



AAP Refines its Child Restraint Use Recommendations

In March, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) issued its revised policy statement, *Selecting and Using the Most Appropriate Car Safety Seats for Growing Children: Guidelines for Counseling Parents*.

The new AAP statement covers issues such as keeping infants rear-facing up to at least age 1 and at least 20 pounds. It advises keeping a child over age 1 rear-facing if he still fits within a rear-facing CR in terms of weight and height. It emphasizes booster use until lap and shoulder belts fit correctly, and continues to advise against the use of shield boosters for children of any size. It advises caution regarding the use of active side-impact air bags adjacent to the seats where children sit and encourages families to consider purchasing vehicles with built-in CRs. The statement refers physicians to certified CPS Technicians for technical advice.

For the complete text, see the AAP website, www.aap.org/family/cps.htm

SRN, March/April 2002

Are You Ready for LATCH?

See pages 3 & 4 for product-related updates

Watch the NHTSA website www.nhtsa.gov for educational materials to promote and explain LATCH

Two Studies from Partners for Child Passenger Safety

High Injury Risk in Rear Seats of Smallest Pickups

A study from the Partners for Child Passenger Safety Project concluded that children riding in the back seats of compact extended cab pickup trucks* have a much higher risk of significant injury than children in rear seats of larger extended cab pickups and other passenger vehicles. The risk in "full-size" extended cabs is generally comparable to passenger cars. The lowest risks were in the back seats of passenger vans.

The Partners project, a collaboration of Children's Hospital of Pennsylvania and State Farm Insurance, examines crashes involving children in post-1989 State Farm-insured vehicles in 15 states and the District of Columbia. As a study of insured families, this group is not representative of the entire U.S. population. However, the project is the largest collection of detailed data on crashes involving children.

Contrary to the general rule that rear seats are safer, in a crash the injury risk in the front seat of pickups with compact extended cabs is strikingly lower than the risk in the back seat. In the back seat of the compact pickups with extended cabs, the serious injury risk is 13 percent, as opposed to 1.6 percent in the rear seats of passenger cars and only 0.9 percent in vans. The risk of significant injury in the front seat of compact extended cab pickups is 2.8 percent, slightly less than that for front seats of passenger cars (2.9 percent). This increased risk in the back seat was true for both restrained and unrestrained children.

The conclusion of the study: "The compact extended-cab pickup truck does not appear to be the optimal choice for a family vehicle."

***Definitions:** The study's definition of compact and full-size extended cab pickups is based on gross vehicle weight, a maximum of 4,500 pounds for compact extended cab vehicles. For CPS purposes, compact, full-size, and crew cabs have different amounts of legroom and types of seating. The compact extended cab is very con-

finer, having jump seats or miniature bench seats. The full-size cab has a somewhat deeper bench seat in back and a rather thin seat back. The crew cab is even larger. Intended for adults, a crew cab has approximately the same space as a compact four-door SUV.

Reference

"Rear Seating and Risk of Injury to Child Occupants by Vehicle Type," Winston, F.K., Durbin, D.R., Kallan, M.J., Elliott, M.R., 45th Annual Proceedings, 2001, AAAM, 847/844-3880, www.carcrash.org

A Snapshot of Booster Use

The Partners for Child Passenger Safety Project has released a study on booster use by children between 2 and 8 years of age who were in crashes between Dec. 1, 1998 and Nov. 30, 2000. "Trends in Booster Seat Use Among Young Children in Crashes" reported that, of 53,834 children in that age group, 11.5 percent were using a booster seat at the time of the crash. Approximately half of the children (many of those in the 2-to-4 age range) were using shield boosters rather than belt-positioning boosters, although all of the vehicles they were riding in were made after 1989 and should have had shoulder belts in the rear seat outboard positions.

Booster use peaked at age 3 and dropped dramatically after age 4. During the two years covered by the study, booster use among 4- to 8-year-olds rose from 4 percent to 13 percent.

Reference

"Trends in Booster Seat Use Among Young Children in Crashes," Dennis R. Durbin, et al, PEDIATRICS, December 2001. Contact: Partners for Child Passenger Safety, Shannon Morris, morriss@email.chop.edu

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Tether & LATCH Use Vary With Combo Seats

Combination seats use a harness for the child under 40 pounds and convert to a booster. In the harness mode, they have tethers and most recent models can be used with LATCH retrofit kits; they will come with LATCH attachments as of September 2002. In the belt-positioning booster (BPB) mode, LATCH anchors and tethers are not needed because the vehicle lap-shoulder belt, not the booster itself, restrains the child.

For the BPB mode, manufacturers' instructions differ on use of LATCH. Anchoring the BPB can add stability when the child climbs in and out. The anchors also can hold the device in place when it is not occupied. *Safe Ride News* surveyed manufacturers for their recommendations:

Car Seat Specialty:

Remove the tether to convert to BPB mode.

Cosco/Eddie Bauer/Safety 1st:

Remove the tether when switching to BPB mode. Do not use the Cosco LATCH retrofit kit with BPBs (or shield boosters).

Evenflo:

The tether MAY be used in the BPB, mode, but it is not required. The Evenflo LATCH kit is not for use with BPBs.

Graco-Century:

Both Graco and Century combination CR/BPBs may be tethered when switching to BPB mode, but tethering is not required.

The Graco-Century LATCH retrofit kit can be used to stabilize a BPB, but also is not necessary. Some LATCH-ready combination seats may have different instructions for LATCH attachment use with BPBs.

—Sue Miller Smith SRN, Nov/Dec 2001

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New Vehicle Safety Features for Children

Seen at the Seattle Auto Show:

▲ Some LATCH lower anchors were found about 1.5 inches above the seat bight. This position is determined by placing a standard “mock” CR in a specified position on the vehicle seat. The elevated position is likely due to the slope of the cushion.

▲ Many LATCH anchors are behind vertical or horizontal slits in the rear cushion. Some are not obvious, but most are marked with the little round logo. (illustrate).

▲ Some tether anchors were obvious, others not at all visible and apparently unmarked. It would be necessary to refer to owner's manuals. Some look like cargo tie-down hardware or are simple bars.

▲ Most right-side frontal air bags were well marked, but the Dodge Caravan had a seamless dashboard, and no visible compartment cover.

▲ More vehicles seem to have a head restraint in the center rear position as well as a three-point safety belt.

▲ Lower-cost luxury models appealing to young, affluent families are coming with features such as side-impact air bags that may not be suitable for use with children (see owner's manual).

Child safety features

Listings in NHTSA's booklet, *Buying a Safer Car for Child Passengers, 2002*, show some positive trends. Most features listed for 2002 model year vehicles (see below) are voluntary, not mandated. Some features available as standard equipment seem to be declining. This may be due in part to increasing numbers of different models listed. There are 23 percent more passenger car models listed, for instance. The listing also does not distinguish high volume family-style vehicles from other models. Features include:

Air bag on/off switches: All light pickup trucks except the Lincoln Blackwood offer on/off switches, but only half are standard equipment. Some passenger vehicles, primarily sports cars, have them as standard equipment or options. Even a few larger sedans, such as Toyota Camry and Avalon, have them as options. A number of SUVs, such as Mitsubishi Montero, Lexus LX 470, and Toyota

RAV4, also have the option, as do two vans, Honda Odyssey and Toyota Sienna.

Rear-seat center shoulder belts: Slightly less than 60 percent of passenger cars and about 25 percent of vans and SUVs have center shoulder belts as standard equipment, down slightly from last year.

Built-in CRs: Offerings have declined and almost all are options only.

Adjustable upper anchors (AUAs) for shoulder belt in the rear seat: These are standard equipment in only 19 percent of passenger car models this year, down from 25 percent last year. For vans and SUVs, the percent with AUAs declined sharply, to just under 50 percent.

Federally required features

Lower LATCH anchors: Almost 60 percent of passenger cars and 50 percent of vans and SUVs have these as standard equipment, up considerably since last year. These are required to be in at least 50 percent of vehicles in the 2002 model year and in 100 percent of passenger vehicles starting in September 2002 (MY 2003).

Interior trunk releases: 89 percent of passenger car models have releases, which are mandated for vehicles with trunks starting in the 2002 model year. (The list does not distinguish sedans from station wagons or hatchbacks.) The trunk release also is installed in the Lincoln Blackwood SUV, Chrysler PT Cruiser (listed as a minivan), and is an option for Ford F-150 and Ranger pickups with hard cargo covers.

Editor's Note

Center rear head restraints, back-seat side air bags, and pickup trucks with full-size rear seats are not listed in the NHTSA booklet.

Resources

NHTSA Booklet: *Buying a Safer Car for Child Passengers, 2002*. View on NHTSA website: www.nhtsa.dot.gov. Order in quantity from the NHTSA Hotline, 888/DASH-2-DOT (427-4236), or by fax: 301/386-2194

SRN Fact Sheet: *Choosing a Vehicle for Family Safety* (emphasizes used car selection), one of a set of 21 reproducible fact sheets, download order form from www.saferidenews.com or call 800/422-4121.

SRN, March/April 2002



LATCH and Tether Update, July 2002

Child Restraint Updates

The following is a list of the most significant changes related to tethers and LATCH that have occurred in the 18 months since the 2001 edition of *Tethering Child Restraints Including LATCH* was published.

The next edition of *Tethering Child Restraints* is planned for spring 2003. Please use this list to update your current manual.*

BRITAX CHILD SAFETY

New address: 13501 South Ridge Drive, Charlotte, NC 28273, U.S. and Canada: 888/427-4829, 704/409-1700, Fax 704/409-1665, www.britaxusa.com.

Britax is now recommending that lower LATCH anchors NOT be used with their child restraints (CRs) that use a harness for children over 48 pounds.

The **Super Elite** (FF harness CR up to 80 pounds) **must** be tethered when used by children 50–80 pounds. While the tether comes with two hooks, only one is needed, according to Britax. The **Traveler Plus**, which goes up to 105 pounds, also requires a single tether anchor from 50–80 pounds and attachment of two tether hooks above 80 pounds. Clip one hook into a tether anchor directly behind the CR and the other to an adjacent anchor.

The “Versa-tether” retrofit kit (part number S800-900), for **Roundabout**, **Elite**, and **Freeway** models, includes both the tether strap and the D-ring connector strap. The connector strap is also sold separately for \$4. The Tether Anchor Assembly (part number M007200) is available for \$1.95 for use with the **Roundabout**, **Elite**, and **Freeway Plus**. An extra tether strap can be ordered for the **Handle with Care** (Perfect Fit Tether H400300) for \$20.

RECALL: Advantage Model E9022 manufactured 3/5/01–7/26/01. The tether bracket may separate from the CR. Call 888/427-4829 to receive a metal ring kit replacement kit.

COLUMBIA MEDICAL

LATCH Retrofit Kit is available at no charge for the Columbia Model 2000 by calling 800/454-6612.

DOREL JUVENILE GROUP

Dorel is the new corporate name for **Cosco Inc.**, **Eddie Bauer**, and **SAFETY 1st** brands. While the address is unchanged, the new website address is www.djg.com

A **LATCH Retrofit Kit** (Model 02-A01, \$20) is available for use with Cosco, Eddie Bauer, and Safety 1st infant and child restraints with harnesses and manufactured since 1995. LATCH is not to be used with car beds, BPBs, or travel vests.

Cosco and Safety 1st recommend that neither tether nor lower LATCH attachments be used with BPBs.

The **Safety 1st Forerunner**, a LATCH-ready restraint, used rearward (5–35 pounds) and forward (22–40 pounds). The same LATCH straps are used for both rearward and forward installations. **Cosco Triad** has been discontinued.

EVENFLO

SecureRight System Retrofit Kit (LATCH) can be used with Evenflo child restraints manufactured since September 1999. The kit cannot be used with the On My Way base or with the Joyride.

A top tether may be used, if desired, with BPBs, but the LATCH retrofit kit may not be used.

E-Z-ON PRODUCTS

The Tether Strap Kit and the Tether Anchor Kit now include a tether strap with a regular hook at the end to use in vehicles having factory-installed tether anchors.

The 86-Y Harness should not be used with a separate booster seat.

FISHER-PRICE

Fisher-Price has been out of the child restraint business since spring of 2001 but continues to provide customer support for their products. The tether kit for the Futura is still available for \$15.95.

GRACO CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS & CENTURY PRODUCTS Correction: the web address should be www.gracobaby.com

“EZ LATCH Retrofit Kit”: A Graco/Century retrofit kit for lower attachments, part number 8405, fits many (but not all) Century and Graco CRs manufactured since September 1997. **Check the instructions; the kit does NOT work with all models made since that time.** (For a list of model numbers, go to www.saferidenews.com). Some models have a base that is too wide to access

LATCH anchors.

An older Century kit (part number 4025) can be used **only** for Century child restraints manufactured since September 1997. Its LATCH connectors are too long for the belt path on some Graco CRs.

The two kits can be distinguished by color: the Century-only kit has gray connectors, while the Graco/Century kit (Model 8405) has shorter, red connectors.

A 40-inch tether extender (part number 4035) is available from Century for \$8 for use with any Century or Graco restraint that uses a tether.

Century allows use of both the tether and lower LATCH attachments when a combination restraint is used as a belt-positioning booster (BPB). The anchors help stabilize the BPB but do NOT restrain the child.

A 40-inch tether extender (part number 4035) is available for \$8 for use with any Graco or Century CR that uses a tether.

SNUG SEAT

The **Gorilla Postural Seat** is LATCH-compatible. A LATCH retrofit kit is available upon request at no charge.

SAFELINE KIDS

The Sit 'n Stroll 2003 will not allow tether to be used in the rear-facing position.

Vehicle Updates

Some vehicle manufacturers have gone the extra mile in providing safety and convenience to accommodate child restraints in their newer models. Some offer more than the required number of LATCH locations. Although all vehicles have not yet been checked, sedans consistently have tether anchor provisions for all rear seating positions. Minivans and SUVs, however, vary greatly in their configurations. Specific hardware installed may depend on whether the vehicle has a bench seat or captains chairs.

Extra tether anchors with LATCH

A lack of sufficient tether anchors can pose a problem for parents who transport three or more children, or who want the children in the same seating row or in the center seating position. Some model year

* To order the 2001 edition, contact Safe Ride News Publications, 206/364-5696, or info@saferidenews.com



Vehicle Update, continued

2002 vehicles do not have a tether anchor for the center position. They include the **Toyota Sienna and Highlander, Lexus RX300, Isuzu Trooper and Rodeo Sport, Kia Sedona, and Jeep Grand Cherokee.** All these vehicles except the Sienna van have two tether anchors in the second row. All have a middle seating position available, but do not offer a tether anchor in that location. The **Lexus 470** has three tether anchors in the middle row, but none in the third seat.

SRN has learned that some manufacturers are not providing additional tether retrofit kits for vehicles with LATCH. This is because of increased burdens for testing to meet the LATCH requirements. In some cases, seating positions without a factory-installed tether anchor may be retrofitable. Check with the vehicle manufacturer.

LATCH Standard Basics

FMVSS 225 specifies that all new passenger vehicles must have lower anchors for the LATCH system installed starting September 1, 2002. The minimum requirement is upper and lower anchors (LATCH) in at least two rear seating positions, with an additional top tether in the middle if the vehicle has a middle seating position. Vehicles with three or more rows must have at least one LATCH system installed in the second row. If the vehicle has no rear seats or insufficient space to accommodate a rear facing restraint and there is an air bag on/off switch, then a LATCH system must be installed in the front seat.

Small school buses under 10,000 pounds must have two lower anchorages but not tether anchors. Top tether anchors are not required in convertibles.

AUDI

Audi dealers will provide and install tether anchors free in any 1993- through 99-model year Audi. They will also install lower anchors (LATCH) free for model year 1999–2001 of A4, A6, A8, and S8 vehicles and Road Quattros (2001–02).

DAIMLERCHRYSLER

RECALL: Cars, light trucks and SUVs from June 1999–October 2000. Some vehicles do not have tether anchor usage instructions as required by FMVSS 225. Call 800-853-1403 for an instruction addendum.

RECALL: PT Cruiser, made between 8/99 and 10/00, right inboard LATCH an-

chor bar may have a diameter too large to meet the standard size. Dealers will inspect and replace for free if necessary. Contact dealership or (if necessary) 800/853-1403.

FORD & MERCURY

Windstar (2002): Tether anchors have been moved to the back of the seat instead of underneath. The new design is easier to use and does not require twisting the tether strap.

Explorer and Mountaineer (2000–01, 4-Door): The squared O-shaped rings behind the rear seat are not identified as the tether anchors in the **2000** owners manual. The rings have been tested and are the anchors. The rings closest to the seat back should be used for the outboard seating positions. For a CR in the center, one of the rings at the back of the cargo area should be used. The 2001 model has three tether anchor rings.

Pickup F-250 (2000–01): The tether anchor kit for the F-250 extended cab does not have accurate instructions. In addition, the 2001 model does not have marks for anchor locations. For those vehicles with three weld nuts and locator tab slots (a rounded rectangular hole under the weld nut) in the back panel, remove the seat backs, screw the bolt into the weld nut, and replace the seat back. The locator tab will slip into the locator slot and will hold the loop straight up while the bolt is tightened. The weld nut is self-tapping, and will require some effort to tighten. Vehicles with J-nut holes (square holes 1.5 inches to the side of the anchor hole) should use the kit for the 1999 F-250 as it includes J-nuts. Two kits are needed for anchoring one or two child safety seats; three kits for three seats.

GENERAL MOTORS

Chevy Silverado (2000–01): When tethering one or two CRs in the outboard seat, the top tether(s) should be attached to the center tether anchor loop after passing the strap through the loop directly behind. A CR placed in the middle should be tethered to either outboard position.

Geo Metro and Geo Sprint (1989–99): **Correction** to *Tethering Child Restraints*, 2001 edition. Both have tether anchor retrofit kits available. There are no retrofit kits available for any **Chevrolet Corvettes.**

LATCH non-compliance ruling (not a recall at this time): A NHTSA ruling (Dec. 7, 2001) regarding 2001 model year

**For a LATCH Primer, go to
www.saferidenews.com**

Pontiac Aztek and Montana, Chevrolet Venture, Oldsmobile Silhouette (U-Vans): Lower anchor bars may have a larger or smaller diameter than called for in FMVSS 225. Variations mean that rigid LATCH connectors on CRs may not fit onto the bars, particularly the oversized bars.

ISUZU MOTORS

Correct phone number: 800/255-6727.

NISSAN

Sentra: The 1990–99 4-door **Sentra** has 3 weld nuts in the rear filler panel, instead of factory installed tether anchors listed incorrectly in the tether manual. The part number is 88894-89900.

TOYOTA

There has been some confusion as to the correct tether anchor part number for Toyotas. *Tethering Child Restraints* (2001 edition) lists the **correct** part number, 73709-12010. This part is listed only as a “bracket” in the parts catalog, but is actually a one-piece part including the bracket, bolt and spacer, selling for around \$12. This new part supercedes the old part (number 04731-22012) called “CRS Kit,” which included a locking clip, the bolt and spacer, but no anchor bracket. (An anchor bracket from the CR manufacturer was needed for installation of the old kit.)

Echo (2000–01): The dealer will upgrade the tethers anchors at no charge upon request. The tether anchors passed FMVSS 225 and the minimum standards required by the 2001 New Car Assessment Program, but “did not perform to Toyota’s high standards.” Owners were notified by Toyota. Call 1-800-331-4331 for more information.

RAV4 (1999–2000): Although the owner’s manual states otherwise, there is **no** tether anchor retrofit kit for these two years. The 1998 model has a retrofit kit (universal part number) and the 2001 has factory-installed tether anchors as part of LATCH.

VOLKSWAGEN

Volkswagen dealers will install tether anchors for free on its model year 1993–99 vehicles and will retrofit LATCH anchors on all 1999 and newer Passats at no charge.

SRN, Tethering Child Restraints, Including LATCH: Special Update, 7/02



Recalls

Graco SnugRide Infant Seat

SnugRide Infant CRs

equipped with a base and made between Aug. 31, 1999, and Feb. 28, 2002, are being recalled. Almost 919,000 seats are involved.

The metal hooks and U-bars that attach the carrier to the base may be missing. Components of either the base or the seat may be missing. This would allow the CR to become detached from the base in a crash. Consumers should download the instruction sheet from www.gracobaby.com (recalls are under "Customer Service") to find out if their unit is affected or call 800/664-5246.

Model numbers are: 7493G9, 7493RS, 7497HL, 7497SY, 7499LK, 7499N2, 841101, 841102, 841103, 841203, 8412T02, 8457D5, 8457DVB, 8457F3, 8457GP, 8457IND, 8457MA, 8457MV, 8457RG, 8457TMJ, 8457TMP, 8457YL, 8458A5, 8458AE, 8458B7, 8458D8, 8458FKB, 8458HE, 8458HH, 8458KY, 8458N5, 8459VL, 8460LV, 8462HAV, 8462JAM, 8471UVB, 8472BLW, 8472BRN, 8472CYP,

8472GMP, 8472MAD, 8472YL, 8474HAB, 8474MEL, 8476VIN, 8477HAV, 8477JAM, 8477NGS, and 8478SAR.

NOTE: Bases purchased separately through Graco Customer Service may not have a model number on the list but should be inspected (using the instruction sheet mentioned above).

Graco urges consumers to continue to use the infant restraint without the base while awaiting the repair kit.

Evenflo Triumph

Over 28,000 Triumph Convertible Child Restraints made between October 2001 and January 2002 with model numbers that begin with "264" are being recalled.

Slide loop connectors, part of the internal harness system, may not be sufficiently strong to secure the occupant. Parents should continue to use the seat while waiting to receive the repair kit and install it, because it will still provide better protection than an adult seat belt or no restraint.

For more information and a free repair kit, contact Evenflo at 800/425-1967, or log onto www.triumphcarseat.com and click on the "Registration" link.

Peg Perego Infant Restraints

Martinelli Primo Viaggio with base, Pliko Travel System, Primo Viaggio System, Atlantico System, and Atlantico Trek System SNG. Over 55,162 infant car seats made from May 20, 2001, through Feb. 15, 2002.

The harness may not stay snug. When the upholstery is snapped to the plastic cover over the A-Loc (pull-type) adjuster, tension on the upholstery due to the child's weight may prevent the A-Loc from being fully engaged. The company will provide instructions for removing the plastic cover and will then send a new cover to owners. Call Peg Perego toll-free at 877/737-3468 or visit www.perego.com
SRN, March/April 2002

Xportation Safety Concepts (XSCi) Pioneered Rear-Facing Child Seat

Air bag-compatible Pioneered CRs made by XSCi from February 1 to March 7, 2002 were recalled for failure of the latch that holds the cradle into the deflector-base.

The company offered purchasers a free replacement seat (from another manufacturer) while the Pioneered seats were being repaired. XSCi indicates that all seats that had been sold or distributed to stores had been retrieved for repair. Contact XSCi at 800/630-6850 with any questions.

Designer 22 Infant Car Seats, Dorel Juvenile Group:

Dorel has recalled about 26,000 infant-only seats under Safety 1st and Beatrix Potter brand names. The carry handle can release during use, which could flip an unbuckled baby onto the ground.

Seats made between Jan. 3, 2002, and Feb. 13, 2002, with model numbers/color codes 02-621-SAL, 02-620-AZY and 02-620-BEA are included. These seats were not sold in Canada.

These seats can continue to be used as car restraints but should not be used as carriers until repaired. For a free repair kit, contact Dorel at www.djgusa.com, by fax at 800/207-8182, or by calling 800/536-1090 (7-5 Eastern Time, Mon.-Thurs.; 7-4:30, Fri.).

SRN, May/June 2002

AAA: CPS Certification Update

Certification Changes for 2003

For the 2003 hands-on component of the four child safety seat configurations (forward-facing convertible, rear-facing convertible, rear-facing infant, booster), at least one of the configurations must include tether or LATCH.

For technician instructors, the "teaching hours" requirement has also been modified for 2003. A maximum of six hours of the 16-hour teaching requirement can be used for instructor candidate monitoring. Documentation should include the class agenda and copies of the candidates' evaluation forms. However, teaching hours CANNOT come from the same class.

Recertification Process

If you do not receive your re-certification test packet within 90 days prior to your certification expiration date, please contact AAA at 407/444-7958.

Board Applications Open for 2003, Due by September 20

Now is the time to apply for a position on the National CPS Board. The board members volunteer for two-year terms. Submit applications by September 20.

Open board positions:

- 1) representative of an organization serving a diverse population
- 2) employee of a state injury prevention program
- 3) a person working in a local, state, or national public health organization
- 4) representative of a national nursing organization
- 5) CPS advocate

For more information and the application, see the board website: www.cpsboard.org or contact Carole Guzzetta at guzzettc@nsc.org, 202/296-6263.