Family Health Education Center, LBDH&HS, Long Beach

SAFETY SEAT CHECKUPS:

10 am-2 pm for public;

9 am-3 pm for checkers

Sponsors: CA OTS and Pomona PD

* **7/26:** St Francis Medical Center, Lynwood

* **9/20:** Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Torrance

CONFERENCE:

* **8/26-28:** Kidz in Motion

Conference, Albuquerque, NM with 8/25 preconference. To

register: www.kidzinmotion.org.

■ Honda Delivers

American Honda delivered funding to assist SBS USA with three key aspects of our program. First, we want to expand the SAFE and **GREEN** program to recycle unusable safety seats by securing a trucking partner to move seats from sites to TMC Horizon.

Second, we are eager to help those serving refugees and asylees from around the world by offering more significant training in CPS.

Finally, this project helps us to expand the 5-Step Test message with our new bookmark.

■ Lifesavers Tidbit

Lifesavers covers a raft of traffic safety issues from the advances in "V2V"* communication to the details of new safety seats. Here is a thought-provoking point from Lifesavers 2014: (We'll have more in September.)

With 33% of child fatalities in 2011 unrestrained, Rennie Ferguson, Safe Kids Worldwide, using surveys, looked at adult attitudes toward driving children unrestrained and discovered that 40% would allow 8-12 year olds, 30%, 1-7 year olds, and 20%, under 1 year olds, to ride loose.

Data show that more unrestrained 1-to-7s are hurt in non-fatal crashes than the other age groups. Of 1000 parents asked, 25% report driving with children unbuckled. When offered a list of common excuses for unbuckled travel, parents agreed that taxi cab travel (26%) & not going far (21%) were "okay" but 12% to 18% consistently agreed with other reasons.

Men tended to be more "lenient/risk-taking" than women; those under age 29 compared with over 30 differed similarly. Perhaps most unexpected were the higher risk-taking rates of those with graduate school education and above and \$100,000+ incomes.

Ethnicity was linked to support for risk-taking; the rate for Latino parents was highest on all questions analyzed.

Ferguson points out the power of parents to foster or inhibit exposure to unrestrained travel; her most cogent take-away: how will these decisions impact children on their own in the future?

**vehicle-to-vehicle*

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■ Recalls on Used Vehicles Not Required to be Fixed Before Sale

Rosemary Shahan, President, Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety in Sacramento, the driving force behind the California "lemon law," was quoted in the 6/25 *Los Angeles Times*, in reference to a petition to the Federal Trade Commission to investigate CarMax for deceptive ads. Claiming a "rigorous inspection" without checking and repairing recalls was false, the petition was delivered by U.S. Senator Charles Schumer (NY) and multiple auto safety groups.

A California bill, SB 686, which sought to establish a law to ensure that, like new vehicles, before sale, vehicles on recall in the re-sale market would be repaired, did not emerge from the Assembly Business and Professions Committee and thus, is dead for 2014. Introduced by State Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson, it was co-sponsored in the Assembly by Roger Dickinson.

CarMax wrote that delays by manufacturers in securing parts and enough dealer slots to repair recalls would require used car dealers to hold on to vehicles too long before re-sale; they suggested federal requirements that used car dealers be given the parts, equipment, etc to do such repairs, subsidized by the manufacturers. Meanwhile, potential buyers of used cars need to check for recalls and be sure that immediate recall repair can be booked with a dealer before taking possession.

■ Pregnant Woman: Baby's First Safety Seat

Protect Your Baby Now...And Later, available from SBS USA for \$20 per 100, has been updated recently, featuring Janna Kim and baby Kaja in English and, in Spanish, baby Emerson Estorga. Given the estimate from long-time researcher Hank Weiss, PhD and colleagues that five times as many fetuses are lost as babies in the 1st year of life, alerting parents-to-be to buckle up on every ride and to have the status of their baby checked after even a minor collision is key.

Now, a longitudinal study of a half million pregnant women in the Ontario area of Canada over six years indicates a significant rise (42%) in multi-car crashes with the 2nd-trimester pregnant woman behind the wheel. Studying the pre- and post-driving records reinforces the contention that hormone and brain changes fuel the jump.

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■ New Safety Seats:

✓ **Diono** has introduced three new convertible/combo car seats. The Olympia accommodates kids 5-45 lbs. rear facing, 20-70 lbs. forward facing, and 50-110 lbs. in booster mode, while the Pacifica and Rainier accommodate kids 5-50 lbs. rear facing, 20-90 lbs. forward facing, and 50-120 lbs. in booster mode.

The 3 models have expandable sides, the Safe Stop for use with the tether between 20-40 lbs., the rear-facing recline block, and 2 sets of harness pads – one for kids under 65 lbs., another for kids over 65 lbs. The seats also feature two buckle positions – one for kids 5-30 lbs., the other for children over 30 lbs. The Rainier features a 12-position headrest. The seats have a user life of 8 years in harness mode and 12 years, in booster mode. SuperLATCH connectors may be used to 35 lbs. rear facing, 40 lbs. forward facing on seats with new labeling, which is *not* retroactive.

✓ **KidsEmbrace** has introduced a backless booster for children at least 4 years old and 40-100 lbs. Their combo seat, introduced with Spiderman, now has Ninja Turtle, Batman, and Dora the Explorer formats.

✓ **Peg Perego** has introduced the rear-facing-only Primo Viaggio 4/35, which features a 5-position, no-rethread harness, an anti-rebound device, and a lock-off. The seat has a 7-year life and can be used on aircraft only without the base.

■ New Testing Protocol from Consumers Union

The June 2014 issue of *Consumer Reports* summarizes the new test protocol Consumers Union (CU) devised with an outside testing lab to compare rear-facing-only safety seats. Looking to reduce stress on infants' heads and mimic more closely than the standard FMVSS 213 test what actually happens in a car, the 35-mph test uses a test seat simulating the average vehicle rear seat and a blocker plate, standing in for the seat in the row ahead. The goal is to encourage even better seats.

The first test round led CU to single out 5 seats. Chicco KeyFit and KeyFit 30 were especially easy to use; the Combi Shuttle is designed to hold larger babies longer; Cybex Aton 2 had much better crash-test performance, with its load leg to reduce rotation and tensioning device to help parents get a tight fit.

The Dorel Safety 1st onBoard 35 Air provides high-weight limit (35 lbs. like the Shuttle) and like the Aton 2, has a unique side-impact protection system. However, CU doesn't yet include side-impact testing. The Air refers to side-impact head pillows that absorb crash forces; the Aton 2 has linear projections to reduce side-impact forces.

The UppaBaby Mesa provides lower-anchor connectors which automatically retract, tightening the seat, and an indicator for parents to know it's in tight enough, features best-suited to lower-anchor-equipped vehicles.

Of the 34 models tested, 13 were rated "Best," 16 "Better," and 5, "Basic." All seats met the FMVSS 213 test, no dummy was thrown out, no shell was damaged, and all harnesses contained the dummy adequately. However, 2 shells detached on rebound; one base cracked significantly. But all of the safety seats sold in the U.S. pass FMVSS 213 so perhaps the most important feature is a correctly used seat every time.