

## Safe Kids USA Endorses American Academy of Pediatrics Child Passenger Safety Recommendations

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WASHINGTON, DC - Safe Kids USA wholeheartedly endorses the newest child passenger safety recommendations developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Congratulations go out to Dr. Dennis Durbin, MD, MSCE for the comprehensive look at these timely child passenger safety issues.

Two new documents will appear in the April 2011 issue of Pediatrics (Volume 127, Number 4): the actual policy statement- Child Passenger Safety and a technical report also titled-Child Passenger Safety. The technical report supports the policy statement. Both documents are must reading for certified child passenger safety technicians.

The policy statement is clear and concise as it encourages slowing the transition from one child restraint type to the next. It does this with five best practice recommendations:

- Best practice recommendation #1 states, "All infants and toddlers should ride in a rear-facing car safety seat (CSS) until they are 2 years of age or until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer of their CSS."
- Best practice recommendation #2 states, "All children 2 years or older, or those younger than 2 years who have outgrown the rear-facing weight or height limit for their CSS, should use a forward-facing CSS with a harness for as long as possible, up to the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer of their CSS."
- Best practice recommendation #3 states, "All children whose weight or height is above the forward-facing limit for their CSS should use a belt-positioning-booster until the vehicle lap-and-shoulder seat belt fits properly, typically when they have reached 4 feet 9 inches in height and are between 8 and 12 years of age."
- Best practice recommendation #4 states, "When children are old enough and large enough to use the vehicle seat belt alone, they should always use lap-and-shoulder seat belts for optimal protection."
- Best practice recommendation #5 states, "All children younger than 13 years of age should be restrained in the rear seats of vehicles for optimal protection."

A large number of child restraints with high weight harnesses and taller seat backs have been available for some time in the US market. Parents may have already purchased a high weight harness seat without realizing the true benefit of it.

The policy statement and report encourages pediatricians to promote these new best practices with their patients and their families. It also familiarizes the pediatrician with the certified technician network and encourages them to use the services of certified technicians.

Safe Kids USA urges all nationally certified technicians to be familiar with these new “best practices” and share them with families at checkup events, inspection stations and community awareness programs. Safe Kids USA encourages technicians to go to [www.aap.org/cpstfaqs](http://www.aap.org/cpstfaqs) to obtain copies of the policy statement and technical report.