

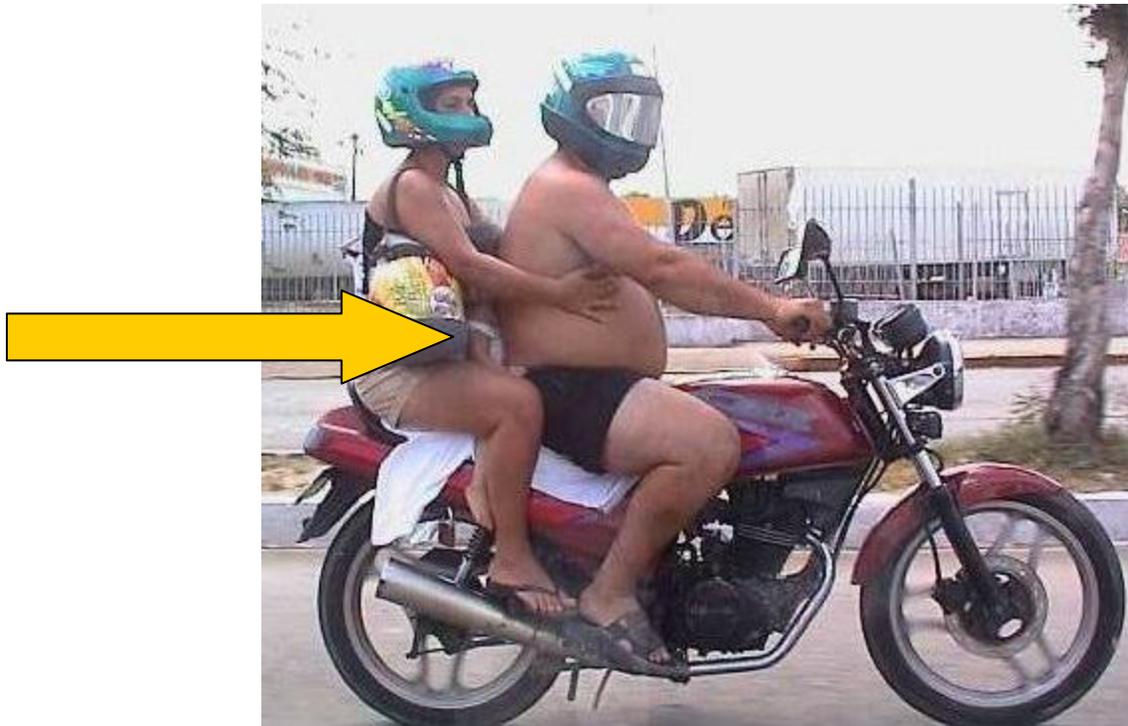


Preschool Issues A National Perspective

**North Carolina Preschool
Transportation Safety Conference**

April 16, 2007

What's wrong with this picture?





Preschool Transportation Issues

- Students: who are we talking about?
- Legal requirements
- Bus Equipment
- Child Safety Restraint Systems
- Personnel
- Training
- Evacuations
- Custody of Care
- \$\$\$
- Other ?

Who is a Preschool Child?



1. Infants - Teenage Parent Program
2. Students in PreK programs
 - Head Start (federal)
 - Title I (federal)
 - School Readiness (state)
 - Local PK –
transportation may or
may not be provided
3. Students with Disabilities



“New NC program will take county preschool classes on the road”

- A yellow school bus is being converted into a classroom that will travel around the county and help preschoolers get a running start on their education, officials say.
- Wee Wings, the mobile preschool classroom being offered through Wayne County Public Schools, is expected to motor into neighborhoods soon.



Are we legally required to transport preschool children in CSRSs?

No and Yes!

- NHTSA Guideline (1999)
 - Industry best practice
- Head Start Transportation Regulation (January 2001)



Head Start Transportation Regulation

- ❑ Regulations on safety features and the safe operation of vehicles used to transport children participating in Head Start and Early Head Start programs
- ❑ Applies to all Head Start and Early Head Start agencies, and their delegate agencies – regardless of whether transportation is provided directly on agency owned or leased vehicles or through arrangement with a private or public transportation provider



Head Start Requirements

45 CFR Part 1310

□ General

- Agency must assist families with transportation
- If an agency has decided not to provide transportation, it must provide reasonable assistance to arrange transportation for the families of the children enrolled
- Vehicles must be equipped with:
 - Communication system for emergencies
 - Safety equipment – fire extinguisher
 - First aid kit
 - Seat belt cutter
- Follow state requirements



Head Start Requirements

- General (cont.)
 - Up-to-date lists of adults authorized to receive the students, including emergency contacts/alternates
 - Child rosters to ensure that no student is left behind
- Child Restraint Systems for all children
- Use of School Buses or Allowable Alternate Vehicles



Head Start Requirements

- Maintenance of Vehicles
- Inspection of New Vehicles at Delivery
- Operation of Vehicles
 - Bus Monitor aboard each vehicle
- Driver Qualifications



Head Start Requirements

- Driver and Monitor Training
 - Board/exiting procedures
 - Use of CSRSs
 - Required paperwork
 - Responses to emergencies
 - Emergency evacuation procedures
 - Use of special equipment
 - Child pick-up/drop-off procedures
 - Pre- and post-trip vehicle checks



Head Start Requirements

- Trip Routing
 - Route should be no more than one hour
 - Stops should not require students to cross street, if possible
 - If students must cross the street, an adult must accompany them



Head Start Requirements

- Safety Education
 - Pedestrian Safety training for children and parents within 30 days of start of program year
 - Children training to include:
 - Safe riding practices
 - Safety procedures for boarding/unloading
 - Recognition of danger zones around bus
 - Emergency evacuation procedures



Head Start Requirements

- Parent training to include
 - Importance of escorting their children to the vehicle stop
 - Reinforcing the training provided to students
 - Complementary training for parents and students
- Evacuation Drills – 3 per year



Head Start Requirements

- Children with disabilities
 - Students to be “included” on regular routes, when possible
 - Comply with student’s IEP requirements
 - Special pick-up/drop-off requirements
 - Special seating requirements
 - Special equipment needs
 - Any special assistance
 - Any special training for bus drivers and monitors
- Coordinated Transportation



Extension of the Effective Date for Head Start Vehicle Requirements

- The President signed P.L. 109-450 (1/17/2007)
- The effective date of complying with the requirements that children are transported in school buses or allowable alternate vehicles has been extended from December 30, 2006, to June 30, 2007.



Head Start Transportation Waivers

- October 4, 2006 – final rule published authorizing annual waivers from two of the requirements of the regulation:
 1. Children must be secured in age and weight appropriate child restraint systems
 2. Must be at least one monitor onboard any bus transporting Head Start children
- Waivers will be effective from
November 1, 2006 – October 30, 2007



“Good Cause” for Waivers

“Good Cause” for a waiver will exist when

- adherence to a requirement of this part would itself create a safety hazard in the circumstances faced by the agency, or
- when compliance with requirements related to child safety restraint systems or bus monitors will result in a significant disruption to the program and that waiver is in the “best interest of the children involved.”



Concern regarding more agencies requesting waivers

- The final rule addressed the concern of more agencies requesting these waivers.
- The response is that the agencies will be required to justify their requests and to describe efforts toward achieving the goal of full compliance.



Updated Definition of Child Restraint System

- In order to stay current with FMVSS 213, the definition of child restraint system has removed the weight requirement (previously 50 lbs or less)
- “Child Restraint System means any device designed to restrain, seat, or position children that meets the current requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 213, for the weight category established under the regulation, or any device designed to restrain, seat, or position children, other than a Type I seat belt as defined at 49 CFR 571.209, for children not in the weight category currently established by 49 CFR 571.213”



Bus Equipment Needed for CSRSs

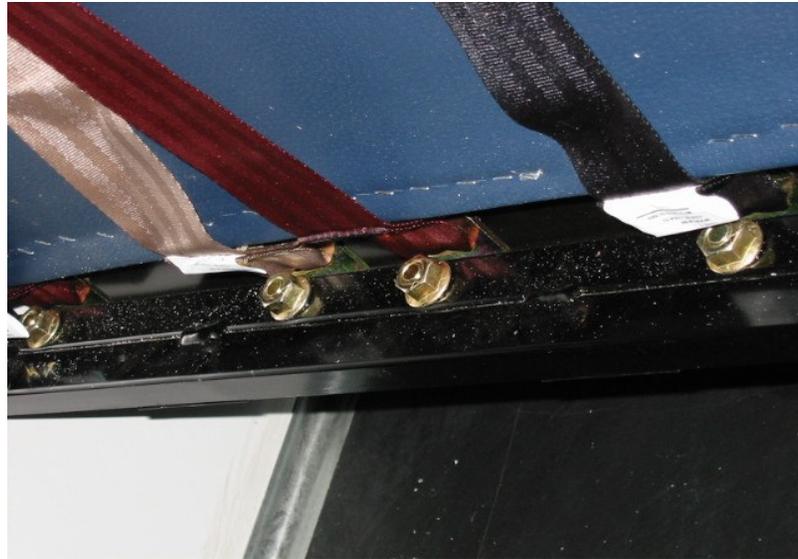
For car seats:

- ❑ FMVSS 210 seats – “lap-belt ready”
- ❑ Maximum seat spacing
- ❑ Appropriate lap belt system

For safety vests:

- ❑ May use FMVSS 222 seats for the vests that wrap around the back of the bus seat—vests that use “cam wraps”

FMVSS 210 Seat



Not a “Lap Belt Ready” Seat



Seat that is not "lap belt ready"

Maximum vs. Minimum Seat Spacing



Maximum Seat Spacing



Minimum Seat Spacing

Lap Belts



Non-adjustable end of lap belt extends no more than two inches from seat bight



Non-adjustable end of lap belt extends more than two inches from seat bight

Don't go there!





FMVSS 225 / LATCH / ISO / UCRA

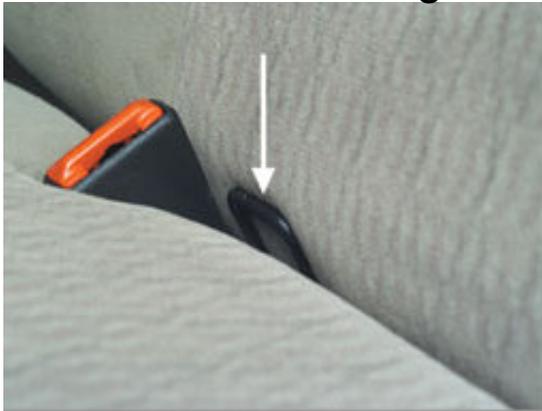
- FMVSS 225
 - Requires lower anchorages and tethers for all vehicles – beginning in Sept 2003
 - Requires same system for car seats
 - Reduces incompatibility issues
- All large buses (over 10,000 lbs) are exempt from the FMVSS 225 requirements
- Smaller buses (under 10,000 lbs) must have “2” FMVSS 225 lower anchorage systems
- ALL school buses are exempt from the tether requirement

LATCH



How FMVSS 225 works --

Lower Anchorage



LATCH Child Restraint Attachment



Upper Tether



School buses are
Exempt from the
tether requirement!



Entry Door



Bus with three steps and low handrail



Types of Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRSs)

- “Car Seats”
 - rear-facing only
 - convertible – rear and forward-facing
 - forward facing only
- Safety Vests
- Integrated Seats



What is a CSRS?

Definition

A child safety restraint system (CSRS) means any device, **except Type I or Type II seat belts**, designed for use in a motor vehicle or aircraft to restrain, seat, or position children who weigh *30 kilograms (kg) (65 lbs.) or less. [49 CRF 571.213.S4]

*Amended in 2003

Rear Facing Seats

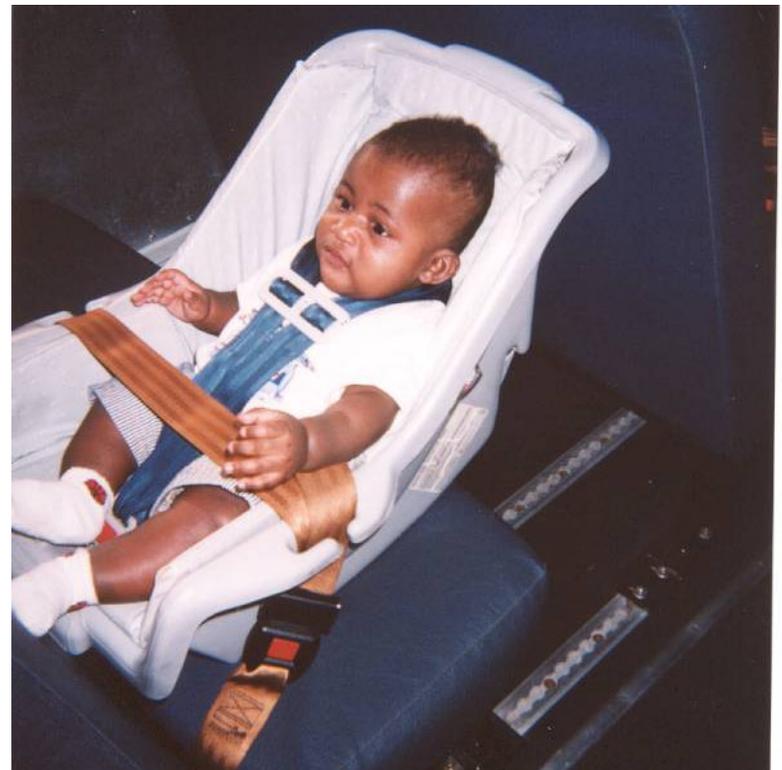
Birth to 20-22 lbs. **and** one year



NOTE: Make sure that the rear-facing seats have a label indicating that they are in compliance with FMVSS 213!

Securing Child In Rear-facing Seat

- ❑ Back & bottom flat into CSRS
- ❑ Harness at or below shoulders
- ❑ Blankets at sides for positioning
- ❑ Harness snug & flat on child's shoulders
- ❑ Retainer clip at armpit level



Rear Facing - Only



Harness clip is too low!

Convertible Seats

- ❑ Rear facing to 30 or 35 lbs. (reclined) and less than 1 year of age
- ❑ Forward facing to 40 lbs. (upright) and over 1 year of age



Tray shield

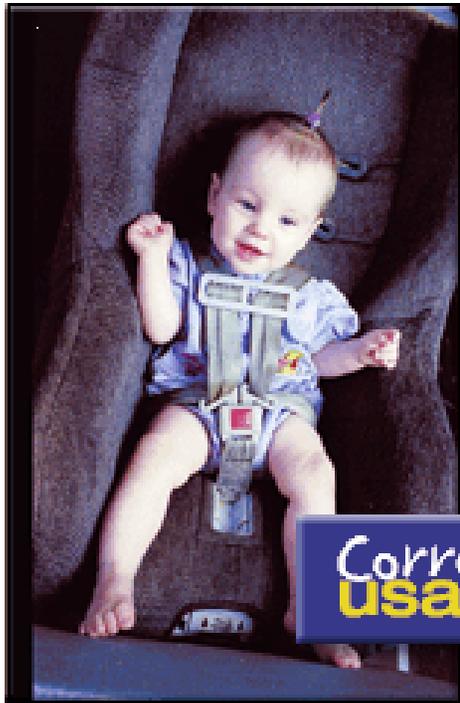


T-shield

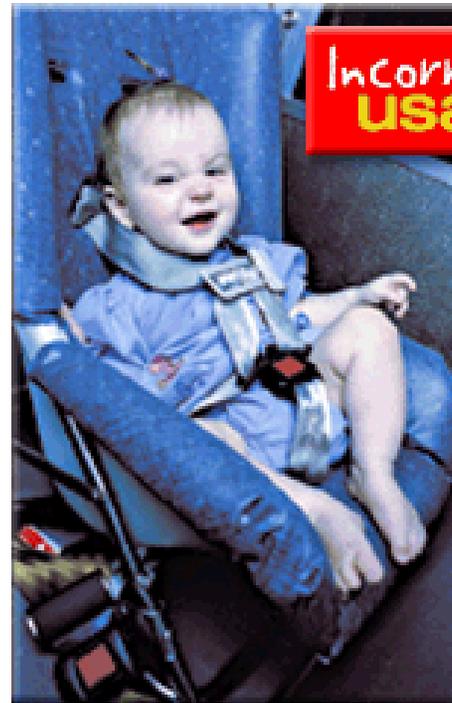


5-point harness

Rear Facing - Convertible



Correct
usage



Incorrect
usage

??????

What's wrong with this picture?



Forward Facing



Forward facing seats handle up to 40 lbs (or 50 lbs) with only a lap belt. To handle a higher weight, the CSRS **must** use a lap/shoulder belt system that our buses do not have.

Securing Child In Forward-facing Seat

- ❑ Back & bottom flat into CSRS
- ❑ Correct harness slots at or above shoulders in reinforced slots
- ❑ Harness snug and flat on child's shoulders
- ❑ Retainer clip at armpit level
- ❑ Mid-point of head can not be above CSRS top



Forward Facing

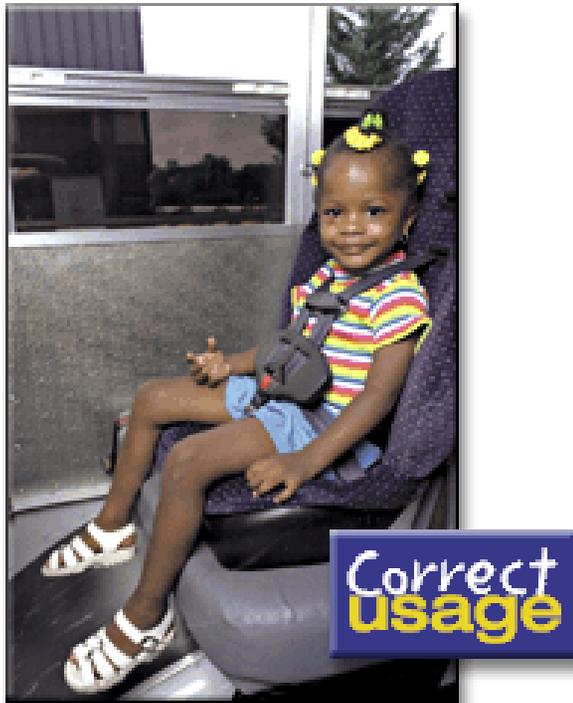


Correct
usage



Incorrect
usage

Forward Facing – Only



What's wrong with this picture?



And this one???



Belt Paths

- *Look for belt paths*

Forward Facing

Rear Facing



- *Make sure the seat is secured with the lap belt in the correct belt path!*

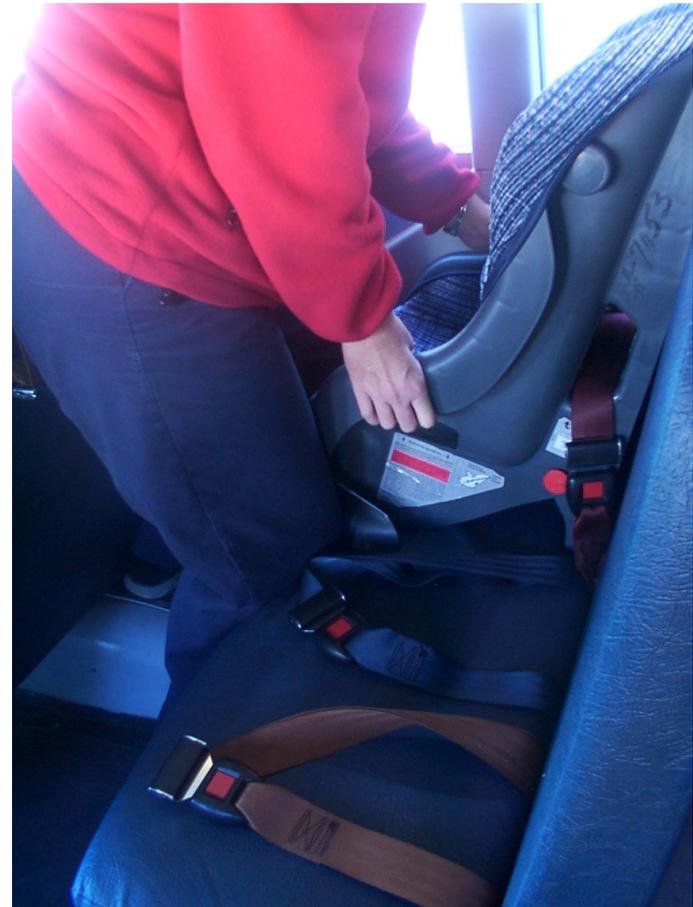
Harness Straps



Harness straps should not be twisted, frayed, or cut!

Tightness

- ❑ To check the tightness of the CSRS, hold the seat at the belt path and move side to side
- ❑ The CSRS should not move more than 1”
- ❑ Check the tightness often
- ❑ Make sure the latch plate is not at an angle



Do Not

Use Booster Seats on School Buses





Safety Vests

Safety vests must have a crotch strap,
per FMVSS 213

“Each child harness shall

- (a) provide upper torso restraint, including belts passing over each shoulder of the child;
- (b) Provide lower torso restraint by means of lap **and crotch belt**; and
- (c) Prevent a child of any height for which the restraint is recommended for use from stranding upright on the vehicle seat when the child is placed in the device in accordance with the instructions.”

Try to avoid using the term “harness” --
safety vest is more user-friendly!

Safety Vest Label



WARNING! This restraint must only be used on school bus seats. Entire seat behind must be unoccupied or have restrained occupants.

Types of Safety Vests



E-Z-On Vest

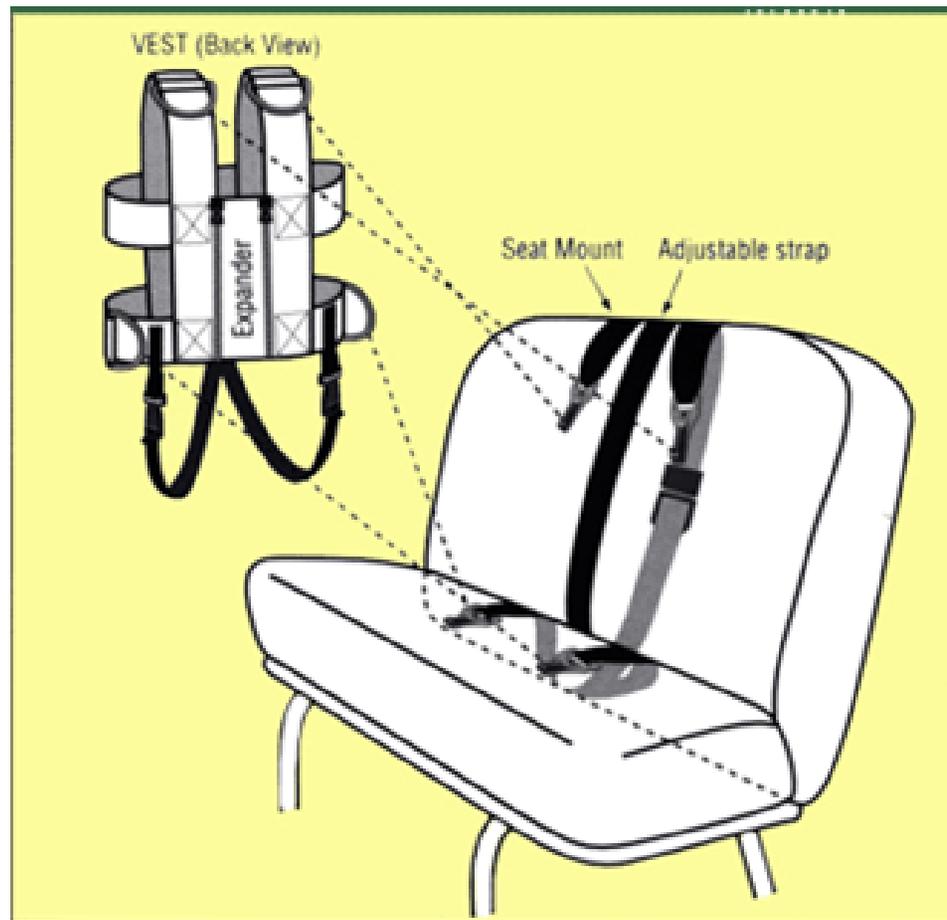


Q'Vest

BESI Vest



Installation of Vest



Student Transportation Add-on Restraint System (STAR) by IMMI



An optional chest strap is available for students with special needs.

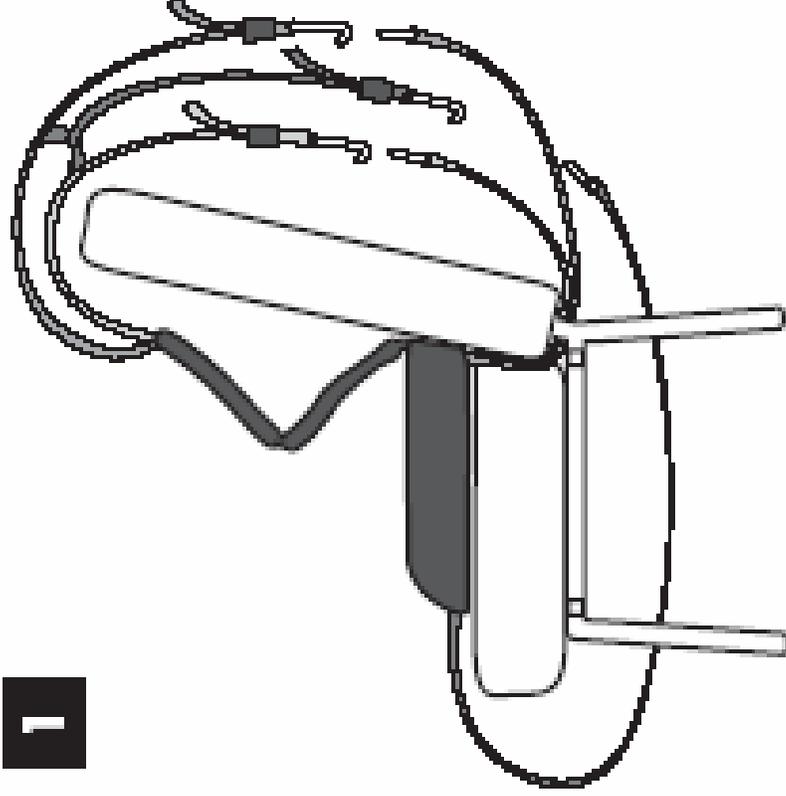


STAR: 25-65 lbs; up to 47" tall
STAR Plus: up to 90 lbs; 47" tall

Installing STAR on the School Bus Seat

1

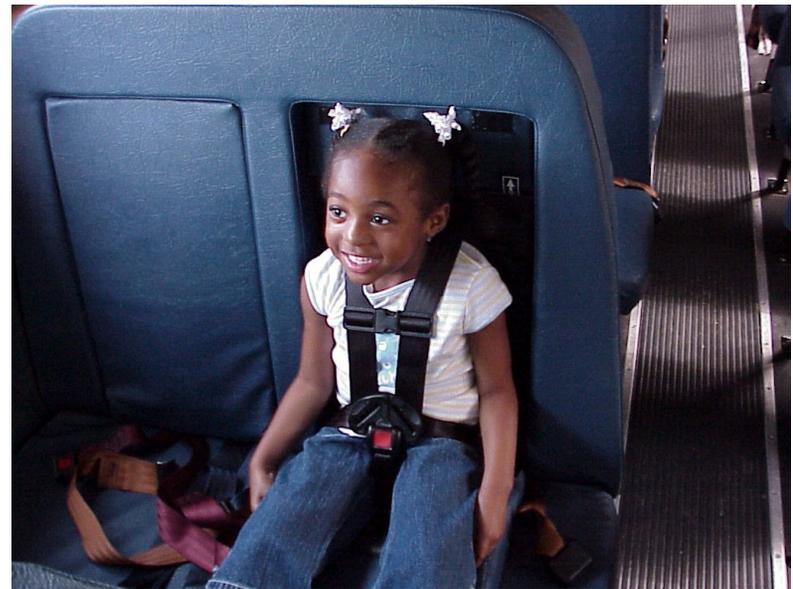
Place the STAR restraint on the bus seat.
Place the three (gray, tan and black) cam wrap straps around the school bus seat back.
Insert the short gray and tan straps connected to the rear of the STAR flexible seat base through the opening in the seat cushion (See Figure 1).



Integrated Seats



SafeGuard by IMMI



C.E. White Seat

What's wrong with this picture?





Location on Bus

- ❑ Place preschoolers in first 3 rows of the school bus
- ❑ Seats over wheel wells provide lower extremity support; front seating offers smoother rides
- ❑ CSRS are not allowed in emergency exit aisles
- ❑ Do not place CSRS in aisle seats unless another CSRS is located next to the window
- ❑ REMEMBER: If a safety vest uses a cam wrap, the seat behind it must be empty or have children in restraints. The other restrained children could use a safety vest, a car seat or a *lap belt*.

CSRS Checklist

	Rear-facing To at least 1 yr. & 20 lbs	Forward-facing Over 20 lbs. & 1 yr. of age	Over 40 lbs
Infant Only Seat (Rear-facing)	X		
Convertible	X*	X	
Integrated	X**	X	X
Forward-facing Only Seat		X	X
Booster with built in harness		X	
Safety Vest		X	X

NOTE: Always check the label on the child safety restraint system that tells you what weight of child can be restrained in the system.

* Many convertible seats are currently available that can accommodate rear-facing infants to a weight greater than 20 lbs.

** Systems provide anchors to secure a rear-facing child safety seat



Maintenance and Inventory

- ❑ Best practice is for the districts to purchase equipment to ensure the integrity of the CSRSs
- ❑ Each district should develop an inventory system for their CSRSs
- ❑ Most CSRSs have a shelf life of 6 years (from date of manufacture)
- ❑ All CSRSs should be registered so that the district can be informed of any recalls



NHTSA Reuse after Minor Crash

Minor crashes are those that meet ALL of the following criteria:

- ❑ The school bus was able to be driven away from the crash site;
- ❑ The occupant space inside the school bus near the CRSs was undamaged;
- ❑ There were no injuries to any children in CRSs, or serious injury to any other school bus occupant;
- ❑ The air bags (if present) did not deploy; AND
- ❑ There is no visible damage to the CSRSs.



Care and Maintenance

- ❑ Always follow the manufacturer's instructions!
- ❑ Clean webbing, seat cushions, and buckle with a damp sponge/cloth using a mild soap solution and lukewarm water
- ❑ Inspect the buckle for buckle function; never lubricate the buckle
- ❑ Inspect the webbing for cuts or fraying
- ❑ If conditions exist which appear to be a concern, contact the manufacturer or replace the system
- ❑ Store all CSRSs in a safe, clean, and dry location

Belt Cutters

- All buses are equipped with a durable webbing cutter that will be mounted in a location accessible only to the driver in an easily detachable manner
- Also in the National Specifications and Procedures



Location of Belt Cutter – Training of the Driver





Other areas of concern

- Personnel
- Custody of children
 - Who can receive them?
 - District Policy
 - Emergency contact lists
- Training
 - Equipment
 - Understanding young children
 - Students with disabilities
- Evacuations
 - Specific for young children; addressing equipment
- \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$



Personnel

Bus Monitors/Attendants – what is an appropriate ratio?

- School Transportation – Best Practice
 - Have adequate staff on board to safely evacuate the students
- Head Start Rule: must have a monitor on board each bus
- Head Start has not provided a ratio for the school bus
- All Head Start classrooms must have at least two adults –
 - Two teachers or one teacher and one assistant
 - A volunteer is encouraged
- Head Start Classroom ratios are as follows:
 - 4-5 year olds: 17-20 students
 - 4-5 year olds – double sessions: 15-17 students
 - 3 year olds: 15-17 students
 - 3 year olds – double sessions: 13-15 students



Custody of Children

- Head Start requirements –
 - Child rosters, authorized personnel to receive students, emergency contact information
- Leaving students on buses – **National problem!**
 - All new NC buses have an electronic system on them
- District Policies
 - Most districts will not leave a PreK student unattended at a bus stop or house
 - Most will return the child to the school for parent pick-up



Training for Bus Driver and Attendant

- Understanding young children
- Student boarding/exiting procedures
- Use of CSRSs
- Responses to emergencies
- Emergency evacuation procedures
- Use of special equipment
- Students with disabilities
- Child pick-up/drop-off procedures (HS)
- Pre- and post-trip vehicle checks (HS)



Evacuations

- Bus drivers and attendants should have an evacuation plan for their bus
- They should take into consideration:
 - Number of preschool students
 - Students with disabilities – specific needs
 - Equipment – CSRSs, oxygen, wheelchairs, etc.
 - Older students as helpers



Districts Transporting Preschool Students

- (FL) Every district has a Teenage Parent Program
- Most districts provide the CSRSs
- A big challenge is with the equipment – ensuring that the CSRS is age/weight/height appropriate for the student – who monitors?
- Biggest challenge is educating staff – lap belts ARE NOT appropriate CSRSs for preschool age children



Head Start Information

Head Start Regional Office

REGION IV - ATLANTA: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi,
North Carolina, Tennessee, South Carolina

Telephone: 404-562-2900

Fax: 404-562-2981

Regional Administrator

Administration for Children and Families

Atlanta Federal Center

61 Forsyth St., SW., Suite 4M60

Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8909

Website: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/region4/>

Head Start Website

<http://www.headstartinfo.org/infocenter/infocenter.htm>

Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>



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[Head Start Act](#)
[Head Start Program Performance Standards and Other Regulations](#)
[Program Instructions](#)

Transportation PathFinder

Authoritative explanations of key transportation requirements from the Office of Head Start

State Information

The State Information module will provide you with a listing of resources, laws, regulations, and contacts regarding Head Start and pupil transportation in your state.

Library

The Head Start Transportation PathFinder Library provides an index of all information contained within this site including federal regulations, FAQs, and other resources.

Guidance

View the Guidance Module to find compliance assistance, explanations, and Tip Sheets related to the Head Start Transportation Regulation 45 CFR Part 1310.

Scenarios

This training tool provides a series of situations a Head Start transportation program might face and questions designed to help a program develop internal policies to address them.

Questions & Answers

Find quick answers to frequently asked questions, organized by category, within the Head Start Transportation PathFinder's database of Questions and Answers.

Search

Use the Head Start Transportation PathFinder's powerful search engine to locate resources within this site according to key words, phrases, and concepts.



Print A Copy Of The TPF Handout



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Other Resources

- **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)**
<http://www.nhtsa.gov/>
- **NHTSA School Bus Safety Program**
<http://www.nhtsa.gov/portal/site/nhtsa/menuitem.e712547f8daccabbbf30811060008a0c/>
- **NHTSA Guideline for the Safe Transportation of Pre-school Age Children in School Buses**
<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/buses/Guide1999/prekfinal.htm>
- **2005 14th National School Transportation Specifications and Procedures Publication**
<http://www.ncstonline.org/>

