

SafetyBeltSafe

NEWS

July, 2021

Annual Assessment: Are Children Protected?

The Lifesavers Conference report on deaths of child passengers was both encouraging and frustrating. The annual tragic totals have been cut in half from 1975; yet almost 25% of the children who died were unrestrained, despite laws and education which some of us addressed as early as 1970. We need to look carefully at those who risk children's lives because "it won't happen to my child."

A recent court case raised the issue of alcohol impairment and risk to children inside the vehicle as well as those in other vehicles. A Florida woman, caring for her three great-grandchildren, agreed to their wish to see holiday lights at a nearby park. After backing her vehicle out of its parking spot, she turned it over to the 10-year-old! Shortly, he rear-ended a vehicle with three children, pushing it into a 3rd vehicle with two more children as passengers. The 10-year-old was in the back seat by the time the family in vehicle #2 got out to confront the driver. The woman who allowed the child to drive appeared inebriated, had a history of impaired driving, and yet was not the driver. While a current lawsuit is underway, there is an additional teaching message, fortunately not accompanied by serious injury: 1) a total of eight children were impacted and 2) at least for the three in vehicle #1, they, like the majority of kids in crashes, were within 20 minutes of their starting point.

Occupant Protection—for Kids and Families

Law is an educator but must be updated to keep it in tune with resources and knowledge. When the majority of U.S. child passenger safety (cps) laws were upgraded to cover children over 40 lbs., products available tended to stop at 80 lbs. so age 8 seemed to be the limit. Today, boosters are certified as high as 120 lbs., and research supports the 5-Step Test, first developed in 2000, as a reliable way to predict good belt fit. Data from SBS USA have long shown that only half of 10-year-olds fit in safety belts correctly; however, most non-Technicians hear age 8 or 4'9" in laws as the predictors.

Louisiana built on formal research, first released in 2016 from University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute, to upgrade their law, using the 5-Step Test, and report that the change has been effective. Not only could one not predict fit in the vast range of vehicles from a single height measurement but also many parents are not focused on height measurements. Meanwhile, the 5-Step Test allows kids, parents, and law enforcement officers to use a single simple method to agree on booster need!

Now, California advocates are looking for enthusiasm in the legislature to introduce an improved law which will reduce unnecessary belt-induced injury. Years ago, a teacher, whose child sustained abdominal injury, lamented that the child's booster had been retired to the garage, based on age 8, and that she was sure her 5th graders were vulnerable as well. Join us in upgrading laws across the U.S.

Dedicated to improving child passenger safety for more than 41 years

SBS USA RN Basics

Through the California Office of Traffic Safety (CA OTS) -funded grant for '20-'21, SBS USA has been holding 1-hour Webinars on the basics of cps for nurses along with tips for the steps appropriate for non-Technician RNs to take with their clients. With partnership from Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, RNs who complete the session are awarded a free CE.

Now Whittier Hospital and Harbor-UCLA are hosting the session for their staff nurses, offering the CE for completion. We want to congratulate both for demonstrating a way to ensure that nurses are updated and perhaps, to interest more in becoming Technicians.

SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.

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Checkup Week, 2021

Safety Seat Checkup Week 2021 was untraditional as it was totally online. One benefit is the series of seven short messages on the SBS USA YouTube Channel available for others to link in their Websites to address common but often unmentioned issues, such as kids in cars with impaired drivers, safety belt strangulation risks, kids who “escape,” the 5-Step Test, risky fakes, and used safety seats. For those who reach out to help, there are short videos about our technical tools—the Color Pictorial, Child Restraint Manufacturers’ Instructions with Summaries, and the recall list, explaining the benefits of using them in one’s practice.

A colorful poster donated by **Lithographix** was made available online or on paper; it lists our Website and 800 line which offer ways to obtain direct, personal help as well and reminds that without **Torrance Fire Department, CA OTS, and Toyota Motor North America** as supporters, it would be hard to provide our services in California and beyond. We are pleased to have enthusiastic members in Mexico and Chile as well as Malaysia, all eager to extend cps protection.

The Counties of Amador and Riverside and Cities of Beverly Hills, Burbank, Carson, La Verne, Lancaster, Norwalk, San Dimas, San Gabriel, Santa Clarita, South El Monte, and Torrance made the effort to proclaim the Week, bringing attention to the ongoing risks to children and their families.

The City of Inglewood, where our office was located for many years, sent a special commendation to *SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A. for our work in the field. Each of these entities recognizes that more than a third of children who die in car crashes are totally unrestrained 43 years after the first cps law was instituted. Keep on teaching!

Starting Up!

SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. expects to hold two series of 5-Step Test events at Foothill Unity Back-to-School gifting in Monrovia and Pasadena from August 9-13. In September, if public health conditions continue to improve, we hope to hold a certification training and checkup.

Volunteers and students are asked to provide evidence of vaccination as will Instructors and coordinators to reduce concerns about COVID-19 transmission. Masks and gloves will be available.

Visit www.carseat.org Calendar for specific announcements of 7/15 and 8/26 Technical Webinars or reach us with inquiries at 800/745-SAFE or stombrello@carseat.org.

Thanks: \$635: Darren Qunell
\$500: Safe Traffic System
\$200: Children’s Hospital/Los Angeles
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Providence Sacred Heart Children’s Hospital

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

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SBS USA Board:

The Board of *SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.* invites volunteers to serve! Board elections are coming up this fall. We meet virtually which makes it easier for interested members from any location to participate. For more details, e-mail stombrello@carseat.org.

CPSTI Negotiates for Technicians

Not every program can fund CPS Technicians as well as they deserve. However, SBS USA always has stood for the concept that not every checkup has to be free. This was not applauded in the early days, but now, Technicians who love their work can make it their job as well.

In that spirit, SBS USA member Kathleen Casey, RN, BSN, CPSTI, added her cps hat to her union negotiating effort and secured recognition for those who are Technicians as having additional skills to serve the hospital population. Casey indicated that at least some of the hospital negotiators were unfamiliar with the legal cps regulations for hospitals and birthing centers in California. She made the case that these skills should be reflected in a \$1500 annual bonus, an additional incentive to attract new recruits and reward those on track to renewal. And she kindly thanked SBS USA for having the details of the CA requirements at www.carseat.org, easy to locate.

Congratulations!

It's always a joy to see hard work validated, and when it's "one of our own," it is positively exciting. At the national, now international, Lifesavers conference, **Jchanet Tan, CPSTI**, was recognized as International CPS Instructor for 2021. Tan began her effort to put cps on the Malaysia map after other mothers expressed surprise at seeing her children in safety seats.

After attending a 2017 certification training in Glendale, California, with SBS USA, Tan invited SBS USA Instructors to Malaysia to start expanding resources, leading to a national law for safety seat use and a very successful non-profit serving thousands of parents, businesses, and professionals. Jchanet Tan has a passion for accurate, community-based programs that root out fakes and address the tragic fatality rate with clear, culturally sensitive information.

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New Seats

Britax released the B-Safe Gen2, B-Safe Gen2 FlexFit, and FlexFit Plus. They are similar to previous B-Safe models but with larger internal dimensions. All three seats cover children 4-35 lbs., feature push-on lower connectors on webbing, a safety belt lock-off on the base, two crotch buckle slots (inner slot for infant under 11 lbs.). The Gen2 has a re-thread harness with four slots. Both Gen2 FlexFit and FlexFit Plus have a no-rethread harness with six positions. (Adjuster is on back of carrier.) FlexFit and FlexFit Plus allow for European routing for no-base installation and include an infant insert for use up to 11 lbs. FlexFit Plus comes with an anti-rebound bar on the base. All three seats expire six years from date of manufacture.

The new **Diono** Monterey 5 iST FixSafe is a foldable booster (seat pan can be folded up into backrest) for children 40-120 lbs. It features rigid lower connectors, 12 headrest positions, and side wings that expand as the headrest is raised. Instructions state the safety belt buckle may not be pulled onto the red belt guide on the seat. (The buckle stalk may be twisted up to three times if necessary to avoid this issue.) The seat expires eight years from *date of purchase*.

Newell Century Baby is back with three new seats. Carry On 35 and Carry On 35 LX are rear-facing-only seats for children 4-35 lbs. Both have four harness slots for their re-thread harness and two crotch strap positions. Their shared base has three recline positions and hook-on lower connectors but no lock-off. Both allow for European routing for baseless installation. The head and body support are for use only to 12 lbs.; use of harness covers is optional (Body support and harness covers come with the LX model only.)

The Drive On All-in-One may be used rear facing for children 5-40 lbs., forward facing with harness, 22-65 lbs., and in highback booster mode for children age 4 on and 40-100 lbs. It has a no-rethread, 6-position harness and hook-on lower connectors but no belt lock-off. To recline the seat are both a flip foot and a 3-position recline lever for rear-facing and forward-facing use. Cup holders must be used. Expiration is seven years in harness mode and 10 years, in booster mode.

UPPAbaby re-released their convertible Knox with some changes after the voluntary recall last year. It accommodates children rear facing 14-45 lbs. (two-part fit inlay mandatory for child 14-25 lbs.) and forward facing 25-65 lbs. It features a no-rethread harness with 8-position headrest, one crotch strap position, four recline positions (two each for rear facing and forward facing), and push-on lower connectors for use to 30 lbs. rear facing and 35 lbs. forward facing. For installation, there are two belt-tensioning plates with tightness indicators on seat (one each for rear facing and forward facing); belt must be locked; lap portion is routed *under*, shoulder belt *over* the tensioning plate, under tabs. The seat also features a multidirectional tether that is recommended for both rear-facing and forward-facing installations. When used rear facing, it is routed under guide on inboard side of restraint and around the side in Australian style. The seat expires 10 years from the date of manufacture. The seat starts at 14 lbs. because the company considers rear-facing-only seats preferable for smaller babies.