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Protecting Children in Traffic

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Child Passenger Safety Research Review

Drinking Drivers Who Crash Kill Kids in Their Cars

A new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows that one in every four deaths in crashes of children under age 15 is related to alcohol use. The data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System about crash-related child passenger deaths during the years 1997 to 2002 were analyzed.

Of the 9,622 children who died during that period, 24 percent (2,335) were in crashes in which drinking drivers were involved; 60 percent of those crashes occurring between 6 am and 9 pm. Most of those, 68 percent (1,588 children), were in the car with the drinking driver and only 32 percent were restrained.

In almost 80 percent of the crashes that involved drinking drivers, at least one of the drivers had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) equal or greater than 0.08, the legal limit in 31 states. Drinking drivers whose child passengers died had a median BAC of 0.13; most of them (68 percent) survived. Restraint use by children declined as the age of the child and the BAC of the driver increased.

Reference:

Child Passenger Deaths Involving Drinking Drivers—United States, 1997-2002. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Review*, CDC, February 6, 2004, 53(04); 77-79, www.cdc.gov/mmwr/ (search by date/title).

Study Quantifies Shield-Booster Risk

A paper published in PEDIATRICS in March shows how much higher the risk of injury is to children under 40 pounds using shield boosters rather than conventional child restraints. Injuries to thirty children between age 1 and 40 pounds involved in crashes while using a forward-facing child restraint (CR) were compared to injuries to 16 children in the same size/age range using shield booster seats (SBSs). Those riding in SBSs had almost eight times the likelihood of serious injury. The mean length of hospital stay for children in SBSs was almost six days, compared to 2.6 for those in CRs. Those in SBSs were 4 times as likely to sustain a head injury and 29 times as likely to have a chest injury. The only children in this study with abdominal or pelvic injuries were riding in SBSs.

The study looked at selected cases of injured children for comparison, rather than including uninjured children also involved in crashes. Thus, because there are many more uninjured children in CRs than in boosters, the potential risk in a SBS has very likely been underestimated. The conclusion was that pediatricians need to make a concerted effort to make sure that children in their care use the most appropriate CR, not simply ride restrained.

This study was part of the CIREN research study at Children's National Medical Center, Washington, DC.

Reference:

"Not All Child Safety Seats Are Created Equal: The Potential Dangers of Shield Booster

Seats." Edgerton, B, Orzechowski, KM, and Eichelberger, MR. *PEDIATRICS*, March 2004. Vol. 113, No. 3, pp. 153-158. <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org> (search for Booster Seat in Vol. 113).

Misuse of Air Bag Switches Puts Kids and Adults at Risk

A NHTSA report has found that air bag (AB) on/off switches are not always switched off for children and sometimes are left off for adult and teenage passengers. The survey in 2000 in four states included 617 cases where at least one front seat passenger was an infant or child under age 13. The AB was off for only 86 percent of the rear-facing infants and 52 percent of children age 1 to 12. That means that 14 percent of the most vulnerable, rear-facing babies riding in such vehicles are at high risk of death from a frontal air bag and 48 percent of the older children are at

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Calling all Instructors

Please spread the word about **SAFE RIDE NEWS** and the **LATCH-Tether Manual** to your students

See Insert and page 8



Deborah Davis Stewart,
Editor

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Editorial

Maintaining Technicians' Skills and Participation

Following my editorial in the November/December issue on why states and large organizations should invest in child passenger safety, I received several compliments saying how helpful my suggestions were. However, one state-program person voiced deep concern about how to keep current CPS technicians' skill levels high. She has found that the high quality that is needed is very hard to maintain, even by offering a regular series of technician updates. And, while she has always suggested that CPSTs subscribe to SAFE RIDE NEWS® to help stay up-to-date, very few have followed through.

Unfortunately, the drop-out rate for technicians is high. Of the 38,818 CPSTs trained, at least 39 percent have dropped out as of August 2003, according to the figures of AAA. We have invested a huge amount in new technicians but much of this has been lost. Only 18 percent of instructors have dropped out, which probably reflects their level of personal interest and professional status.

How many current CPSTs will remain certified under the new renewal procedure and fee structure remains to be seen. How many will be reinstated under the new plan to requalify is unknown. Efforts are underway. SAFE KIDS is offering its update/refresh course, which is being conducted around the country after a hiatus due to the delay of the 2004 curriculum. Some states have held quarterly regional update sessions or annual CPST conferences in the last few years. A few provide subscriptions of SRN to all their technicians or instructors. Others publish their own local newsletters. A few provide their CPSTs with up-to-date manufacturers' instructions available from SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.

Funding is getting tighter by the year. I have heard from a number of people that they will no longer be attending Lifesavers, which is at this point the only national meeting to deal with CPS issues in depth. It is very unfortunate that many of the people who usually would take information from this conference back to their states will not be able to do so.

NHTSA is continuing to publish its

CPS Tech Update (previously *CPS Tech Report*), a 4-page quarterly that provides at least a minimal amount of technical and program information. This will be mailed to all who are certified and also is posted on the CPS Board website. However, only 10 percent of the currently certified CPSTs and instructors are signed up for e-mail notices of updates on the web site.

I wish I had an easy answer. The curriculum seems to foster a degree of simplification in which rules are learned and little encouragement is given to understanding the background in order to analyze situations for which the rules do not seem to fit. There also is no encouragement to develop and maintain relationships, habits, and skills that would help newcomers to go beyond the basics they have learned in the course. By this, I mean both seeking mentoring relationships with more seasoned veterans and developing skills and knowledge through the acquisition and use of reference materials that the veterans rely on for their expertise. The resource list in the new curriculum, while largely accurate, does not provide any guidance as to what the listed organizations provide or why new technicians should contact them.

Maintaining skills and interest seems to be partly related to activity level. Educating and assisting parents and other caregivers in the field means constantly confronting the kinds of questions and problems that demand awareness of the myriad issues of child restraint use. For those who only occasionally use their skills, almost no amount of retraining can keep their knowledge and interest up. Unfortunately, unless there continues to be consistent funding and attention to those individuals at the local level whom we have trained and nurtured over the last few years, we may see CPS go into a long, steady decline. Yet, as I said in my December editorial, new babies and parents are born every day. We can't ignore them.

I suggest that instructors and administrators make a strong effort to help new technicians find mentors, know how to get the resources that they will need to work in the field effectively, and then make sure that there are opportunities for review and updating within states and organizations.

Traffic Deaths Affect World Health

As of 1998, 88 percent of the world's traffic-related deaths occurred to people in low- and middle-income countries, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). In 2000, over 1.2 million persons were killed in vehicle-related crashes. In addition, injuries happen to about 10-15 million people each year in collisions.

WHO World Health Day, April 7, focused on the major road safety problems causing injuries; speed; alcohol; non-use of effective equipment (seat belts, child restraints, and helmets); and visibility. Highlights of actions taken in various countries that have been demonstrated to reduce injuries featured on the WHO web site include: speed bumps in Ghana, random breath testing in Australia, seat belt law enforcement in Korea, motorcycle helmet use law in Thailand, and reflective material on uniforms and book bags of school children. For details, go to: www.who.int/features/2004/road_safety/en/ and www.who.int/world-health-day/2004/en/

Summer Training in Injury Prevention

An intensive training course in injury prevention will be held July 11-16 at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, MD. It has an emphasis on problem-solving, centering on real-world issues specific to each student's interest. Lectures will cover all the aspects of prevention, including behavioral, epidemiological, legislative, and community partnership approaches. Academic and CHES credits available. Details at www.jhsph.edu/InjuryCenter/summer_institute/index.html.

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Role of Law Suits in Injury Prevention

People often view law suits against manufacturers as only initiated for the sake of the injured person collecting damages to either cover expenses (compensatory damages) or to punish particularly egregious behavior (punitive damages). Others believe that trial attorneys often bring frivolous suits and make huge amounts of money from suits they win. Despite these issues, a recent review of data shows that there have been significant public health benefits in the field of auto safety that have been made as a result of litigation.

A recent paper, *Role of Litigation in Preventing Product-related Injuries*, spells out the research that has been done on this topic and describes the ways in which law suits have benefited society. It highlights the interplay between law suits, the media that publicize them, and government regulation.

The researchers reviewed a number of studies of manufacturers done since 1976. These studies document that both large and small companies have paid attention to the risks of litigation in their product design, instructions, and warnings. In some cases, insurers have pressed for change in specific products, based on the damages they have covered. In others, regulations have been strengthened. The liability system has been found to be particularly useful when government regulations were inadequate or nonexistent.

The researchers recognized that there can be unintended societal and industry costs to litigation, such as stifled innovation, higher prices, and reduced competition when companies stop making certain products due to high insurance rates. The authors call for more epidemiologic review of these factors to see how significant they are. Whether or not the improvements in product safety that have been attained are worth the possible costs was not analyzed or discussed.

Reference:

Role of Litigation in Preventing Product-related Injuries, Vernick, JS, Mair, JS, Teret, SP, Sapsin, JW. *Epidemiologic Review*, Vol. 25, 2003, pp. 90-98, Jon Vernick, Jvernick@jhsph.edu

Editor's note:

This is a complicated political as well as public health issue. Liability suits are seen by some as benefiting the consumer, and by others as raising costs of insurance (and products) and limiting innovation. There is no clear, simple answer. A study such as this needs to be balanced with a study of the costs, but the Johns Hopkins research team does not intend to follow up with that work. Others have commented that the Firestone tire case, which they cite, was more complex than described in this research paper or in the press, due to problems with misuse (under-inflation) of tires, overloading of vehicles, and excessive speed.

In the case of the child restraint industry, the high cost of liability insurance has been blamed for driving up costs, pushing some companies from the market, and delaying or stalling the availability of new products. Suits against shield boosters may have played a role in the demise of the Britax Laptop. Misuse of restraints is known to play a role in individual cases. In addition, instructions are longer and more complicated than they may need to be, which has been shown to be counter-productive to achieve correct use. These trends are frustrating for many in the CPS world.

In addition, the injuries that occur in any particular crash need to be balanced with an understanding of the magnitude of the risk of a particular problem or injury occurring. Just how far society and regulation can realistically go to protect from very low risk but devastating outcomes is a question that may never be answered to everyone's satisfaction.

It is interesting to note ways in which settlement funds can be used to prevent further injury. A major study dealing in part with child passenger safety has recently been funded with money from an unrelated motor vehicle suit, as reported in the January/February issue. It is administered by the FHWA/NHTSA National Crash Analysis Center at George Washington University. In another recent settlement, funds are to be used to upgrade the safety of 15-passenger vans in use by adding another set of wheels at the back to improve stability.

Conference Report, Part 1

The Lifesavers Conference in San Diego drew a large crowd and included many CPS-related sessions of generally high quality. Many Lifesavers presentation notes are available at the website: www.lifesaversconference.org

There will be additional reports in the next issue of SRN.

Next year's conference will be March 13–15, 2005, in Charlotte, N.C.

Side-Impact Air Bags – A Surprise and Progress Report

At the Lifesavers session on the impact of the new 213 requirements, SRN editor Deborah Stewart asked for clarification about a warning in some CR instructions about not placing a CR in a position with an air bag. With surprising unanimity, all the major CR manufacturers who were presenting agreed that their warning was intended to cover CRs in seats with all types of air bag, including the various styles of side-impact air bags (SIABs). They cited fears that not all manufacturers are following the voluntary “out-of-position” (OOP) dummy tests adopted several years ago by most vehicle makers (see background, next column).

Immediately after the conference, SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. and Safe Ride News pursued this issue to try to find a resolution. Besides alerting NHTSA to the issue, they contacted representatives of the Automotive Coalition for Traffic Safety (ACTS) and the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers. One barrier to resolution appeared to be a 1999 NHTSA Consumer Advisory that had not been updated to reflect current knowledge, equipment, and experience.

At press time, SRN has learned that the manufacturers intend to approach NHTSA to change its consumer advisory. Meanwhile, NHTSA has decided independently to look into revising it in the very near future. Whether changes will be sufficient to allay CR manufacturers' concerns is uncertain at this time.

New Travel Vest Debuts

The Ride Safer Travel Vest, seen at Lifesavers, is a versatile new product that is ready for market but not yet available



Background: Side-Impact Air Bag Controversy

It is difficult for me to understand why the CR industry has taken the position against SIABs. There has been no evidence that SRN has found so far that would forecast serious harm from a SIAB to a child properly harnessed in a child restraint. Side-impact air bags do not intrude very far into the occupant space.

The early SIABs were, almost universally, installed in the front seat only, so those would be primarily of concern regarding older children and adults leaning against the door of the vehicle in the front seat. Due to early concerns about front seat occupants, voluntary out-of-position (OOP) tests were developed by the auto industry for SIABs using child dummies. It would be very helpful to know which manufacturers have or have not adopted OOP testing of recent model vehicles with rear SIABs, along with which type (head or torso) of air bags are installed for back seat passengers.

Note that SIABs that meet the OOP tests actually have reduced deployment force, which may make them somewhat LESS effective for someone sitting properly positioned.

NHTSA side-impact dynamic testing is done on many current vehicles under New Car Assessment Program (NCAP) to assess chest injury potential using front and rear-seated adult dummies. Ratings based on these tests are reported on the NHTSA website in the section Buying a Safer Vehicle (reach it directly at

in stores. It has high-tech pilot styling and comes in two sizes (35 to 60 and 50 to 80 pounds). It can be used as a vest with a tether and lap belt or with a lap-shoulder belt to position both belts properly on the body. An adjustable, flexible back and head cushion can be attached with Velcro to hold a sleeping child's head

The vest has significant force attenuation features, such as energy-absorbing foam in the front vest panels and deformable parts of the tether assembly and shoulder belt clip. Hooks at the hips hold the lap belt down.

Contact:

Ride Safer, Safe Traffic System, Inc., 847-329-8111, www.safetrafficsystem.com

www.safercar.gov). It does not describe the types of SIABs installed, however.

Parents should be informed about how important correct installation and a snug harness are to keeping a child contained in a CR as much as possible during a side-impact crash. Boosters with high backs and side wings that effectively hold the child's head and shoulders in position while sleeping would be particularly useful in vehicles with rear SIABs.

Curriculum language on SIABs:

The new version of the standardized curriculum discusses the voluntary tests, which it says have only been implemented for “head-only air bags” and states that “the current head-only side air bags have minimal interaction with and have not shown any safety risks for properly restrained or out-of-position children or adults.” (Module F) However chest SIABs and chest-head combinations “could pose a serious risk to children who are in close proximity to the air bag opening at the time of deployment.”

In Module I it further states: “There are no studies right now that indicate a child properly restrained in a child restraint is at risk from current side impact or curtain-style air bags, but unrestrained and out-of-position children could be injured.”

Note: “Close proximity” is not defined. Also, how many vehicles have rear-seat chest and chest-head combination air bags?

Read on the List-Serve

Question: Now that some manufacturers are making claims about better side impact protection provided by their child restraints, does that mean that they can be used on side-facing seats?

Answer: No. FMVSS 213 still is, and will be for the foreseeable future, based on testing for frontal impact. CRs that may provide better side-impact protection (deeper side-wings, impact-absorbing foam liners for the wings) are not intended or tested for use on side-facing seats. They may provide better protection in lateral crashes, but such features are completely voluntary.

Technician Update, April 2004

Web access:

- Current CPSTs should have received their user ID and password by letter recently. These codes are case sensitive.
- If a technician or instructor does not have web access, all interaction with the SAFE KIDS certification organization except recertification can be done by phone or mail.
- The new participant manual will be available soon on the web site for reference/review by current CPSTs for their practice and for recertification.

Recertification

- People who have lapsed between June 1, 2003, to November 30, 2003, can recertify online until May 31. This is a firm cut-off.
- Recertification testing and logs of checks performed can only be done via the online system. There will be a process for validating checkup performance by the instructor who has signed off on them.
- There will be no grace period.
- A CPST will have 30 days to take the test and 10 days to complete it once the process has begun. There will be feedback on areas of the test that a person did not do well in, but not the specific questions missed.

Marketing and Cancellation of Classes

SAFE KIDS wants to help administrators avoid the cancellation of classes, which is a complicated and expensive process for the program.

To read tips for marketing courses and about balancing SAFE KIDS BUCKLE UP requirements with national certification standards, look at the FAQs on the Safe Kids Certification web site. Find FAQs under the "Contents" button at the top of the page.

New Arabic Fact Sheets

See page 8

School bus seat belt issues buzzing

Three recent headlines may be reasons that CPSTs receive more questions than usual about seat belts on school buses. In reality, however, all three initiatives largely reiterate their previously reported positions. This recap is to help CPSTs go to the sources for further detail.

The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services (NASDPTS) asked NHTSA in April 2003 to clarify NHTSA's position about whether or not states lacking laws mandating lap belts on buses should be encouraged to adopt such laws. (NASDPTS has been on record as saying it would support requirements for lap-shoulder belts if funding for that is provided.)

NHTSA's Office of Chief Counsel answered the NASDPTS letter in January, stating: "NHTSA believes its past letters of interpretation and/or public statements concerning the installation of lap belts in new large school buses are still appropriate." The letter also said: "In a final rule published in July 2003, we announced that we are developing proposed requirements for *voluntarily installed* lap-shoulder belts in large school buses."

To read NHTSA's letter and the NASDPTS analysis/response, go to www.nasdpts.org/reports.html, then scroll down to the School Bus Safety section.

Meanwhile, Indiana Mills and Manufacturing, Inc. (IMMI), one of two competing manufacturers of school bus seats with integrated lap-shoulder belts, has initiated a multi-state television/video and internet advertising campaign to sway public opinion in support of requiring 3-point belts in buses. IMMI, through its www.safeguard4kids.com web site and materials urges public pressure on local and state transportation officials and school boards.

NHTSA Decides Safety Vests can Use Cam Wraps

NHTSA issued its final rule on seat-mount (cam-wrap) safety vests on buses on March 9. The final version also reported the agency's positions on several related issues.

Test your vehicle vocabulary

Frequently used terms can lead to confusing interpretations in the field. To help sort out these words, SRN has created a glossary of vehicle types on its web site. Test your awareness.

True or false:

1. Some NHTSA vehicle categories are entirely exempt from FMVSS relating to safety belts, air bags, or tether and LATCH anchors.
2. Number of available passenger seating positions, more than body style, determines where many regulatory lines are drawn.
3. "Light truck," "van," "LTV" and "SUV" are examples of regulatory categories used to distinguish crashworthiness requirements.
4. "Allowable alternative vehicle" or AAV is a NHTSA regulatory term devised to address Head Start needs.
5. A phone caller asking about safety on a "bus" is providing enough information to know which regulations would apply regarding restraint availability for transporting school-aged-children.

For answers, see page 7 and the glossary at www.saferidenews.com

Background: A cam-wrap or seat-mount fastening system for vests uses an adjustable strap that wraps vertically around the back of the bench seat and fastens to the user's vest at the shoulders and (if no lap belt is available) at the hips. Such fasteners are used instead of tethers or both tethers and lower anchors. They have been in extensive use in school buses for years. This rule clarifies the conditions under which they can be used.

The key conditions for vest use with a cam wrap will continue to be:

- 1) Seat-mount vests must have a warning label stating they may be used only in school buses, not cars, and
- 2) A bench seat immediately behind a vest user must be either empty or contain only restrained passengers, so there will not be an unrestrained ("compartmentalized") passenger who would, in a crash, move forward into the flexible seat back, introducing slack into the cam wrap.

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Continued from page 1

risk of serious injury. The incidence of active air bags went up from about 25 percent for children age 1 to 6 and jumped to 41 percent for 7 to 8 year olds. For teens 13 to 15, ABs were turned off in 22 percent of the cases. When a child and two adult were in the front seat, the AB was on in 38 percent of the cases, protecting the right-front adult but possibly putting the child at risk, at least in some vehicles. When only adults were in the vehicle, 17 percent of the ABs were off.

Most owners knew that their vehicles (mostly small pickups) had a switch and understood its function but were not well informed about some aspects of use. They generally knew that it should be used to turn off the air bag when an infant or small child was in the front seat, but they were not clear that children as old as 12 could be in danger or that teens would benefit from the air bag.

See related air bag usage details in box, next column

Some owners said they preferred to leave the air bag off all the time, so they wouldn't forget to turn it off when their children were in the front seat. That means that some adults would not have the protection the air bag could provide.

Some people turn off the passenger air bag for elderly passengers, assuming that there is a risk to them comparable to that for a small elderly driver sitting very close to the steering wheel.

NHTSA intends to develop a public information and education campaign to make sure pickup truck drivers are aware of the correct use of the on/off switch. Meanwhile, CPS advocates and technicians should be sure to inform parents they work with about correct use. It will be essential to refer to the owner's manual of a pickup-truck or sports car if the air bag cannot be switched off.

Reference

Results of the Survey on the Use of Passenger Air Bag On-Off Switches, Christina Morgan, NHTSA Technical Report, DOT HS 809 689, Nov. 2003, www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/rules/regrev/Evaluate/809689/index.html

Use/Misuse Study from NHTSA

The NHTSA study of observed use and misuse of child restraints (mentioned

Correct Use of Air Bag On/Off Switches:

- Turn the switch OFF for a rear-facing infant or for a child up through age 12 in the right front or center front seat position.
- Turn the switch ON for teens and adults, including the elderly.

Switches and Advanced Air Bags

AB switches will be installed until 2012 in vehicles with no back seat or a seat too small for a rear-facing child restraint. As advanced air bags (AABs) are installed in new vehicles, the switch may become less necessary although children will continue to be best protected in the back seat.

However, at present the use of LATCH instead of a safety belt for CR installation in the front seat of some vehicles will mean that the sensors in the belt will not trigger suppression of the AAB. To correct this problem, vehicle manufacturers are removing the LATCH anchorages from the front seat, which means that, according to the federal standard, the air bag switch would also be removed. There would then be position in which to transport a rear-facing infant or a young child in such a vehicle. Technicians need to read the Vehicle Owner's Manual regarding what actions can/must be taken if the airbag "Off/on" indicator light does not indicate that the airbag is turned off.

on page 1 in the January/February issue) confirmed that restraint use decreases with age and that booster seat use is growing. Child restraint use by infants under age 1 was 97.1 percent; for children 20 to 39 pounds, 86.4 percent (with an additional 6.3 percent in safety belts); for those 40 to 59 pounds, 41.7 percent (plus 43.1 percent in safety belts); and for children 60 to 80 pounds, 10.9 (plus 64.9 percent in safety belts).

Only misuses that could be observed without removing the child from the CR or the seat from the car were studied. The focus was on "critical" misuses, those that would be most likely to cause serious injury. Observable critical misuses were found in the range of 79.3 to 83.9 percent of infant, convertible and forward-facing CRs. Shield boosters had 60.5 percent

serious misuse; belt-positioning boosters had a 39.5 percent rate. These rates do not cover all critical misuses: some could not be observed within the limitations of the study.

There were 42 instances of LATCH use. Three of these seats had improperly used lower anchors and three had misused tethers. Six were attached by both the LATCH anchors and the safety belt.

Passenger frontal air bags were found in 71.8 percent of the vehicles in the study. Few vehicles had air bag on/off switches. In those vehicles, 16 children were in the front seat with the air bag on, 2 were rear-facing, 4 were in forward-facing CRs, 3 were in a safety belt, and 7 were unrestrained.

The February issue of the *Annals of Emergency Medicine* published a commentary on the study: "Misuse of Child Restraints, Commentary: Child Restraint Use Up But Mitigation of Misuse Slow to Gain Ground."

Reference:

Misuse of Child Restraints, Decina, LE, and Lococo, KH, TransAnalytics, NHTSA Final Report, DOT HS 809 671; summary at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/outreach/TrafficTech/2004/trafficTech290/; the full text is at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/CPS or by faxing to 202-366-7096.

Canadian Study Tests Simple Labels

Various formats of labels were tested by the Ergonomics Division of Transport Canada for effectiveness in installation of child restraints and dummy securement done by 48 adults. The formats were 1) no label, 2) the existing required manufacturer labels, 3) the proposed changes in labels (which have recently become required), and 4) "optimal" labels designed "according to human factors principles and guidelines." The analysis showed that the optimal labels worked better than the existing or proposed labels and that, in the absence of any labels, the people did at least as well as when following either the existing or proposed labels. The conclusion was that only major changes in labeling following human factors principles would make a significant difference in the effectiveness of labels.

Reference:

The Design of Child Restraint System (CRS)

Labels and Warnings Affects Overall CRS Usability. Rudin-Brown CM, Greenley MP, Barone A, Armstrong J, Salway AF, Norris BJ. Traffic Injury Prevention, 2004; 5(1): 8-17. (available from <http://www.tc.gc.ca/roadsafety/tp/tp13987/en/menu.htm>)

CDC Review of Program Effectiveness

The Community Guide branch of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has analyzed available studies of programs that sought to reduce child passenger injuries. While not new, its messages are still relevant.

The two most effective countermeasures were the passage of child passenger safety laws and the combination of education with a distribution program. Overarching lessons:

- 1) It is important to continue programs that have been found to work and not waste money/time on activities that do not work. That's why the extension of the child passenger safety laws to higher ages is so important.
- 2) Evaluations are particularly important, not just throwing money at a problem.

Reference:

Community-Based Interventions to Reduce Motor Vehicle-Related Injuries: Evidence of Effectiveness from Systematic Reviews, Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, www.thecommunityguide.org/mvoi/

SRN Updates List of Transit-Option Wheelchairs on Web

The national voluntary ANSI-RESNA standard, WC-19: Wheelchairs Used as Seating in Motor Vehicles, has been available for several years. Manufacturers offering WC-19 "transit option" wheelchairs for children or adults comprise a small but growing segment of the wheelchair and seating industry. However, SRN has found that a list is necessary, because disability/mobility information sources often are unclear about WC-19 status of products. WC-19-compliant products must be labeled, but not necessarily identically.

Those who transport children to school and other activities must deal with the wheelchairs used by some of their young charges. The initial selection of a specific product is the key to how a child will ride. Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPSTs) who are or work with physical or occupational therapists can contribute their awareness of crash dynamics and the issues behind travel product standards and claims when new chairs are being purchased for children.

Go to www.saferidenews.com for a complete discussion of findings plus the list of products known to be compliant with WC-19.

—Sue Miller Smith

Air Bag Recall

Nissan Quest Minivan, 2004

Nissan announced a U.S. recall in early March covering almost 14,000 Quest minivans (model year 2004). The advanced air bag system sensors may not shut off the frontal passenger air bag when a 6-year dummy is in the front seat. Dealers will recalibrate the weight sensors to detect a small child. Owners will be notified beginning in May.

Nissan will offer to recalibrate air bags in Canadian vans as well, although the vehicle air bag systems meet the current Canadian standard.

NOTE that when the air bag indicator light is on, the air bag will not inflate. When the air bag light is off, the air bag is active.

Also note that children are at lower risk of injury in the back seat, whether or not there is an active frontal air bag.

Nissan: www.nissanmotors.com (recall not posted as of 4/14)

Recent Safety Belt Recalls

Ford Escape, 2001

This recall of over 132,000 vehicles made from October 1999 to May 2001 is to replace buckle covers of front seat safety belts that may break, allowing the belts to appear latched when they could easily disconnect. Owner notification began in February. Contact Ford at 800-392-3673 or www.ford.com/en/vehicles/owners/recalls/default.htm.

Mazda Tribute, 2001

Front seat belt buckle covers on 49,000 Tributes made between April 2000 and May 2001 could break, allowing them to appear latched. The recall began in February. Contact Mazda, 800-222-5500 or www.mazdausa.com (click on "Owners").

Mercedes-Benz C Class, 2004

Safety belts on 4,300 vehicles may have a burr on the locking mechanism that may prevent complete latching of the belt buckle. The belts will be replaced. Contact Mercedes-Benz, 800-367-6372 or www.mbusa.com.

School Bus News, continued from p. 5

- On other issues in the rule, NHTSA:
- Clarified that seat-mounted vests should be used only on FMVSS 210 reinforced ("lap-belt ready") bench seats.
- Rejected requests that dynamic testing be less stringent than for personal vehicles. (Petitioners had argued that the FMVSS 213 test is considerably more severe than would be likely in real-world bus scenarios because large, long buses have a less severe crash pulse than passenger cars).
- Specified more precise, uniform methods for dynamic testing of seat mounts under FMVSS 213.

To read the Federal Register announcement, go to www.carseat.org, Laws-Regs (menu at left), then scroll down to FMVSS 213 rules.

E-Z-On unveils new bus tether anchor method

E-Z-On Vest now offers a tether bracket that can be fastened to the reinforcing bar underneath a bus bench seat that meets FMVSS 210.

NASDPTS Survey of State Van Use Regulations

A new survey of laws and regulations governing the use of 12- and 15-passenger vans for pupil transportation has been completed by the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services. Find survey results and the NASDPTS position on the use of vans for student transport at the web site: www.nasdpts.org (go to Position Papers).

—Sue Miller Smith

SBS USA Web Site

www.carseat.org

Find the latest federal regulations and state CPS laws at the SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. web site. The most recent versions of FMVSS 213 and 225 are posted along with amendments published in the Federal Register. At www.carseat.org, click on Laws-Regs (blue menu at left).

FAA rules for the use of child restraints on aircraft are also available there, along with the recent changes dealing with harnesses on school bus seats and labeling of child restraints.

AAP Policy Statements are linked from the site. Find them under Resources (blue menu at left).

AAP 2004 Brochure

The annual update of Car Safety Seats: A Guide for Families, has been published. The 27-page booklet lists current products, harness type, and weight limits, as well as providing selection and usage information. Contact AAP at 888-227-1770 or at www.aap.org/bookstore.

NHTSA Materials

Web Access Simplified

- Much useful CPS information is centralized at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/CPS.
- *Buying a Safer Car* now is at www.safercar.gov, part of the NHTSA site. It now is searchable, using drop-down menus.

Shoulder belt retrofit kits and seat belt adaptors (buckles & clips)

Find Vehicle Belts, Buckles, and Clips under "New," at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/CPS.

Guide to Booster Promotion

Best Practices for Promoting Booster Seat Use—A How-To Guide Based on Community Demonstration Projects, recently published by NHTSA, is based on the experience of five community projects. In 2001–02, booster use was promoted and evaluated in Nassau County, N.Y.; Phoenix, Ariz.; Houston; Texas; Bismarck, N.D.; and King County, Wash. The guide includes research findings and lessons learned, as well as resources. Find it at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/CPS.

SAFE RIDE NEWS

2003 Index Available

The index of articles published in 2003 is now posted with previous years' indices on the SRN web site, www.saferidenews.com (go to Back Issues). Printed copies are available for \$10 from SRN Publications. Call 800-403-1424 or e-mail nancy@saferidenews.com for an order form.

SRN Fact Sheets: Customization Urged

We urge Fact Sheet users to add their local contact information in the customization box on the front of each sheet. Not only does this give recipients a local contact for questions but it gives credit to the local sponsoring organization for its efforts. Customization of PDF versions can be done by a commercial printer or by printing out the sheets, using an address label to add the relevant information, and printing from the paper copy.

Printing PDFs Full Size

Fact sheets printed directly from CDs should be checked to make sure they are full sized. The correct margins are specified in the "Read This First" file. If they are printed smaller than intended (which sometimes happens with PDFs), the type will be smaller and less readable, particularly in the Spanish versions.

NEW: ARABIC Fact Sheets

Thanks to a collaboration between Oakwood Healthcare, Inc., and SRN, five child restraint fact sheets have been translated into Arabic and are now available to educators around the country. They are in the Lebanese type of Arabic, which is particularly common in the Dearborn, MI, area where Oakwood is located.

The 2004 Arabic set includes: *This is the Way the Baby Rides*, *Selecting the Right Kind of Car Seat*, *Check Your Child's Car Seat*, *Kids and Air Bags Don't Mix*, and *Are You Pregnant?*. The reproducible set of five will sell through SRN for \$30 for newsletter subscribers and \$50 for non-subscribers, including shipping. Contact SRN at 800-403-1424 or via e-mail, nancy@saferidenews.com.

NOTE:

SRN is interested in pursuing similar efforts in other languages. Please contact SRN if you are interested in this.

SAFE KIDS WEEK – USA

May 1–8, focus on water safety, drowning prevention. Contact local SAFE KIDS coalitions or Tomeka Rawlings, at 202-662-0623, trawlings@safekids.org

SAFE KIDS WEEK – Canada

May 31–June 6; focus on booster seat use. Contact Jennifer Hall, 416-813-6164 or jennifer.hall@sickkids.ca

PLAN AHEAD:

Lifesavers 2005, March 13–15, 2005, Charlotte, NC. Contact www.lifesaversconference.org

CPS Conference, August 2005, Orlando. Preliminary plans are underway. Contact www.kidzinmotion.org

Vehicle Vocabulary Quiz answers:

- 1) *False. NHTSA crashworthiness FMVSS intentionally cover all categories without exemption, but specific rules grant limited exceptions within categories, based on weight ceilings or specific usage factors, such as vehicles such as convertibles (tether anchor exemption) or postal service vehicles.*
- 2) *True.*
- 3) *False. Those terms have nothing to do with crashworthiness rule applications.*
- 4) *False. AAV is a Department of Health and Human Services term only. The NHTSA equivalent regulatory term is "Multi-Function School Activity Bus (MFSAB)."*
- 5) *False. "Bus" and "required" can mean many different things in these areas. Terms and circumstances would need to be defined more precisely.*

Calling All Instructors!

The current curriculum training plan does not include LATCH-Tether manuals and has rather sketchy information about resources for technicians.

SRN can provide you with packets for your students, including a sample of a recent newsletter, order form for the manual and our fact sheets, a list of useful web sites, and a discount coupon.

To order packets for your classes, please use the insert with this newsletter or contact SRN at 800-403-1424, nancy@saferidenews.com. Please order several weeks in advance, if at all possible.