

## Status Update: Nebraska's Child-care CPS Training Requirement

In 2013, the March/April issue of *SRN* reported that the state of Nebraska had adopted a new regulation requiring CPS training for all licensed commercial centers that provide transportation as part of child care. The ambitious regulation aimed to make children safer by ensuring that every childcare center transporter would be trained to make proper choices regarding CR selection, installation, and use. The extra safety precautions that should be taken when driving 12- and 15-passenger vans and school buses would also be part of the scope of required training.

Safe Kids Nebraska was charged with the task of developing an appropriate three-hour course for childcare providers, as well as establishing the procedures and requirements for scheduling and teaching the course.

Now that a couple of years have passed, *SRN* checked in with Jason Kerkman, director of Safe Kids Nebraska, to get a status update on the program. He told *SRN* that over 1,700 individual childcare center staff had been trained to date. The curriculum includes a pre- and post-test to measure change in knowledge of state laws and CPS best practice, and program staff have found that the score, on average, increases from 5.6 before the class to 8.3 afterwards. Participants' post-class evaluations indicate that 96.4 percent agree or strongly agree that their CPS knowledge improved, and 93.6 percent rated the materials beneficial

*Continued, page 5*

## Spring 2015 Child Restraint Update

Fewer new CR models are being introduced this season than in recent years, and many of those featured in this issue's new CR article are actually redesigns or remarketings of earlier models. This may be because spring is not traditionally a time for new introductions, which are more likely to coincide with the ABC Kids Expo in the fall. However, regulatory uncertainty may be a contributing factor, as new side-impact testing requirements have been proposed but are not finalized. In addition, manufacturers have heard talk that significant changes to how CRs are tested for frontal collisions may be on the horizon. In this environment, manu-

facturers might consider it prudent to wait so that they can be sure new designs meet future testing requirements.

Nevertheless, some improvements to existing CRs and innovative new releases have recently come to the market, as described in this article. The main focus seems to be on energy management, vehicle compatibility, and side-impact protection. Some innovations are only available on more expensive models, though some notable new features have been added to CRs in the low to mid price range. Better instructions, labels, child fit, and ease-of-use features are found at all price levels.

*See page 6 for a rundown of new CRs.*

## Transporting Students with Disabilities and Preschoolers Conference

Every day, many children ride in child safety restraint systems (CSRS\*) on school buses. Some are simply too small (under 50 pounds) to be adequately protected by compartmentalization. Others have disabilities that require them to ride with extra support. In addition, small buses weighing 10,000 pounds GVW or less cannot provide adequate protection via compartmentalization to any occupant (large or small), so on these buses either seat belts or CSRS must be used.

The annual national Transporting Students With Disabilities and Preschoolers Conference, held this year in Frisco, Texas, March 20-25, is dedicated to supporting the transportation professionals who deal with these situations, serving small children (including those in Head Start) and children with special healthcare needs. Among the myriad extra responsibilities these drivers, aides, and administrators take on is the use of CSRS and wheelchairs on school buses. At the 24th annual conference, attendees learned and practiced the gold standard in care through general and breakout sessions, participation in or observation of the National Special Needs Roadeo, a vendor

expo, and the opportunity to take the CPS Restraint Systems on School Buses National Training. The articles on page 4 cover some highlights from this year's conference.

\*CSRS, or child safety restraint system, is the preferred terminology for what we might call a child restraint in a passenger vehicle. The terminology includes the word "safety" to differentiate the use of these lifesaving products from other forms of restraint that are sometimes inappropriately used on children with special needs (on buses or in the classroom).

*TSD coverage continues on page 4*

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### Kidz in Motion Conference

11th Annual!

August 12-15  
Orlando, Florida

[www.kidzinmotion.org](http://www.kidzinmotion.org)



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## Editorial

# Good, Better, Best—Something to Think About for CPS

Perhaps, like me, you've heard the idea of "good, better, best" mentioned a bit lately. Often it's used as a way to think about food choices (i.e., that gummy roll with real fruit might be a good snack choice, but 100 percent apple juice is better, and the whole apple is best). But my interest was piqued when I recently overheard this concept being used to talk about CPS options. In a field in which CPSTs are taught to adhere to the gold standard of best practice—while many of our clientele are prone to making choices that fall far short of that mark—I think applying this philosophy in our caregiver interactions can help us communicate more effectively.

One natural application for this concept is when dealing with the topic of CR selection. For instance, we know that children are safest staying rear facing until at least age 2, and even after that if they still fit the CR. This is the best-practice message we should always convey to parents. But what happens when parents arrive for CPS education with an 18-month-old in a convertible CR that they insist on turning forward facing? Or perhaps they already have done so. What about the child who has ridden in a RF-only CR until well over a year old, but whose parents have recently selected a combination CR for the next step (eliminating the option to continue the rear facing mode)?

Sure, these scenarios can't be called "best." But, if the CRs are used correctly following manufacturers' instructions, aren't they at least "good"? I'm the first to admit, the idea of accepting less than the absolute "best" practice is hard to stomach. We always want what's best for every child, right? But perhaps, from our perspective, the "best" that we should aim for is making the very best of the limited time we have when teaching a family and/or the best use of a family's limited resources. Many times, that's going to mean empowering families to make their own choices, even if they settle on "good." Don't get me wrong, all caregivers deserve to know the gold standard of safety, and it is our job to teach that. But we also need to know how to tactfully approach this, being sensitive to the unique situation in each caregiver interaction.

So, the concept of "good, better, best" can be directly employed as a way to talk to caregivers. By expressly communicating when a choice is good, or even better, we can build the kind of rapport with caregiv-

ers that's needed to encourage real learning. Depending on the situation, we might also need to let them know that a different choice would be even better. But we should probably pick those situations carefully. (Sometimes in life, what we don't say can be key to success.)



*The Safe-Dock system is now being provided by many retailers. Although any system that involves strapping a CR atop a shopping cart is not the best safety alternative, if properly used, the system is probably better than many other approaches caregivers take when shopping with baby.*

I've also found myself thinking in these terms to assess new CPS situations, as well. For instance, many retailers (including Costco and Walmart) are now equipping some shopping carts with a new device, the Safe-Dock, which is intended to secure a RF-only CR atop the seating area. The creator, Safe-Strap Company of New Jersey, developed this system to help prevent some of the 23,000-plus annual emergency room visits involving children and shopping carts.

Unfortunately, I can't consider this a best-practice solution while shopping. Because shopping carts are unregulated and are prone to tipping over (often when they are destabilized by an older sibling riding on the side of the cart—a gruesome situation I've witnessed myself), a shopping cart is simply not a stable place for an infant, whether perched on top or within the basket. (See *SRN* Jan/Feb 2012 for a report on shopping cart dangers.) And what if the caregiver fails to securely attach the docking strap (which is essentially a seat belt) around the RF-only CR, or the harness isn't properly snugged? We know from experience in vehicles that these errors are very likely to be made.

So, no, a Safe-Dock is not "best." But, considering the struggle caregivers face when trying to balance safety with the basic neces-

*Continued, next page*

## NHTSA Rules on Waiver Requests to Use Highway Funds for CRs

The requirements of the Buy America mandate for use of state highway funds has been back in CPS news lately. After approving a waiver last fall for these funds to be used to purchase Huggable Image training dolls (see *SRN* Sept/Oct 2014), which are made outside of the U.S., NHTSA has replied to three other CPS-related waiver petitions, granting two while denying one.

First, responding to a request by the Maryland State Highway Office (MSHO), NHTSA determined that Section 402 funds may be used to purchase Nania (Team-Tex) **Baby Ride** CRs, despite the fact that they are made in France. NHTSA agreed with MSHO's reason why an exception was warranted, stating, "The Nania **Baby Ride** is unique in the child seat market because it does not specify a minimum child weight." As noted by NHTSA, other CRs for small infants made in the U.S. limit use to infants weighing at least 4 pounds. The **Baby Ride** is available from Child Source for about \$39.90. The waiver will expire on September 30, 2015.

In its application, MSHO says it sought the waiver because it operates several CR assistance programs in the state that work with hospitals to discharge healthy infants who weigh less than 4 pounds. It also states it finds using a rear-facing CR preferable to using a car bed because rear-facing CRs are easier to use and install, require only one seating position, and have harness dimensions that are "not as limiting as car beds."

### Good, from p.1

sity of getting groceries, I think I can concede that using it is "better" than what usually occurs. The reality is, we may find ourselves soon grappling with a "good, better, best" question: Should we be warning caregivers not to use a Safe-Dock because it is not "best," or teaching how to use that system as safely as possible because it is better than many alternatives? The answer probably is to communicate both—promote "best," but accept that the "better" option is likely to be too good for many families to pass up. In general, we should strive to explain the risks to caregivers and give them information for safer alternatives (like, in this case, carrying baby in a front pack or stroller, or shopping online), but recognize and support them in their right to have the final word.

*Denise Donaldson*

No official comments were posted during the comment period (other than one, apparently from a non-CPST, objecting on the basis of keeping jobs in America). However, in the aftermath of this announcement, commenters on the CPSP listserv questioned the harness fit of the **Baby Ride** for use with very small infants. Of concern to many is the fact that the European manufacturer states a "from birth" starting weight for the **Baby Ride**, despite the fact that the CR has no discernible design features that would provide a superior harness fit for small infants over other models that state a starting weight of 4 pounds. As in any situation, it is presumed that those providing this CR will check proper fit of the harness and will weigh the fit as heavily as the allowed usage weights.

NHTSA also approved a waiver request submitted by the New Hampshire Highway Safety Agency (NHSA) to use state highway funds to purchase Diono **Radian R120** CRs (made in China) for the purpose of transporting children in ambulances. In its assessment, NHTSA found that there are a few CRs made in the U.S. that are convertible and have an equivalent harness-use range of 5 to 80 pounds, features that the waiver application cited as necessary to meet specific emergency-equipment requirements in New Hampshire. However, NHTSA granted the waiver because it agreed that none of those high-weight-harness CRs made in the U.S. fold to a slim profile like the **Radian R120** does, a feature that is key for storage on an ambulance. The ruling document says that the NHSA application noted the "Working Group Best-Practice Recommendations for the Safe Transportation of Children in Emergency Ground Ambulances," issued by NHTSA in September 2012 (see *SRN* Sept/Oct 2012), recommends that children transported by ambulance be secured using a size-appropriate child restraint system in either the cot (stretcher) or the captain's chair. It also cited the **Radian's** steel alloy frame and 10-year lifespan as desirable features. The waiver is effective until the end of the fiscal year, September 30, 2015.

In a waiver application that was denied, the North Carolina Governor's Highway Safety Program (NCGHSP) sought permission to use highway funds to purchase small quantities of seven specific CR models for use in CPS training (primarily certification courses). The NCGHSP listed seven models

(Baby Trend **Inertia**, Chicco **KeyFit**, Cybex **Aton 2**, Graco **Head Wise**, Graco **Nautilus**, Graco **AFFIX**, and Evenflo **RightFit**) that it said met the waiver criterion that there be "no comparable products reasonably available and of satisfactory quality" made in the U.S. Its application stated that the CRs had unique usage features and/or were extremely popular with families in the state, so they are needed to properly prepare technicians.

In its denial, NHTSA concluded that since CRs are made in the U.S. for each of the CR modes represented by the CRs in the application (RF, FF, booster), the NCGHSP should be able to teach courses using only domestically made CRs. In response to the application's points regarding the unique features possessed by the specific models, NHTSA acknowledged that "some domestic car seats may lack similar features" to those listed in the waiver request, but "these features are marketing based features that have little overall impact on the functionality of the seats."

During the subsequent comment period (now closed), the NCGHSP emphatically objected to classifying features like rigid LA connectors, a load leg, and an anti-rebound bar as marketing features, as if they were in a class with cupholders and sunshades. Mark Sedlack, president of the Millenium Development Group and who has been involved in all aspects of CR development since the mid-1980s, also submitted comments, which echoed this viewpoint. In the NCGHSP comments, author Bill Hall of the UNC Highway Safety Research Center stated, "As new Technicians often lack confidence and experience with different seats, it is important for them to have supervised practice with popular models so that they are prepared to verify information in the car seats' instructions and efficiently educate the parent on proper use. In many cases, the models that are most popular in a given community are ones that are not made in America."

NHTSA hasn't responded to these comments as of this issue's publication date, but *SRN* will report on any updates. The documents, including posted comments, can be viewed by going to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and searching NHTSA-2014-0128 (for the waiver requested by Maryland), NHTSA-2015-0021 (for the waiver requested by New Hampshire), and NHTSA-2015-0007 (for the waiver requested by North Carolina).

### School Bus Evacuation of Students in CSRS Requires Planning, Training

At the Transporting Students with Disabilities and Preschoolers (TSD) Conference in March, Charley Kennington, of Innovative Transportation Solutions, and Kathy Furneaux, of the Pupil Transportation Safety Institute, discussed an important aspect of transporting groups of children: having a plan for how to get all students off the vehicle quickly in an emergency. When a school bus carries children who ride restrained in five-point harnesses, you can readily see how important it is to practice and prepare for emergency evacuation. In fact, knowing how a child would be evacuated in an emergency should be considered as important as learning how the CSRS is installed.

Being ready to quickly remove a child from a CSRS on the bus is just one of a wide array of evacuation considerations, but an important one. For a child with special needs, appropriate procedures should be

considered during meetings of the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) group and written in the IEP documentation. Whereas in a family vehicle, a reasonable plan might be to release the installation belt and the child in his CR, this approach is usually not practical on a bus. Complicating factors on a school bus include the number of children on board, the fact that CSRS are often installed using a cam wrap (a strap around the bus seatback), and the confinement of narrow row spacing and aisles. Therefore, evacuation procedures often involve use of belt cutters, specifically as described in the box on the next page.

Some children ride to school while seated in a wheelchair rather than a CSRS. Sue Shutrump, OT/PT director for Trumbull County Educational Service Center in Ohio and an expert in transportation of children with spe-

*Continued, next page*

### Maine Team Wins Special Needs Roadeo

Lisa Gadway and Gregg McGoff from the Maine School Administrative District #49 were the winning team at the 18th Annual National Special



*Lisa Gadway and Gregg McGoff of Maine were the top special needs school bus team for 2015.*

Needs Team Safety Roadeo, held March 21 in Frisco, Texas. The Roadeo is an annual event that recognizes excellence and commitment to the safe and compassionate transportation of students with special needs. The event is co-sponsored by the National Association for Pupil Transportation and STN Media, publisher of School Transportation News magazine. Congratulations, Lisa and Gregg!

### CSRS on School Buses Training Updated

In 2013, three of the authors of the CPS Restraints on School Buses National Training appealed to NHTSA regarding the need to revise and update that course. Cheryl Wolf, Sue Shutrump, and Charley Kennington, along with support from the National Safety Council (NSC), began that update process in 2014, and the draft curriculum was piloted at the Transporting Students with Disabilities and Preschoolers Conference in Frisco, Texas, on March 22.

The group cited the need to acknowledge the industry trend toward use of school-bus-specific CSRS (rather than conventional CRs) as one important reason that an update was needed. In the updated curriculum, more time is allotted to discussing these products. Several new photographs showing school-bus-specific CSRS installation and usage steps enhance the materials.

Another difference is that the new version more specifically focuses on preschoolers. Discussion of CSRS for special needs has been consolidated into one segment of

Chapter 3, rather than appearing throughout the training. For older students on buses equipped with lap-shoulder belts, a new section has been added on the proper way to wear these belts. As of October 2011, lap-shoulder belts on buses are required to meet lockability standards to accommodate CSRS installation, but information on the use of locking clips has been added to the curriculum for those older buses that have lap-shoulder belts with free-sliding latchplates.

Although the hands-on time has not decreased, chapter consolidation eliminates repetition and has streamlined the lecture content considerably. The pilot course was offered over a six-hour period, two hours shorter than earlier versions of the course. However, the course authors are reluctant to say at this time what the recommended length of the course will be when the curriculum becomes finalized. At this time, it is being reviewed by NHTSA, and the date it will be made final is unknown. *SRN* will report when this is announced.

#### Background of CPS Restraints on School Buses National Training

No central agency records attendees of the CPS Restraints on School Buses National Training, so no tally of the number of people who have taken the course exists. However, Charley Kennington, one of the primary instructors who has been involved in most offerings over the years, estimates that roughly 3,000 people have completed the course (adjusting for the fact that some people take it multiple times).

**2000:** Development period of NHTSA's eight-hour, standardized course for using CSRS on school buses (not a certification credential).

**2001:** In February, the new course is piloted.

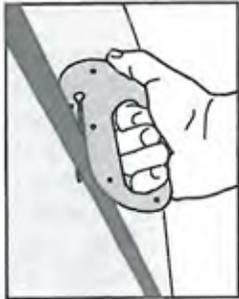
**2008:** The first major update to the curriculum is completed and launched.

**2014:** The second major curriculum update is undertaken; piloted in March 2015 at TSD conference. Now awaiting final approval from NHTSA.

#### Encouragement for course instructors

Are you interested in holding a CPS Restraints on School Buses National Training in your area? Have you considered being on the teaching team? To qualify, you must be a currently certified CPST who has taken the standardized school bus course (preferably within the last few years, rather than many years ago). If you want to learn more about how to arrange for and participate in a course, send an e-mail to Charley Kennington at [CKennington@esc4.net](mailto:CKennington@esc4.net).

## Cutting CSRS Straps for Bus Evacuation



A belt cutter, readily available from many online sources, is used for cutting webbing in an emergency. The blade slices as the webbing slides through the cutter's notch. For best results, hold the webbing taut and pull downward on the cutter at an angle across the webbing.

### Cutting by CSRS Type

**Convertible, Combination, and Integrated CSRS:** Cut each of the two shoulder straps right below the harness retainer clip (HRC). Once these are cut, pull down on the HRC to slide it off of the cut ends of the straps. The straps below the cut will slide easily through the harness' latchplates (still buckled) as the child is pulled up and out of the CSRS.

**Safety vest:** These are installed using a cam wrap that runs vertically around the seatback. Cut the cam-wrap strap just below the attachment hook that secures it at the back of the seatback. The straps will then pull free of the seatback as the child leaves the bus (still wearing the vest). The cut cam wrap strap that's still attached to the shoulders of the vest can be held by an adult to move or guide the child, if needed.

**School-bus only CSRS:** Although these install with a cam wrap, cutting for evacuation is the same process as for a conventional forward-facing CR. Cut the two shoulder straps below the harness retainer clip, and then pull down on the clip to remove it.

**Conventional RF-only CR:** Remove the carrier (from the base, if used) and evacuate the child while harnessed in the carrier.

## Evacuation, from p. 4

cial needs, says that it is entirely impractical for an evacuation plan to include use of the bus's power lift for removing children while in their wheelchairs. In a true emergency, the limited time and resources available would instead require one or two people lifting or dragging the occupant, leaving the wheelchair behind. A belt cutter would again be needed to cut both the occupant restraint (lap-shoulder belt) and positional harness (a procedure that would depend upon the particular wheelchair and restraint system).

An even better situation for children who use a wheelchair is to transfer them to

appropriate seating on the bus while being transported, whenever possible. According to AAP policy guidelines, this is best practice for crash safety. An additional consideration is that it is also easier to evacuate a child who is seated in a bus seat (whether in a CSRS or not) in the event of an emergency, since there are fewer belts to cut to release the child than when seated in a wheelchair.

Those who work in the school bus industry know that this article merely scratches the surface of the overall effort required to develop an evacuation plan. More information can be found through the resources listed below. An idea for CPSTs who do not work with buses but who would like to help is to offer school districts old/expired CSRS for use in training (clearly marked "DO NOT USE," of course), as drivers and aides can use them to practice cutting webbing. This is a good way to repurpose unwanted equipment and could also be a nice way to introduce yourself in order to start a positive relationship with your local district.

### Resources:

A new 10-minute training video on school bus evacuation is now available: "School Bus Evacuated—Breaking News!" Go to [www.ptsj.org](http://www.ptsj.org).

Another resource is SRN's *The School Bus Safety Handbook*, available at [www.saferidenews.com](http://www.saferidenews.com).

## Nebraska, from p. 1

or highly beneficial to their work.

Safe Kids Nebraska also polled the directors of childcare centers to determine how they perceive the required training has affected their businesses. Of those who responded, 66.7 percent rated the training "beneficial" or "very beneficial" to their staff, and 41.7 percent of the centers made changes to their transportation policy subsequent to being trained. Importantly, 91 percent said they have or now know about available CPS resources.

Kerkman says the law is having a long-lasting, far-reaching effect. "Prior to the regulations, CPS training for staff at childcare centers was inconsistent," he said. "New regulations requiring CPS training resulted in the provision of consistent, accurate, and up-to-date information that has led to safer transportation of children." Examples of the strides reported by the class trainers are improvement in booster seat use, replacement of expired and unsafe CRs, updated transportation policies, and increased awareness about the safe use of 15-passenger vans as well as small and large school buses.



Childcare workers in Nebraska are trained how to properly use CRs.

Improvements continue to be made. Kerkman notes, "We are currently revising the curriculum based on the feedback from the CPSTs conducting the training to better meet the issues they are seeing." Perhaps the most impressive sign that this policy has been well received is that it has led to the adoption by the Nebraska Children and Family Services (CFS) of a similar training for all Nebraska CFS specialists who transport children. The three-hour CFS training is based on the Safe Kids Nebraska Child Care Transportation Training, and CFS has supported their staff trainers in becoming CPSTs to implement the new CPS training. Kerkman has told SRN that Safe Kids Nebraska is willing to share its materials with those in other areas who are initiating similar trainings ([jason.kerkman@nebraska.gov](mailto:jason.kerkman@nebraska.gov)).



Trainers demonstrate proper evacuation of a wheelchair occupant. (Photo taken at an earlier conference.)

# Spring CR Update

## CR Update, from p. 1

### Highlights by Manufacturer

This spring product update has been compiled through *SRN* representation at Lifesavers, other spring conferences, and direct contact with manufacturers. Many new or revised CRs are now available, while others are in their early stages. This article focuses mainly on those that are either currently available or are expected in the next two months.

Mention here does not imply a recommendation by *SRN* or the author. Participating manufacturers are listed in alphabetical order. While this article gives an idea of what is expected, always refer to the instructions that come with the CR for the final word.

#### ❖ **BabyTrend**—[www.babytrend.com](http://www.babytrend.com)

Hello Kitty Hybrid No-Back Booster—\$25  
Booster: 40–100 lbs. backless  
Now available

This new BPB, with Hello Kitty cartoon branding to appeal to children (and some adults), is the same as Baby Trend's *Hybrid 3-in-1* CR in backless mode. It has foam padding on the entire seating surface and armrests and two molded cup-holders.

#### ❖ **Britax Child Safety**—[www.britax.com](http://www.britax.com)

As described in the last issue of *SRN*, BRITAX is in the process of discontinuing permission to tether its convertible CRs while in the rear-facing position, and instead it is offering a rebound bar accessory to caregivers who want similar functionality. User guides for convertibles in the ClickTight line already state, "Do not use the top tether strap with rear-facing installations." Instructions for G4.1 convertibles will reflect the update by mid-2015. See *SRN* Jan/Feb 2015 for more details. (Note: These changes are not retroactive to older BRITAX CRs that allow RF tethering in the instructions.)

In other BRITAX news, it has introduced new versions of its RF-only CR.

#### **B-Safe 35/B-Safe 35 Elite**—\$210/\$250

RF-only: 4–35 lbs.

Now available

The new *B-Safe 35* has a much-improved base compared to the original *B-Safe*. Those who have adjusted the recline angle foot on the original version will appreciate how much easier it is to move the foot to the desired position. For lap-shoulder belt installations, the shoulder belt slides into lock-offs along the base's belt path. The base also has

a unique center-pull adjuster for the LA attachment in which two straps that lay flat across the top of the base are pulled to tighten.



BRITAX B-Safe 35

The updated CR is now rated to 35 pounds, and the belt path for use without the base is no longer covered by the CR padding. The Elite version adds a no-rethread harness.

#### ❖ **Chicco**—[www.chiccousa.com](http://www.chiccousa.com)

The Chicco line is now complete, as the *KidFit* rounds out options from birth to booster.

#### **KidFit**—\$100

BPB: 30–100 lbs. highback; 40–110 lbs. backless  
Now available

This well-padded booster adjusts to 10 backrest positions and can be used with the back removed. It has push-on LA connectors to stabilize the CR in either mode. Two soft-sided cup holders flap inward when not in use and are removable for cleaning.

#### ❖ **Dorel Juvenile**—[www.djgusa.com](http://www.djgusa.com)

Dorel brands are in the process of phasing into all applicable instructions a requirement that children be a minimum of age 2 before riding forward facing. It is also moving to an age-4-and-40-pound minimum for all boosters. In addition to introducing the new model described below, the company has announced a program that allows buyers of its Maxi-Cosi *Mico* RF-only CR to customize online orders. It has also significantly improved the *Dream Ride SE* car bed by adding LA attachment for installation.

#### **Safety 1st Grow & Go**—\$169

3-in-1: 5–40 lbs. RF; 22–65 lbs. and at least 2 years old FF; 40–100 lbs. and at least 4 years old for highback

Available summer 2015

This new 3-in-1 may eventually replace the *Alpha Omega Elite* series and has many improved features over that older model. The CR and its footprint take up less space when rear facing, and it can be set to three levels of recline (so use of a noodle will rarely be needed). The LA attachments are the hook-on style.

The headrest and no-rethread harness adjust to four positions for larger children, and there is a separate, lower set of harness slots for very small infants. There are also two sets of loops for harness connection to the splitter plate, and the crotch strap has three adjustment positions (along with special routing for newborns). Removable head and body pillows will be required for smaller infants, but optional for larger children. A dual level line will indicate the correct angle for infants and older children.

#### ❖ **Evenflo**—[www.evenflo.com](http://www.evenflo.com)

#### **Advanced Transitions**—\$150

Combination CR: 22–65 lbs. and at least 1 year old FF; 40–120 lbs.\* and at least age 4 for highback or backless BPB

Now available (Walmart exclusive)

This new combination CR offers a backless booster mode in addition to harness and highback BPB options. The seat is cushioned with three layers for added comfort, and an extensive zone of impact-absorbing materials reduces side-impact forces by up to 50 percent. The recline feature is required for children weighing less than 40 pounds, as are the removable harness covers. The body pillow must be removed once a child weighs 40 pounds. The *Advanced Transitions* has push-on LA connectors, LATCH funnel guides, four sets of harness slots that require rethreading, a seven-position headrest, and a two-position crotch strap. Buckle pockets hold the harnesses out of the way and keep the latchplates cool.

For positioning a shoulder belt, the backless version has a belt-positioning strap, and there are dedicated storage areas for unused LA attachments and the tether strap.

\*Note: The very earliest units sold indicate a 110-pound upper limit.

Place latchplates in pockets on some Evenflo CRs to ease loading and prevent the metal from getting hot when unbuckled.



#### **Evolve Platinum**—\$180

Combination CR: 22–65 lbs. and at least 1 year old FF; 40–120 lbs. and at least age 4 for highback or backless BPB

Now available (Babies R Us exclusive)

This is the Babies R Us version of

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## CR Update, from p. 6

the *Advanced Transitions* 3-in-1 model described above. Rather than the *Transitions'* three layers of seat cushioning (found in Evenflo's Advanced line exclusive to Walmart), the *Evolve*, like others in Evenflo's Platinum series at Babies R Us, features a special fabric developed by NASA that absorbs hot and cold temperature and releases it as needed for child comfort. Other features are the same.

### ❖ Hauck—[www.hauckusa.com](http://www.hauckusa.com)

A new entry to the U.S. and Canadian markets is the German company Hauck, which has been selling baby products elsewhere in the world for 90 years. They are now set to enter the U.S. with a RF-only CR under the Hauck and i'coo brand names.

### *PROsafe 35*—\$199

RF-only: 4–35 lbs. RF

Available June 2015

What sets the *PROsafe 35* apart from other CRs in the U.S. is the unique lock-off/angle adjustment feature on the base. By opening and extending the lock-off fully, the recline adjuster is simultaneously engaged, setting the base to the most reclined position. Attach the push-on LA connectors or thread the vehicle belt, tighten, and check the angle by looking at the dual-level indicator. If the installation is too reclined, the foot can be reset to the next of five levels by re-extending the lock-off. Repeat this process until the proper level is achieved, then close the lock-off to complete installation.

The base and shell are designed so that the shell will automatically slide and lock into place from any position it's put on the base.

The *PROsafe 35's* five-point harness has four sets of shoulder slots that require rethreading, two sets of loops for splitter plate attachment (to accommodate smaller and larger infants), and a two-position crotch strap. For newborns, it has an infant pad with an additional foam insert for use from 4 to 11 pounds. Remove the foam insert when the baby fits properly without it (sometime from 11 to 22 pounds), and discontinue use of both infant insert parts after the child weighs 22 pounds. The recommended handle position for travel is the rebound-control position—set forward to brace against the vehicle seatback.

### ❖ IMMI—[www.immigoseat.com](http://www.immigoseat.com)

Since it has been awhile since IMMI has produced a CR for use in passenger vehicles

(like the reintroduced *GO*, below), we'll refresh readers' memories about this company. IMMI is a major producer of the parts used by many CR manufacturers, including harnesses, LA connectors, tether hooks, and more. It also produces seat belts and child safety restraint systems for use on school buses, as well as many other products for use in vehicles. The company owns and operates CAPE, the Center for Advanced Product Evaluation, which is an extensive crash-testing facility, performing simulations via sled, rollover machines, outdoor crash tracks, and more.

### *IMMI GO*—\$199

FF Harness/Booster: 22–65 lbs. FF; 40–100 lbs. backless

Now available

Years ago, this model was introduced as the *GO* under IMMI's Safeguard brand. Then it was sold to Dorel and released as the Safety 1st *Go Hybrid*. It was off the general market for a short while, but now it is back with IMMI, being sold as the *IMMI GO*.

This incarnation was inspired by the *GO's* ability to serve specific market niches, such as for-hire vehicles, police cars, etc., due to its portability. (See the *SRN* May/June 2014 issue for an article about its use by uberFamily taxis.) Lacking a hard shell, its five-point harness (with adjustable shoulder height and a two-position crotch strap) instead threads through a soft back. Due to this design, it is lightweight and can be folded into a carrying case for storage. It is also an option to consider when there are significant space constraints for CR installation.

The *GO* installs using either a seat belt or LA attachment and must be tethered at all child weights when used in harness mode (which makes it unapproved for use in aircraft).

For use as a booster, the back is removed and the seating surface becomes a backless BPB that may be used with or without the LA attachment connected to the vehicle LAs.

### ❖ Kiddy—[www.kiddyusa.com](http://www.kiddyusa.com)

*SRN* reported on this company's first U.S. RF-only CR back in 2013, but its release was delayed until recently. This report updates what we initially described.

### *Evolution Pro*—\$399

RF-only: 4\*–35 lbs., up to 37 inches RF

Now available

This new CR has many interesting features that set it apart from others. One of the biggest is its 37-inch height maximum,

## Graco Fined For Too-Slow Recall Response

In March, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) fined Graco \$10 million for violating regulations that require manufacturers to launch recall campaigns in a timely manner. *SRN's* initial coverage of the recall in question, which has to do with CR buckles that are difficult to unbuckle, appeared in the Jan/Feb 2014 issue. However, under pressure from NHTSA, Graco expanded the recalled models/dates over the course of 2014.

The DOT stated that \$3 million of the civil penalty would be due to the U.S. Treasury immediately, with the \$7 million balance due in five years unless Graco spends that amount on steps to improve child safety. Graco is expected to create a detailed plan for addressing certain performance requirements, specified by the DOT, which may include:

- Improving Graco's assessment/identification of potential safety defects.
- Revising Graco's procedures for addressing consumer safety complaints.
- Creating a scientifically tested program to increase effectiveness of CR registration programs for all brands.
- Launching a campaign to disseminate safety messages to parents and caregivers.

An independent third party must certify that Graco has met these obligations within five years or the balance of the \$10 million must be paid. For more details, go to [www.safercar.gov](http://www.safercar.gov) (search "Graco").

which means it allows use by infants 5 to 7 inches taller than other RF-only CRs.

Another unusual feature is that this CR features a three-point harness. These V-shaped harnesses were very popular years ago (and continue to be in Europe), but have not been sold here for many years. However, they are arguably easier to use, and provided a CR can pass the requirements of FMVSS 213, any design is allowed. The harness can be adjusted to five harness heights without rethreading.

Many of those who purchase this CR are likely to have been attracted to its lie-flat feature for use outside the vehicle. By rotating the handle back, the CR reclines to a flat position for use in carrier or stroller mode. Design features prevent the CR from being used in lie-flat mode in the vehicle, and the handle must be adjusted

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# NHTSA's Tween Campaign Urges, "Never Give Up Until They Buckle Up"

In March, NHTSA launched its first national advertising campaign aimed at parents of tweens (kids ages 8–14, for the campaign). Over the past five years, nearly 50 percent of the 1,552 kids between the ages of 8 and 14 who died in car crashes were unbelted. Focus groups conducted by NHTSA found that parents of children in this age group can become lax about requiring consistent seat belt use, especially when carpooling, running errands, and shuttling kids between school and other activities.

NHTSA notes that parents need to lead by example when it comes to getting their children to buckle up. It is also important to remind parents that many children in this age group are not large enough to properly fit the vehicle seat belts and should be riding in a belt-positioning booster.

For more about NHTSA's tween safety campaign, visit [www.safercar.gov/kidsbuckleup](http://www.safercar.gov/kidsbuckleup) (English) and [www.safercar.gov/chicosabrochense](http://www.safercar.gov/chicosabrochense) (Spanish).

## CR Update, from p. 7

to the upright position for proper use during travel. Another unique feature of the shell is the back area's slatted design, which is both shock absorbing and promotes airflow for occupant comfort.

The base has an interesting tightening feature. After attaching the push-on LA connectors, a panel inside the base is moved up and down to ratchet the LA straps until the installation is tight. The recline adjuster on the base has seven levels, which is intended to help it achieve the correct angle in any vehicle without the need for noodles. European shoulder belt routing is an option when installing without the base.

\* Be sure to check instructions to confirm starting weight. An owner's manual secured by SRN indicates 4 pounds, though widespread reporting of other weights implies that this information might vary in instructions.

### ❖ Phil&Teds—[www.philandted.com](http://www.philandted.com)

#### Alpha—\$200

RF-only: 4-35 lbs.

Now available

This new model from a company that is new to the U.S. is essentially the same as another new model, the Urbini *Petal*, described in the May/June 2014 issue. It has an adjustable base with hook-on lower connectors, as well as a built-in lock-off for seat belt installation.

The crotch strap, harness height, and hip strap locations are adjustable, making it very customizable to a large range of infant sizes.

### ❖ Safe Traffic System—

[www.safetrafficsystem.com](http://www.safetrafficsystem.com)

Safe Traffic System (STS) is set to introduce a BPB that can be combined with its *RideSafer Travel Vest (RSTV)* or used with

just a vehicle lap-shoulder belt.

STS has also stated it has discontinued the *RideSafer 3*, the version of the vest that cannot be tethered, in order to simplify the product line (not due to any safety problem). The company says it will continue to make the *RideSafer 2*.

### Delighter—\$49

Booster: 4–100 lbs. backless (with or without use of *RideSafer Travel Vest*)

Available summer 2015

The *Delighter* is covered with padded fabric, including the armrests, and it is specifically designed for optimal performance when combined with a *RideSafer Travel Vest*. It has cup/snack holders made out of netting on each side, and the footprint is relatively narrow. The instructions are stored in a fabric pocket on the bottom, and it does not come with a shoulder belt adjuster, as the *RSTV* will serve that function.

### ❖ UPPAbaby—[www.uppababy.com](http://www.uppababy.com)

#### Mesa—\$279

RF-only: 4-35 lbs.

Now available

We have previously covered the *Mesa*, but the company continues to make significant running changes. Newest models feature a base redesign with a new front edge for better vehicle seat contact and rebound control. UPPAbaby has also continued to refine the belt lock-off on the base and has provided new storage locations for the instructions and locking clip. Further revisions to the CR shell are in progress; expect to see models with the redesigned shell by this summer.

—Joe Colella

### School Transportation News EXPO

July 25–29, 2015, Reno, Nevada

[www.stnexpo.com](http://www.stnexpo.com)

### 11th Annual Kidz in Motion Conference

August 12–15, 2015, Orlando, Florida

[www.kidzinmotion.org](http://www.kidzinmotion.org)

### ABC Kids Expo

October 18–21, 2015, Las Vegas, Nevada

[www.theabcshow.com](http://www.theabcshow.com)

### 2015 CPS Week—September 13–19 Seat Check Saturday—September 19

## KIM Update Curriculum Now Available

The KIDZ IN MOTION 2015 Update Curriculum is now available. It is preapproved through April 1, 2016, for up to six CEUs for CPS recertification. The presentation materials are designed to educate technicians, instructors, and instructor candidates on the latest information on CPS topics, including an overview of the new CRs and model revisions, LATCH and air bag technology updates, issues with inflatable seat belts, and a complete overview of the proposed changes to FMVSS 213 for side-impact performance testing. The presentation, which includes speaker notes, is designed to be run on Microsoft Office 365.

To order, go to [www.kidzinmotion.org](http://www.kidzinmotion.org) and click on the link to fill in an online order form. A \$20 donation is requested for orders shipped via Drop Box. Kidz in Motion will send orderers an invitation to join its Drop Box folder so the file can be electronically downloaded.

Kidz in Motion also has a very limited supply of the curriculum in other media (DVD or thumbdrive) for those who prefer that. Orders of the curriculum in other media formats are \$45 each. Please allow two to three weeks for delivery when specifying other media.

Recently added to the  
SRN website:

**LATCH Manual FAQs**

Go to [www.saferidenews.com](http://www.saferidenews.com)