



1255 23rd Street, NW
Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20037

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Safe Kids Worldwide (SKW) is pleased to provide this document, **BEST PRACTICE: CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY SECUREMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRE-SCHOOL AND SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN ON SCHOOL BUSES** as a reference for developing and implementing national, state and local guidance and best practices regarding occupant protection of all passengers transported in school buses. It is relevant to:

- National, state or local regulators who develop guidance for those who assume responsibility for the safe transport of children on school buses, especially those under age 6
- Code-enforcers who must read, follow and enforce laws and regulations
- Caregivers who consult regulated guidance and act upon it
- Safety educators or advocates who foster end-user training to improve child passenger safety

Confusion and concern about child passenger safety on school buses is not unique to one state or industry, especially since children of all ages now use this form of transportation. Many school transporters carry preschoolers and/or the babies and toddlers of teens attending school. Other organizations, like churches, after-school programs and summer camps, also sometimes use school buses or contract with bus companies to take children to and from programs and childcare.

In many cases, current guidance (or a lack of guidance that addresses younger passengers) confuses even the most diligent transporter. Therefore, experts (from school bus, medical, transportation, communication backgrounds) created this document using the latest information available. We hope this document makes it easier to determine the best way to transport very young children on a school bus, as well as children over age 5 who may have additional transportation needs. Please consult it when guidelines are updated and share it with colleagues who may benefit from it.

We want to be sure you know of the hundreds of certified child passenger safety technicians (CPSTs) in your state who can assist you in your efforts to keep kids safe on the road. CPSTs are trained, tested and certified to educate the public regarding the proper use of child restraints in motor vehicles, including school buses. They have passed a rigorous 3-4 day course developed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA www.nhtsa.gov) and are certified through SKW (www.safekids.org). CPSTs are police officers, health and medical professionals, first responders, fire fighters, scientists, educators and others; you may be most familiar with their work at car seat checkup events conducted at their workplaces and other community locations. Make use of them and their special skills when determining how to safely transport kids of all ages. For instance, CPSTs can be a tremendous asset when conducting school bus driver training, childcare conferences and community events. Learn more about the CPSTs in your state from the Occupant Protection Specialist at your state highway safety office (State Highway Safety Office <https://icsw.nhtsa.gov/people/outreach/TipsandTactics/pages/8Resources.htm>) or contact one directly by searching Find a Tech at <https://cert.safekids.org>.

School buses are significantly different than cars and vans, and rules and best practices for one do not necessarily apply to the other. SKW's ultimate goal is to ensure that all children, regardless of their mode of transport, benefit fully from available regulated safety devices (vehicles, child restraints) to improve safety on every ride.

Questions? Contact Lorrie Walker at lwalker@safekids.org



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