

PRESS RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Stephanie Tombrello, Executive Director
SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.

(310) 222-6860

stombrello@carseat.org

Available on request: Photos of car (totaled), letter from mom in English and Spanish, interview with mom in English or Spanish

Baby Saved in Crash After Mom's Safety Class

TORRANCE, CA (July 23, 2007) – Ingrit Sanchez got the best possible reward for taking the time to learn about driving children safely – her own baby survived a severe crash without being injured.

Preparing to open a family day care business, Sanchez found out about a child passenger safety workshop to be presented by SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. at the Center for Community and Family Services in Carson on June 2. Although three-month-old Jehu always rode in a rear-facing safety seat in the back seat, as required by California law, his mother learned she was making several serious errors, which the instructors helped her fix. [See sidebar]

Just a month later, on July 1, the family was driving on Interstate 99 when they had a blowout. The car rolled three times before it finally stopped. Unable to see the baby in the back seat, Sanchez's husband quickly unfastened his safety belt and climbed out the window. After frantically looking through their belongings, which had been thrown all over the road, he went back to the car and started moving pillows and blankets until he saw a tiny foot moving.

According to Sanchez, "Jehú was smiling like nothing had happened. My husband and I were severely injured, with cuts, scratches, and bleeding...but Jehú, our three month old baby, did not have a single scratch, not even a mark from the harness. While in the hospital, every time a doctor or nurse approached me, I kept on telling them about being at the workshop... I am

MORE

MORE

MORE

constantly telling other people the importance of using car seats and seat belts appropriately.”

The class Sanchez attended was part of a SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. project funded by California Kids’ Plates. Californians can support injury prevention programs by ordering a special license plate with one of four unique symbols (heart, plus, hand, or star). To order a California Kids’ Plate license plate or learn more about the program, go to <http://kidsplates.org> or call 800-HEY-KIDS.

For more information about using safety seats and safety belts correctly, go to www.carseat.org or call the Safe Ride Helpline (800-745-SAFE for English, 800-747-SANO for Spanish).

[Sidebar]

Basic Guidelines for Transporting Children Safely

1. All children ride in the back seat!
2. If there is no back seat in the vehicle or the back seat is full of other children, never put an infant in front of an active air bag.
3. A safety belt is needed for every adult and child (with or without a safety seat) in the car.
4. Read the manufacturer’s instruction manual and follow it exactly.
5. If there is only one child in the car, put her in the center rear, if possible to do so correctly.
6. Use a rear-facing seat as long as possible (until one year at minimum, recommended up to 18-24 months). Make sure the seat is labeled for use up to 30-35 lbs.
7. Use a safety seat with a harness as long as possible (at least until age 3-4 and approximately 40 lbs.)
8. Install the safety seat securely. Check: correct belt location, no slack in belt, belt locked, push test (less than 1” sideways or toward front of car).
9. Secure the child in the harness snugly. Check: pinch test (if you can pinch a fold in the strap, it is too loose).
10. If the child is too big for a safety seat with a harness, use a booster unless the child can pass the 5-Step Test.
11. Proper fit of safety belt (with or without booster): Lap belt touches thighs, shoulder belt touches shoulder and chest. Keep it snug.
12. If only a lap belt is available, it is better than nothing. However, boosters cannot be used without a shoulder belt.

#