



Safe Kids California CPS Webinar Presentation Notes

Slide 1: Introduction

1. This Child Passenger Safety webinar will provide basic information on Child Passenger Safety, including Safety in and Around Cars. The presentation covers California laws, best practices, and safety tips for parents/caregivers/safety advocates.
2. The goal of this webinar is to provide you with the basic tools to work with parents and caregivers and provide them with the information that will keep their children safe in and around the car.
3. All the information in this webinar is from accredited websites. But do keep in mind that child passenger safety is an evolving field, as new technologies are developed and new laws are passed to keep our children safe.
4. This presentation is not a substitute for hands-on car seat education that will help parents learn to install their children's seats correctly in the vehicle and ensure the child's proper fit in the seat.

Slide 2: *Car Crashes and Safety*

Let's talk a little bit about what happens during a vehicle crash. (Read Slides)

Our goal as educators is to educate children and caregivers to make buckling up a habit for life.

Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death in the US (statistics from the CDC, 2013)

There are many factors that contribute to the outcome of any crash, such as the vehicle size, speed, and point of impact. We also should take into consideration the possibility of rollovers, rotation and possibly ejection. So to prevent further injuries and deaths we must take every precaution to make sure all occupants are safely secured whether with a seat belt or child restraint for younger kids. **Understand that we can't prevent crashes, but we can minimize the impact of a crash.**

Slide 3: *IIHS video*

This video demonstrates the effect of a crash using seat belts and without seat belts. Even with an airbag in your car, it is critically important to buckle your seat belt because seat belts and air bags work together to protect front seat adult occupants. The purpose of an air bag is to reduce the occupant's speed during a collision and reduce the possibility of injuries. But airbags are NOT designed to protect small children or babies and we should never place a rear-facing car seat in the front passenger seat. In addition, vehicle manufacturers, NHTSA and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend that children under 13 years old should ride in the back seat.

Slide 4: *Kids Need Adults to Keep Them Safe*

Adult seat belts are not designed to protect small children and babies. Car seats and booster seats ARE designed to best protect kids. As parents/caregivers we are responsible for protecting and educating our kids to prevent injuries. So if we educate and inform our kids about the importance of keeping their harness snug or seat belt buckled up, as they grow they will understand the importance of keeping themselves buckled up and secure when riding in a vehicle. It will become a lifelong habit.

Slide 5: Video

Here's another clip demonstrating what happens to children who are not restrained. There is airbag protection for the adult, but look what happens to both the kids.

Slide 6: Video

This is a demonstration of a mother holding her child. Holding a child in her lap or unrestrained, as you see, results in the child being crushed by the mother. It's important to understand that the forces involved in a crash can kill or cause serious injuries to the adult and the child. While car seats, booster seats and seat belts do not prevent crashes from taking place, they play a major role in reducing the severity of injury to occupants involved in a collision.

Slide 7: Why Car Seats Work

First and foremost, the car seat keeps the child from being thrown from the car. Car seats protect a child's head, neck and spine, especially when the young child is in a rear-facing car seat. The harness holds the child's hips and shoulders, spreading the crash forces over the strongest parts of their body.

Slide 8: NHTSA & AAP

This is a chart from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. This chart is also supported by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Both websites provide valuable information on child passenger safety. Looking at the chart we see the age/years of a child at the top. The bottom pictures show the different types of car seats. Rear-facing seats can be utilized from birth all the way to 3 years old, meaning that a child can remain rear-facing until 3 years old **IF** their car seat will allow them, by weight and height. For example, some convertible car seats allow rear-facing up to 40 lbs. and 40 inches. But every seat is different, so it is important to ALWAYS look at the manufacturer's guidelines to determine the child's maximum weight and height allowable for each car seat.

For the Forward-facing car seat in yellow, in a 5-point harness a child could begin to sit forward by age 1 and could remain in the harness until age 7. But we do NOT recommend turning a child forward until at least two years of age. Again, these numbers vary according to the model of the car seat and the manufacturers' guidelines, taking into consideration the child's age, ht, wt and developmental stage. Best practice, or the safest option, is to utilize the car seat to the maximum wt. and ht. allowable for that child.

A very important point I want to make is that we join NHTSA and the American Academy of Pediatrics in recommending that children remain rear-facing until at least two years of age, which **is best practice and the safest option**. In fact, CA Assembly Bill 53, which would require all children under age 2 to remain rear-facing, is now waiting for Governor Brown's signature. If he signs it, it would go into effect in 2017, giving us a full year to educate the public.

Slide 9: Rear-facing Only Car Seats

Let's go over the different stages or types of car seats. The first type of car seat is the rear-facing only seat. Again, depending on the model, this type of car seat is appropriate for a child weighing from 4 lbs. to 35 lbs. As we said a moment ago, we strongly recommend keeping a child rear-facing until age 2 before turning them forward-facing. It is absolutely the safest option. Remember young children have heavy heads and they are still fragile, especially their necks. Rear-facing will keep them best protected. Again, this type of car seat should be placed in the back seat of a car.

Slide 10: Convertible Car Seats

Convertible car seats are for children from 5 lbs. to 40 lbs. This type of car seats starts out rear-facing, then as the child exceeds the ht. or wt. of the rear-facing direction, the car seat can be turned in the forward-facing position. Again,

always check the car seat label or manual to determine the minimum and maximum ht. and wt. for each car seat, due to the variety of car seat manufacturers and guidelines.

Many parents prefer the convenience of a rear-facing only car seat over the convertible car seat, because the rear-facing only seat allows the parent to remove the child from the vehicle in a carrier, while keeping the base in the vehicle. But both types of car seats provide the same rear-facing protection, starting at 5 lbs for a new born; although the rear-facing only seat may be more convenient, the convertible car seat will generally allow a child to sit rear-facing longer before the child outgrows the seat.

Slide 11: *Rear-facing Recommendations*

So here's a recap of recommendations for our rear-facing direction. (Read Slide, emphasize picture). Caregivers should not worry about a child's feet touching the back of the car. Kids are very flexible and they easily fall asleep too. Again, frontal collisions are the most frequent and can result in further head, neck, upper body injuries, especially to young children. Rear-facing car seats will best protect children's upper body. As you see in the picture, this child is 3 yrs old and is still happy to be sitting rear-facing. His legs may look cramped to an adult, but it is easy for children to spread out their legs. This child is accustomed to being rear-facing.

Slide 12: *Forward-facing vs. Rear-facing*

This chart compares a forward-facing car seat with rear-facing car seat. The graph on the bottom shows the force that is placed on the child in the direction they are sitting. As you can clearly see, the forward-facing child has extreme forces placed on their neck versus the child rear-facing. For the child sitting rear-facing, the neck and upper body is protected by the back of the car seat, which limits the forces on the neck. Again, I want to emphasize the importance of keeping your child rear-facing as long as you can. Most convertible car seats will provide this best protection option.

Slide 13: *Combination Car Seats*

Combination Car Seats: This type of car seat starts as a forward-facing seat. Again, it is important to pay attention to the manufacturer's label on the seat to know the weight and height limits. Combination car seats start with the 5 point harness and when the child outgrows the harness, either by wt. or ht. the car seat can be converted into a booster seat. Best practice is to keep the child in a 5 point harness as long as you can, up to the manufacturer's max ht. or wt., before transitioning them into the booster stage, which only provides a three point protection from the seat belt. Again, always follow the car seat instructions for each type of car seat. The car seat label or manual will also let you know when and how to adjust the harness height as the child grows and transitions to the booster mode.

Slide 14: *Belt Positioning Booster*

The Belt Positioning Booster is made for older, more mature kids. Again, the wt. and ht. varies with each type of seat, but usually goes from 30 lbs. to 120 lbs. or about 4 years old to 12 years old. There are two types of boosters, a high-back booster, which is what this child is using, and a no-back booster, which is just a bottom piece. Both types of boosters function the same way, to boost a child up, so that the seat belt will fit them properly, across the shoulders and the middle of the chest and low on their hips, not on their necks or their stomachs. Remember, seat belts are made for adults. If your child is not at least 4' 9" inches tall, the seat belt will not fit as it should - with the shoulder belt crossing the middle of the shoulder (NOT touching the neck), and the lap belt crossing low on the hips. Until the child is 4'9" tall, he/she needs to remain in a car seat or booster seat. Weight is not a factor in this decision, only height.

The high-back booster provides upper support and a shoulder guide, and is probably more appropriate for a younger, "squirmier" child who would have trouble sitting still and straight for long periods of time. A no-back booster should be used with a head restraint on the seat to support the child's neck.

Slide 15: *No Booster vs. Booster*

This clip compares a child with and without a booster seat. As you can see, for the child NOT in a booster, their head moves further forward and down causing more head, neck, and spine injuries compared to the child on the bottom in a booster seat. The booster seat allows the seat belt to fit their body correctly, which will prevent severe head movement and injuries.

Slide 16: *Lap Only, Not Recommended*

Lap only belts are NOT recommended. Some older vehicles may still have lap only seat belts, which only secure the lower portions of our bodies. We do not recommend having a child in a booster seat sit in this seating position in the vehicle. Without a shoulder belt for upper body protection, as you see in the clip, the head is excessively thrown forward, resulting in multiple injuries to the upper body. Do NOT seat your child in a lap belt only position!

Slide 17: *Car Seat Labels*

Car Seat Labels: All car seats and booster seats come with labels/stickers on the side or back. If you don't have the car seat manual, these labels will be a quick guide to height, weight and sometimes the age appropriate for that seat. The manual and label also show instructions on installation. The label or manual will provide information about the date the seat was manufactured and when the seat expires.

It is very important to know the history of your car seat, in case it was ever in a crash or may have been recalled. If you don't know the history of your car seat, it's impossible to know if the seat was ever in a crash. That's why we do not recommend that people purchase used car seats. If a seat WAS in a crash, even if it looks undamaged, the integrity of the seat has been compromised and it is no longer safe. So please urge your parents to NOT purchase a used seat. And if they get a seat handed down from families or friends, it's important to ask questions about the seat and check to see if it has been recalled.

Most car seats have an expiration date of 6 years. But again, that depends on the car seat manufacturer, and varies depending on the materials or plastics used in the fabrication of the seat. Also, make sure you complete and mail in the registration card that comes with your new car seat. It is the only way the manufacturer can notify you in case of a recall. Again, always refer to the car seat manuals for height, weight and age appropriateness and how to correctly install the car seat. **To register a seat online**, go to www.safercar.gov/parents and enter the brand, model number and date of manufacture. It takes less than 2 minutes and assures that the owner of the seat is notified in the event of a recall. The information cannot be used for any other purpose.

Slide 18: *Manuals: Vehicles, Child Restraints*

Manuals: When educating caregivers/parents on car seats, we strongly encourage you to go through vehicle manuals and car seat manuals as a guide to correctly installing car seats or booster seats. The vehicle manual will cover how and where to correctly place your car seats, what Latch systems are, how to use your seat belts to secure car seats, and airbag placements. Child Restraint Manuals will show how to install the seat using either the Latch system or seat belt and explain the details of the car seat, such as securing the child in the harness.

Slide 19: *Latch System*

Latch is an acronym for Lower Anchors and Tether for Children. The latch system is found in vehicles 2003 and newer. These anchors systems are placed into vehicles to help make car seat installation easier. Here are examples of where tether attachment and lower anchors can be found. Depending on the vehicle, tethers can be found in several different places. The vehicle manual will show the location of the tethers.

Slide 20: Non-Regulated Products

Non-regulated products are products that did not come with the car seat or vehicle. The picture to the left is a mirror mounted to a head restraint. This is considered unsafe because in the event of a crash, the mirror could break off and become a projectile. It can also be a distraction for drivers as they look back to see the baby. The picture to the right shows the non-regulated products - or the additional inserts for the baby. These additional inserts will interfere with the harness slots and potentially push the baby's head forward, not allowing the child to open up their airways. These products that did not come with car seats or vehicle will change the way the car seat functions to protect the child. They are not recommended.

Slide 21: Did it Come with the Car Seat?

Yes, the pictures to your left show that these inserts came with the car seat and should be appropriate to use versus the pictures to your right, which are inserts that did not come with the car seats and may not fit the seat or the child correctly.

Slide 22: California Law

In California, the law states that "Children under age 8 must be properly buckled into a car seat or booster in the back seat." Children age 8 or older, or who are 4'9" or taller, may use the vehicle seat belt, **if it fits properly with the lap belt**. So, it's all about proper fit, (as the picture shows). The shoulder belt crosses the center of the chest and the lap belt stays across the hips. Seat belts are made for adults; children who are not yet 4' 9" inches tall need a booster to lift them up for correct seat belt fit and best protection in case of a crash.

Although the law provides us with a standard, we should always use best practice to keep our children the safest. "Best practice" in the CPS world is the gold standard of protection, while following manufacturer instructions. Best practice is the safest way to transport a child based on the child's age, height, weight and developmental levels. So, always use best practice when educating parents/caregivers on car seat safety.

In addition, in California, Assembly member Cristina Garcia introduced Assembly Bill 53 that would require children up to 2 years old to sit in a rear-facing car seat. It is awaiting Governor Brown's signature (as of September 2015). If he signs the bill, it will go into effect in 2017. We would have all of 2016 to educate the public about keeping children rear-facing until age two. However, until that happens we will continue to educate parents/caregivers about best practice, which is already to keep children in rear-facing seats until age two.

It's so important to understand that child passenger safety continues to evolve as technology changes. We need to stay current in the information we provide to parents/caregivers, particularly as laws and technology change. So, always refer to your vehicle manuals and car seat manuals as well as your state laws to keep up with changes and accurate information.

Slide 23: Child Passenger Safety Video

Slide 24: In and Around Cars

Another important topic to include in our education is Heatstroke, one of the leading causes of non-crash vehicle related deaths for children. The temperature in cars can rise to 30 to 50 degrees higher than the outside temperature. The inside of a vehicle heats up 19 degrees every 10 minutes. When we educate parents/caregivers, we include these tips: **A** – Avoid: never leave your child alone in the car, even for a minute. And always lock unattended vehicle doors and trucks so children cannot get inside to play and become trapped.

C – Create reminders by putting something in the back of your car next to your child such as briefcase, a purse or cell phone that is needed at the final destination. This is important, especially if you're not following your normal routine.

T – Take action. If you see a child alone in a car, call 911. Emergency personnel want you to call. They are trained to respond to these situations. One call could save a life. This past August we are aware of two near-misses in the Sacramento region alone, when infants' lives were saved because alert bystanders decided to get involved and make the 911 call.

Even cracking a window open will not provide enough ventilation to cool the inside of a car. Prevention is key in preventing heatstroke deaths. Never leave a young child alone in a car. Always take action if you see a child alone in a car – Call 911.

Slide 25: In and Around Cars

In the fall of 2001, the governor of California signed into law Senate Bill 255, known as Kaitlyn's Law. Named after Kaitlyn Russell, a six-month old child who died after being left alone in a parked car for more than two hours, the law makes it illegal for a child age 6 and younger to be left unattended in a motor vehicle.

For more detailed information, here's a link to the carseat.org website

As of today, 9/4/2015, there have already been 18 heatstroke deaths of children left in vehicles across the country. We have seen two deaths this year in California and many near-misses when bystanders have stepped up and called 9-1-1. We must continue to educate to raise awareness and call folks to action to prevent heatstroke deaths. For additional resources on heatstroke or statistics, visit noheatstroke.org.

Slide 26: In and Around Cars

Driveway Safety: another topic to think about is driveway safety. Many preventable injuries and deaths occur in driveways or parking lots when drivers are unaware that children are playing near vehicles. Statistics from Safe Kids Worldwide website states that more than 9,000 children are treated in emergency rooms for injuries that occurred while they were unattended in or around motor vehicles.

As drivers, we need to take extra precaution when backing out of our driveway, making sure a child doesn't run out behind our car. Safe Kids suggests taking a few seconds to walk all the way around your parked car to check for children, designating a safe spot for children to wait when cars are moving, making sure drivers can see them or holding onto children's hands when walking near moving vehicles, driveways and parking lots or sidewalks.

Trunk Entrapment Prevention: is another issue related to vehicle safety. We need to educate our children that the trunk or the inside of a car is not a place to use as a hiding place. The trunk has poor ventilation and vehicles can get hot very. ALWAYS lock your cars, including the trunk, when not in use. Keep your car keys out of children's sight and reach. Make sure kids understand that cars and trunks off limit. Show older kids how to locate the emergency trunk release, which will be found in all vehicles made after Sept 1, 2001.

Slide 27:

Smart Parents Safe Kids

All materials for a parent workshop presentation are available for download from the Safe Kids California website.

safekidscalifornia.org/home-safety/home-safety-toolkit

Be sure to check for child product recalls and learn more about recalls at: safekidscalifornia.org/recalls

Prevention tips and other injury prevention resources are available on the Safe Kids California website, safekidscalifornia.org/home-safety/home-safety-toolkit.

Slide 28: Car Seat Resources

Here's a list of more car seat resources and to find a nearest safe kids coalition, you can go to:

1. Visit the Safe Kids California website to find a coalition in your area, safekidscalifornia.org/about-us/find-a-coalition
2. For more car seat information, brochures in English and Spanish, car seat inspection stations in CA, visit safekidscalifornia.org/car-and-road-safety/car-seats
3. Safe Kids GS : provides weekly inspection stations, visit website for detail and contact information and well as other injury prevention topics
4. Sac DDHS compiled a Car Seat Resource guide that can assist parents/caregivers with installing car seats correctly, some agencies may provide a low cost seats to eligible families.
5. California Dept. Public Health: also has updated booster seat laws and brochures that you can download to share.
6. NHTSA: provides additional best practice car seat safety information and access to car seat recalls.

All Smart Parents Safe Kids workshop materials and resources for Child Passenger Safety can be found and downloaded from the Safe Kids California website, safekidscalifornia.org/home-safety/home-safety-toolkit. Scroll down to find the Child Passenger Safety Toolkit.

THANK YOU!