

CLASSROOM NOTES:

Chapter Objectives

- Define LATCH
- Identify LATCH symbols/locations
- Identify top tether anchors
- Identify lower anchors
- Describe what action is needed if vehicle does not have factory-installed top tether anchors
- Explain to caregivers the importance of top tether use

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- This chapter looks at Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children—LATCH—a system used to make it easier to install child restraints in vehicles

Vehicle LATCH Parts

One pair lower anchors

Seat belt

Top tether anchor



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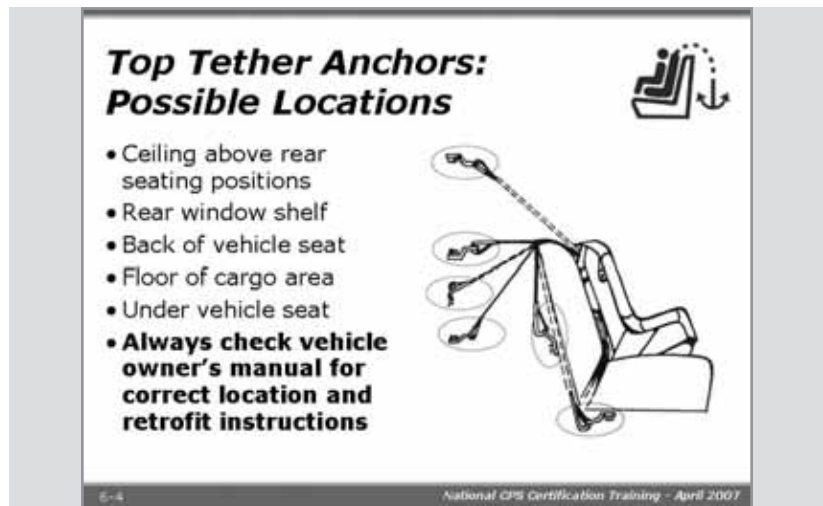
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- Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children (LATCH) is a system used to make CR installation easier in vehicles.
- In LATCH use, both the CR and the vehicle must have LATCH parts that work together.
- Look in the owner's manual to know if a vehicle has LATCH and where each LATCH seating position is found.
- LATCH attaches the CR to the vehicle through anchor points installed in the vehicle and through anchor hooks attached to the CR.

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required by NHTSA. These positions can be found in the owner's manual.

- If a lower anchor or top tether is hidden behind fabric or a cover in the vehicle, a symbol will identify the LATCH locations.
- Only the marked LATCH seating positions may be used. For example, if only the two side seating positions have LATCH, then the middle seating position cannot use the inner bars from each side's seating position unless approved in the CR and vehicle owners manuals.
- If the parent wants to use the middle seating position, they should use the seat belt to secure the CR.
- There is a nationally recognized LATCH Manual that is a good technician resource (<http://www.saferidenews.com>).
- Refer to "Frequently Asked Questions About LATCH and Tethers" found in the Appendix.



- Many older vehicles have pre-drilled holes, dimples, or actual tether anchors.
- Top tether anchors are located where the car body is strong enough to withstand crash forces. Top tether anchors have upper weight limits that vary.
- Top tethers may look very different in pickup trucks. Remember, the only way you can be sure about LATCH use is to read the owner's manual.

- Top tether anchors alone have been required in vehicles made after September 2000, but many auto manufacturers provided them or marked the tether anchor location in much older vehicles so that tether anchors could be installed at a later date.
- You may find vehicles with more top tether than lower anchors.
- Students should encourage parents with young children and older cars to have top tether anchors added to their cars.
- The LATCH Manual can tell parents the part number for some older and newer vehicles. Most CRs that can be used in the forward-facing mode, as well as some seats that can be used forward facing made after September 2002, have a top tether strap attached from the factory.

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- Most vehicles cannot be retrofitted with lower anchors.
- Only the owner's manual can tell you about this feature.
- Whenever possible, have the parent/caregiver locate the lower anchors.
- Try not to stick your hand in the seat bight.

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**Activity 2:
Finding LATCH in Vehicles**

LATCH	Vehicle 1	Vehicle 2
No. of seat belts in back seat		
No. of LA seating positions		
No. of top tether anchors		

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Activity 2: Finding LATCH in Vehicles

Instructions:

- Remember, some LATCH parts are easy to use and find. Others are not so obvious.
- After you are placed on a team, you will have a member of the teaching team to help you.
- You will rotate through at least two cars to see some differences in the placement of LATCH systems and the words/symbols to describe them.
- Keep in mind that LATCH equals two lower anchors and one top tether anchor.
- At the end of this activity, your instructor will install a CR using LATCH.
- You will have time to practice this later in the course.

LATCH	Vehicle 1	Vehicle 2	Vehicle 3
No. of seat belts in back seat			
No. of LA seating positions			
No. of top tether anchors			

CLASSROOM NOTES:

Special Considerations:

- **Weight limits**
 - Top tether anchors
 - Lower Anchors
 - Higher weight CRs
- **Parent desire to use seat belt and lower anchor together**
- **Use of assigned hardware**
 - Top tether anchor not available in center position
 - Lower anchors not available in center position

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- Always follow CR and vehicle manufacturer instructions, including weight limits, for lower anchors and top tether anchors. Remember, limits can vary from manufacturer to manufacturer.
- If parents have any concerns about LATCH, they can always use the seat belt as an equally good alternative.
- In some situations LATCH provides a better fit, and in others, the seat belt may be preferable. It is generally not permitted to use more than one top tether hook per top tether anchor, but that rule, like many, can change over time. The same is true for lower anchors.
- Do not use the lower anchors and the vehicle seat belt at the same time unless indicated by both vehicle and CR manufacturers.
- Many families will want to use the center seating position with LATCH. This is OK as long as the vehicle manufacturer designates this position for LATCH use, but this is not common.
- Parents cannot use the inner lower anchors from both side seating positions unless both the CR manufacturer and vehicle manufacturer give approval in their manuals.

Activity 3: Talking With Parents

- How to find top tether anchors and lower anchors
- What to do if the vehicle does not have a top tether anchor or lower anchors and parents want them in their vehicle
- Why a CR with a higher weight harness might require a vehicle seat belt instead of LATCH for heavier children

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Activity 3: Role Play—How to Talk With Parents**Instructions:**

- You will be given guidance by your instructor about this role play activity.
- Using what you have already learned in the course up until now, you will explain to parents when they should use a seat belt instead of LATCH, where to find lower anchors and top tether anchors, and what to do if they do not have top tether anchors (or lower anchors) in their vehicle.
 1. How can you tell parents where to find all the tether anchors and lower anchors in their car, van, SUV, or truck?
 2. Role play No. 2: What can you tell the parent who has a 1998 Chrysler four-door Sebring with no top tether anchor and who wants to have one installed?
 3. Role play No. 3: What should you tell the parent who has a car seat with harness rated up to 65 pounds, a child who weighs 58 pounds, and LATCH in both the car and on the CR?

Remember:

- Parents need to understand that they have two safe choices for securing their child's CR.
- Always use the vehicle owner's manual to learn about the car.

