



Consumer Reports Withdraws Car Seat Report

Lancaster, NY (Jan 18, 2007) – Consumer Reports announced this morning that they are withdrawing a recent report that indicated that certain Child Restraint Systems (CRS) are unsafe in the event of side impact collisions. The following statement was issued by Consumer Reports, as reported by their website, www.consumerreports.org:

We withdrew the report immediately upon discovering a substantive issue that may have affected the original test results. The issue came to light based on new information received Tuesday night and Wednesday morning from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) concerning the speed at which our side-impact tests were conducted.

The original study, published in the February issue of Consumer Reports, was aimed at discovering how infant seats performed in tests at speeds that match those used in the government's New Car Assessment Program (NCAP). This program tests most new vehicles in crashes at speeds of 35 mph for frontal impact and 38 mph for side impact. Child safety seats, in contrast, are currently tested only in front-impact crashes at speeds of 30 mph.

Our tests were intended to simulate side crashes at the NCAP speed of 38 mph. The new information raises a question about whether the tests accurately simulated that speed, however, so we are now reviewing our tests and the resulting article.

To those who may have seen the report earlier in print, on the Web, or in broadcasts, we urge you to remember that use of any child seat is safer than no child seat, but to suspend judgment on the merits of individual products until the new testing has been completed and the report re-published.

We appreciate that manufacturers and particularly NHTSA are engaging directly with us on this article, and we applaud NHTSA for giving serious consideration to development of side-impact child seat tests. Consumer Reports has long advocated adoption of such tests, since government data shows that side crashes account for a significant number of child fatalities.

We look forward to re-issuing guidance on child-seat safety as soon as possible..

“Child Restraint Systems offer protection that would not be normally available with vehicle safety belts alone” states SafeWNY President Brian S. Dadswell. “Parents are urged to read the vehicle and CRS manuals, or contact a trained Child Passenger Safety Technician to ensure the best possible outcome for their children in the event of a crash.”

SafeWNY will be scheduling Child Passenger Safety Checkpoints throughout 2007 to assist parents with the selection, installation, and maintenance of a Child Restraint.