

SafetyBeltSafe News

Volume 35, No. 6

November 2014



■ California Office of Traffic Safety Funds Project of Pomona Police Department and SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.

California Office of Traffic Safety (CA OTS) is enabling ongoing work throughout the state with specific focus on Los Angeles County. Specific objectives include:

- to reach out to assist Californians with the Safe Ride Helpline on child passenger safety (CPS)
- to pursue programs to increase booster use through teaching the 5-Step Test
- to reach out to refugee programs to increase correct education
- to offer training for newcomers, law enforcement officers at roll calls, increase the Technician corps, and update those in the field
- to pursue more avenues to increase safety seat recycling
- to alert the public and professionals about the risk of children being forced to ride with impaired drivers, namely the adults in whose care they are
- to provide safety seats to those in need at checkups.

The most recent checkup, in Pomona on October 22, was co-sponsored with National Latino Peace Officers Association and featured 100% incorrect use and the need for replacement seats in 40% of the situations. Thank you, CA OTS, for your ongoing support.

■ Unsafe from the Start:

Critical Misuse of Car Safety Seats for Newborns at Initial Hospital Discharge

Ben Hoffman, MD, FAAP, of SBS USA-member Oregon Health and Science University Hospital, reported data on incorrect transport of newborns at the recent AAP conference (*see p. 2*). Between November, 2013, and May, 2014, 267 randomly selected mother-newborn pairs, excluding preemies and youngsters who were in NICU care, were observed on discharge. Ninety-three percent were riding at risk due to errors in use.

Major errors included: 69% loose harnesses; 43%, too loosely installed; 36% had seat at the wrong angle; 34%, retainer clip too low; 23% had the belt unlocked; 20% used unregulated products; 18% had the harness above the child's shoulders; 17% had the seat too close to the front seat back; and 15% didn't know how to adjust the harness.

The issues were more pronounced for those who were low income, less educated, non-white, not English speaking, or unmarried and without a partner. Those who had input from a CPS Technician were 13 times more likely to get it right!

All families were helped to correct the errors before the baby was driven home.



We appreciate the many kind messages extended to our family on the sudden death of my husband, Professor Thomas A. Tombrello, Jr., on September 23rd at Heathrow Airport near London.

Stephanie M. Tombrello

■ Recall:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) issued another recall related to the AmSafe QT1 harness buckle, which may be hard to open, thus placing users at risk in an emergency.

This time it is *some* of the **Evenflo Embrace 35** rear-facing-only seats made from 12/11-5/13. All the recalled model numbers are on the SBS USA recall list at www.carseat.org. Call 800/490-7591 with the model # for replacement.

■ Calendar:

35th Anniversary for SBS USA is January 29, 2015!

January 2015: CPS Technician Certification Training, sponsored by Long Beach Health and Human Services, Long Beach, CA. Site and dates TBA. For application, e-mail i0680@hotmail.com

Safety Seat Checkups

10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Call 310/222-6860 to register or to check. Jan. '15: to be scheduled with Technician training. April 11, '15: Petersen Automotive Museum, L. A., CA

Lifesavers Conference, 3/15-17, 2015, Chicago, IL. www.lifesaversconference.org

■ Safety Belt Use as Public Health Issue

An 18 year old, driving at night with a 16-year-old passenger, apparently had been “huffing” from aerosol cans. Neither was safety-belted; both were seriously injured when the driver lost control, and the passenger died.

In the course of prosecution of the driver, the New Jersey safety belt use law was declared a clear effort to “protect public health and safety” and thus, disregarding it could add 5-10 years to incarceration for recklessness in a crash with injury or death as outcomes.

Although the driver was allowed to plea-bargain her case, she appealed this aspect, leading to the New Jersey Supreme Court determination.

■ Thank You . . .

to 2015 Members:

\$250 Karen Proctor, RN, CPNP
\$200

Chandler Regional-Mercy Gilbert Medical Centers
Lakeville Police Department
SAFE KIDS Greater Augusta (Georgia)

to VW Group of America:

which donated \$6322, enabling SBS USA to exhibit at the national conference of American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) in San Diego for three days, with 14,000 MDs in attendance!

With a gleaming Audi Q3 as the centerpiece, our team, headed by Heidi Heflin, CPSTI and nurse, and consisting of SBS USA Executive Director Stephanie Tombrello, long-time advocate-pediatricians, and Technicians associated with Pacific Safety Center, guided visitors to try our quiz by finding answers posted around the exhibit.

This gave the doctors a chance to see if their current information differed from the latest recommendations; to ask questions; to see how three seats could be placed in the back seat; “meet” some products they might not have encountered before; and see the key points of buckling up a baby.

Donated Dorel Incognitos, Buckleboppers, MyCue streamers, and SBS USA 5-Step Test posters were among the prizes for the doctors who got three of four questions correct. Ours was the only vehicle on display which was a big attraction. Enthusiasm ran high with the 1st CPS exhibit in 10 years, according to leading pediatricians!

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■ New Safety Seats:

- ✓ **Diono** introduced the Cambria, a booster for kids at least 4 years old and 40-120 lbs. It has a removable backrest and folds flat for travel or storage. It has 2 recline positions, lower anchor connectors for seat stability and positioning, and a 6-position headrest.
- ✓ The **Dorel** Maxi Cosi Pria 85 convertible seat for kids 14-40 lbs. rear facing and 22-85 lbs. forward facing, has 3 recline positions – positions 1 or 2 may be used rear facing; position 2 must be used forward facing for a child 22-40 lbs.; position 3 must be used facing forward for a child 40-85 lbs. The 3-position crotch strap must be in the inner or middle slot when the child is facing rear but may be in any appropriate slot for facing forward. The seat features a no-rethread harness and two sets of harness covers – a smaller set for rear facing, and a larger set that must be used if the child weighs more than 65 pounds and the tether is not in use. Lower connector use ends at 40 lbs.
- ✓ **Jané** introduced the Montecarlo R1, a booster for kids 30-100 lbs. The seat has lower anchor connectors, a 5-position headrest, and two recline positions. Width is adjustable on the headrest and sides; armrests adjust as well. It must be used with the backrest.

■ Safety Seat Checkup in Louisiana!

SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. Board member, **Annette Knobloch**, shared the unusual site of the August 9th checkup and booster distribution held in Houma, LA. The event, which brought together a host of volunteers and service donors, was held at the opening of the Ninja Turtles film in the theater parking lot.
 The 22 Technicians checked 197 seats in 98-degree heat, donating 59 new and collecting 45 unusable seats. The theater not only attracted families but also provided cool, convenient resources to the service providers and volunteers.
 Special thanks to Michael Toups of Houma Police, event coordinator, and his 10-year-old daughter, who is already on track toward Child Passenger Safety Technician (CPST) status with her knowledge of the field.

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■ KIDZ IN MOTION CONFERENCE

Among the workshop presentations was the analysis of 2011-12 data from encounters at 121 fitting stations in 63 of 92 Indiana counties, given by Marnita Louzon of Auto Safety Program at Riley Children's Hospital. From 1998-1999 when 9 sites went on line, the program hit its highest inspection numbers in 2008-2009 with 10,000. Of the sites, 75% were at fire departments, law enforcement agencies, and hospitals. Louzon described the functions of the checkup form as guiding the checkups, reducing liability, enabling re-creation of the encounter, and providing program overview through data collection. The data not only describe the Indiana experience but also allow others who collect consistent information to see if findings are similar.

Data for 2011-2012 covered 9,046 checkups in 7,738 vehicles; 51% users received some form of public assistance (35% had less than \$20,000 annual income), probably affected by the distribution programs available. The 3.6 persons per family had drivers, 75% female, who were mainly college grads, high school grads, or attended some college respectively; 79% were white, 9% Latino.

Among the striking findings: 3,260 were referred by friends/family with hospitals at 1,121 the next highest source. Prenatal visits comprised 44% of the checkups with another 1,960 for babies under age 1. A fifth of seats were used. Sixty percent were belted in, 23% LATCHed, and 5% were using both; 59% moved more than an inch; 22% were at the wrong angle; only 14% used top tethers. Harness errors included 52% too loose, 47% with mis-located chest clips, and 18% not at the correct shoulder level.

A startling proportion of children under age 2, whom research partly authored by Marilyn Bull, MD of Indiana, showed would be safer rear facing, did

not leave facing rear. Although 98% of those under a year were rear facing on departure, the percent of 12-17 month olds went down 4% to 72% and those 18-23 months stayed the same at 33% rear facing. This stimulated increased focus on educating Technicians on this issue.

On the other hand, for 4-13 year olds, the sites increased protection substantially by moving the unrestrained and safety-belted to harness safety seats or boosters, including nearly 60% of 8-13 year olds leaving in boosters! Nearly 40% of the children left in a seat different from the one on arrival; of those, 85% were given by the sites. The analysis also highlighted gaps in recording, another area for improvement for many programs.

Why No Global Safety Seat?

The search for a global safety seat and frustration with the variability of safety seats are twin issues raised by parents and Technicians. In his talk, David Amirault of Dorel Juvenile Group addressed the variations in regulatory standards, social contexts, and consumer preferences as well as examples of cross-fertilization. Comparing ECE R44, standard for Europe, China, Latin America, and Japan, with FMVSS 213, the U.S., the peak force loads occur much faster in the latter but are higher in the former, both good measures for seat safety. FMVSS 213 requires testing with lap belt only, lower connectors only, full LATCH system, and lap belt and tether; ECE R44 requires 2 modes: with ISOFIX (like LATCH but rigid) and with the lap-shoulder belt which means the lap segment may be around the base of the seat with the shoulder belt through guides at the top.

(Continued on page 5...)

■ *KIM Conference, continued from pg 4*

A new United Nations regulatory compact, i-Size 129, initiated in 7/13, will change emphasis by encouraging rear facing through 15 months and focusing on child height instead of weight. Designed to increase use of ISOFIX, it includes the top tether and support leg to increase stability; side-impact tests with ISOFIX only; and is expected to supersede other standards in 5 years. Dummy “families” also differ with the U.S. using the Hybrid “family” and Europe, the P Series; however, with side-impact regulations developing, both may use the Q Series.

Consumer influences differ considerably. “Favorite” vehicles are different with 2 large pickups heading the U.S. list and not until the 6th most common finding a “small” car. In Europe, with much higher gas costs, all popular vehicles are “small” with the VW Golf heading the list. Safety seat styles differ with U.S. rear-facing-only seats tested above 22 lbs, having detachable bases, and fitting special strollers contrasting with European models (Group 0) stopping at 22 lbs., less likely to have separate bases but fitting many strollers, reflecting use.

For forward-facing seats in the U.S., the top weight is generally above 40 lbs., and they usually are convertibles; in Europe, Group 1 stops at 40 lbs.

The underlying social differences are reflected in the price of gas: \$8.32/gallon vs. \$3.52 on average, with Europe much more a walking culture. Per 1,000 adults, in Europe, there are 600 cars; in the U.S., 800. The number of children per woman in Europe, 1.6; in the U.S., almost 2. The U.S. shopping environment is highly “big box” stores and targeted price points under \$100, but in Europe, specialty stores with \$258 as an average price are more common. The U.S. jump in purchasing power occurred in the 1990s; European purchasing power jumped more recently.

Converging changes are seen in rigid LATCH and stability or load legs entering the U.S. market while in Europe, which doesn’t have manually locking safety belts, lockoffs, no-rethread harnesses, and more separate bases are emerging. Both areas will see changes due to the new effort to regulate side-impact testing.

■ Major Recall of Air Bags:

A major problem with Takata air bags, supplied to multiple auto companies, has led to a strong recall from NHTSA for owners to have dealerships inspect air bags and until then, to stop driving vehicles or, at the very least, not transport anyone in the front seat.

Companies include Acura, BMW, Chrysler, Dodge, Ford, General Motors, Honda, Infiniti, Lexus, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Pontiac, Saab, Subaru, and Toyota, for vehicles primarily made 2000-2011. Recently, the 2013 Chevrolet Cruze was listed for a separate Takata air bag recall.

Because so many manufacturers and dates are involved, check on vehicles made since 2000 to see if yours is listed. Propellant in the bags can cause them to fail *or* to explode, sending shrapnel throughout the cabin; high humidity makes the problem more likely.

■ No After-Market Products

Suzanne Tylko, Chief, Crashworthiness Research, Transport Canada, was quoted recently on the risk of using after-market products. She explained the diversity of such items as making it hard to set a standard to test them. Unless the product is tested with the safety seat, it is not to be used.

A bunting will interfere with harness snugness; on appropriate rebound of the safety seat, a child’s face can strike a rear-view mirror attached to the vehicle seat. Using seats as tested by the manufacturer is the way to go.

There is a good selection of photos of after-market products at <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/motorvehiclesafety/safedrivers-childsafety-notices-d200401-menu-336.htm>.

■ For SmartPhone Users!

SBS USA Webmaster Wendy Thomas has created a one-tap shortcut to your favorite CPS Web site, www.carseat.org. No need to browse the Web and type out the URL to search for the SafeRide Helpline number, or upcoming CPS workshops and checkup events. Now you can bookmark SBS USA on your iOS or Android home screen page.

The process is simple, and the resulting SBS USA icon allows easy access! Specific instructions to add a bookmark to your home screen can be found on the Web, done in 3 easy steps taking less than 3 minutes.

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To: Our SafetyBeltSafe News Readers:
From: Bonnie Oseas, President, Board of Directors

As 2014 comes to a close, we prepare for the election of a Board of Directors to take us to 2017! We ask you to participate and to join or renew for 2015 as all memberships expire on 12/31/14. Don't miss any benefits; renew before the last day!

January marks our 35th Anniversary, a day our founders never expected to reach. However, our goal, to reduce deaths and injury of children and their families, is still eluding us, especially for the children who are hurt or die totally unrestrained. Just a few days ago, a child in California was flung from a rolling vehicle; his rescue involved helicopters and separation from the unrestrained adults, both of whom also were ejected, one to his death.

We are working hard to reach out to the many newcomers to the U.S. whose native countries never stressed buckling up as well as the newly "born" parents who hadn't been following this issue until suddenly they were involved. Happily, government and private funding enables us to plan new projects. However, without our members, we would not have the funds to respond to unexpected challenges.

For you, we continue tiers of membership to meet your particular needs. Each member is eligible for a Continuing Education Unit (CEU) toward Technician renewal for reading *SafetyBeltSafe News*; we offer other sources of Units related to our DVD of Manufacturers' Instructions and other resources. At the \$50 level, the special code allows for downloading the Recall List for use in your programs. Those at the \$100 level have a code that provides both access to the List and our Web site for new manufacturers' instructions released throughout the year. The \$200 level, in addition, provides subscriptions to our newsletter for up to 4 additional locations and, for the lead representative, a copy of the DVD of Child Restraint Manufacturers' Instructions with Summary Sheets (more than 7000 pages) and 100 current glossy brochures as well as *Safe Ride News (SRN)*, another CEU source. However, for smaller groups and individuals, SRN and the DVD can be added to the \$100 membership for only \$35.

Our Facebook page is an additional site for updates to supplement our Web site, www.carseat.org, where you can find downloadable materials, answers to questions, applications for Toyota/Lexus tether retrofit kit certificates, a popular resource for families across the U.S., and renew and re-invigorate our team.

As we head for our 35th anniversary, we look forward to your input and support. Ask your friends to help us keep our resources available nationwide!

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