

# Pointers For Parents

## Are America's Children Riding Safely?

(NAPSA)—With all the safety advances of today's vehicles, it's surprising but true that government officials from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and Department of Transportation (DOT) are worried about the security of today's young passengers. Government studies show that despite crumple zones, air bags and electronic stability control, a wide majority of kids ages 4 to 8 are still riding unsafe. That's because many children in this age range aren't properly restrained.

According to NHTSA, less than 20 percent of children who should be in booster seats actually are, leaving thousands of children without adequate protection. Recently, former U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta called booster seat usage rates a "failure."

"How many times have you seen a child put their shoulder belt under their arm because it's resting uncomfortably across their neck? They do it because the belt doesn't properly fit their small frame," said Dr. Anne Snowdon, Ph.D., University of Windsor professor and health, safety and injury prevention expert. "By raising children 4 inches or so, booster seats ensure that seat belts cross



**Some booster seats are designed to keep kids safe, comfortable and stylish.**

children's lap and shoulders rather than their neck and abdomen where it could cause injuries."

So why are so many children riding without booster seats? A recent nationwide survey asked nearly 500 parents with children ages 4 to 8 about the challenges to using booster seats. The parents said their top three concerns are "the seat is not secured to the vehicle," the seat is "difficult to

install/remove" and their "child finds the seat uncomfortable."

Fortunately, one booster seat has features that address these major concerns, making booster seats easier for parents to use. Called olli and made by clek, it won a Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association Innovation Award and an iParenting Media Award.

With an integrated rigid LATCH system, the booster seats securely fasten to the vehicle's LATCH anchorage system and install and release in less than 10 seconds, providing a solution to the top two challenges cited by parents. An additional layer of padding eliminates numb-bum and addresses parents' concerns regarding child comfort.

"We believe we can attack the lack of booster seat usage through new seating products that parents and kids are more inclined to use," said Dr. Snowdon. "For instance, clek looks and feels like a real seat, offering improved comfort and ergonomic advantages that reduce pressure on the sciatic nerve and keep a child's legs and feet from going numb on longer car rides."

For additional information, visit [www.magnaclek.com](http://www.magnaclek.com).