



Almost-Deadly Sippy Cup Incident Warns Against Projectiles In Car

By Christie Haskell, Images via Christina Hish; CafeMom.com

I know people think some things are extreme when it comes to car seat safety, often a matter of the "It won't happen to me" mindset. When mentioning clearing the car of potential projectiles, often the reaction is, "Oh, please! Whatever," ignoring the fact that even slamming on your brakes without impact is enough to make things go flying.

For one mom, Christina Hish of Denver, the reality of dangers from a projectile came true, in a very scary and serious way. The end result is over 400 stitches and many surgeries for her son, all from a soft-spouted sippy cup.



On October 15th, last year, Hish and her 2-1/2-year-old, JD, were going out in their family car. Only a block away from her house, as she turned left, someone who drove straight in a left-turn lane hit her going around 45 miles per hour.

Her airbags deployed, the car was smoking, and she heard her son screaming behind her. She got out and went to him, and saw blood everywhere. He had been essentially scalped by the soft spout sippy cup he had with him.

She screamed for help, and an amazing woman removed her shirt, helping her apply pressure to her son's head and they sang while waiting for emergency response.



A plastic surgeon was called in to handle JD's injuries - his skull was fractured in three places.

He required more than 200 internal and 200 external stitches, and the main muscle in his forehead was severed and not able to be repaired, meaning he will never have movement of his forehead muscles.

Being autistic and non-verbal, JD's recovery was especially difficult. But with a great support system of loving family, he is now doing well. He has been through a lot, will have lasting scars, and may face future surgeries.

JD's mom is now, understandably, a major car seat safety advocate, with focus on dangers of projectiles. Many people consider it excessive or extreme but the fact is even in situations where a person merely slams on the brakes, items go flying. Everything that is loose is potentially a danger to the occupants of a vehicle (especially unrestrained passengers and pets!).

The method for determining the force at which an item flies isn't tough. Just figure that the weight of an object, times the speed you're traveling equals the force at which that item would hit something if your car comes to a sudden, complete stop (like hitting something head on). A 5 pound purse x 35 miles per hour = 175 pounds of force. That's actually pretty significant if it's hitting you or your child.

It may seem silly to buckle in your purse or put your water bottle in the center console that closes, but it's worth it. Only allow soft items like blankets or stuffed animals in the car with your child, and if you need a drink, check out something like an entirely soft water bladder that can be secured to something, and would break and spill before it would go flying. I think any mom would really hate to have her purse damage her child, when she figured just months before, "Whatever. It's not worth the effort."

Do you take projectiles seriously? Do you secure them?

See original article at:

http://thestir.cafemom.com/baby/120581/almost_deadly_sippy_cup_incident.

Change to Oregon Booster Seat Law - January 2012



A change to the Oregon Child Seat Law goes into effect January 2012. The current law requires children to move from a child seat to a booster after forty pounds. House Bill 3590 signed by Governor John Kitzhaber on June 9, 2011 will allow continued use of child seats up to the highest weight limit allowed by the seat manufacturer, as an alternative to boosters, for children over forty pounds but under age eight or less than 4'9" tall.

Current law states that after a child reaches forty pounds in weight, the child must be restrained in a booster to age eight or 4'9" tall. However, a child safety seat with a five-point harness will restrain a child more securely than a booster seat. The upper weight limits of harness-type seats have been steadily increasing (beyond a former 40 pound maximum) to accommodate much higher weights as children are getting larger, younger (some up to 60 or 80 pounds). The revised law allows drivers the choice of continuing the use of the five-point harness seat beyond 40 pounds and up to the maximum weight rating allowed by the manufacturer - as an alternative to a booster. This also avoids the need to discard a perfectly good seat and purchase a booster unnecessarily.

A secondary reason for this change was to prevent officers from citing citizens for using boosters where there is a harness system available that is safer. Although this hasn't been reported to be a widespread issue, as more officers become trained as Child Passenger Safety Technicians and the public becomes better educated, the practicality of enforcement of safety belt laws and how our laws relate to national "best practice" has come under increasing scrutiny. Many states have been routinely upgrading their laws to match best practice.

Find out more about Oregon's Occupant Protection Laws on ODOT - Transportation Safety Division's Occupant Protection page at: <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/safetybelts.shtml>.



