



Deborah Davis Stewart

Deborah Davis (Richards) Stewart has been a public health advocate, educator, and publisher for more than 50 years. A graduate of Wellesley College, she began her career in public health by serving for two years in the Peace Corps in India and then running a community clinic for Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington, D.C.

Stewart's involvement as a child passenger safety consultant, writer, and trainer began as a new mother in 1970, when she first realized the lack of protection available for her baby and other child passengers in cars. She co-founded the first parent advocacy organization concerned with child passenger safety, Action for Child Passenger Safety, ACTS, (1972–81). ACTS members were nurses, parents, and others around the country who supported local educational activities and became a vocal group pushing for national standards to govern children's car seats and seat belts on school buses. ACTS produced a pamphlet for parents and a newsletter, *ACTS Actions*.

In 1981, Stewart (then Deborah Davis Richards) developed *Safe Ride News*, a national newsletter for the American Academy of Pediatrics as part of its NHTSA-funded 'Make Every Ride... A Safe Ride' program, becoming its editor.

In 1995, she (as Deborah Davis Stewart) took over *Safe Ride News*, which became a subscription publication. The goal of Safe Ride News Publications was to provide self-supporting publications for the national child passenger safety

(CPS) field, free from the vagaries of grant support. Along with the newsletter, Stewart developed and published a set of annually updated fact sheets for caregivers, *The LATCH Manual* (an authoritative teaching guide for child restraint installation using tethers and LATCH now in its 10th edition), and *The School Bus Safety Handbook* (a book on child restraint use on school buses specifically for transportation safety administrators, drivers, and bus safety advocates, now in its 3rd edition). In 2013, Stewart retired and Denise Donaldson took over Safe Ride News Publications.

Along the way, Stewart created CPS training manuals, testified before Congressional committees, wrote responses to Federal regulatory proposals, and served on national advisory committees, most importantly the first Blue Ribbon Panel on Child Restraint & Vehicle Compatibility (1995). She trained advocates and professionals in many states in correct child restraint use and parent education. She has authored several major publications on CPS topics for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and played a major role in launching the certification program for child passenger safety technicians. She also has pressed for many technical issues of child restraint standards to be resolved.

In addition to her work in CPS, Stewart has written on other maternal and child health topics, specializing in newsletters. She is the author of “Baby & Me—The Essential Guide to Pregnancy” (now in its 5th edition) and “Best Start—Your Baby’s First Year,” both written materials at a grade-6 reading level and translated into Spanish. Since her retirement, she has dedicated herself to combatting another urgent health problem, acute climate change. She lives in Seattle and works primarily with the Seattle chapters of Citizens’ Climate Lobby and the Climate Reality Project.

