

SRN Answers to Webinar Questions (May 27, 2021)

1. Appendix C has no GM vehicles listed and there is no mention about GM vehicles in this appendix. Does that mean GM does not allow Center LATCH installation?

You are correct that Table C1 in Appendix C has no GM brands listed, so that does mean that borrowing is not allowed in any GM vehicle; you can also find this in the brand-wide bullet for each brand (top, center).

However, note that Appendix C also includes Table C2, which lists all the *standard* center LATCH systems in any vehicle, by configuration type. You'll see that many GM-brand vehicles are listed there. So, in those vehicles with a standard set of LATCH bars provided for the center (also described in App B and in the owner's manual), center LATCH *is* allowed.

2. Is there any thought to put some guidance on the aftermarket lower anchor bars that are being sold?"

Yes, we do include that in the 2021 *LM*. As was shown in the webinar, you can find a warning on page 53 about retrofit parts, but since that chapter is tether-focused, we also needed to include a warning about the lower anchors. So, check out page 19 of Chapter 3 (the step-by-step LA attachment-use chapter). Under step 1, Confirm LATCH Availability, there is another paragraph that provides a warning to be on the lookout for unsafe, aftermarket LATCH.

On this subject, please also check out a new webpage at www.saferidnews.com (under Resources) that is called Unsafe Products. This page is a compilation of the reporting, learning, and teaching tools on the topic of illegitimate products.

3. How about a smart phone app that will provide a short information and point to the page in the LATCH manual for detailed information?

Cool idea! We have mostly thought about ways to bring the whole book (or at least the appendices) to a searchable electronic format. But this is an interesting thought that's worthy of consideration, thanks!

4. How about the moving belt latch in Mercedes cars?

Mercedes definitely does have some interesting and unique features! I'm sorry, I'm not sure I understand this particular question, but if you look at this link to the LATCH Gallery under Mercedes-Benz C-Class, you can find a fun example of foldable lower anchors (where you have to push a little button to pop them out).

<https://www.saferidnews.com/latch/latch-gallery/latch-gallery-las/>

5. I appreciate the notes discussing the seat back angle "clicks" with Toyota - even though it is most confusing!

Thanks. Katrina and I spent a lot of time editing those for 2021, pouring over many owner's manuals to try to make that guidance clearer (not just for Toyota, but any that describe a particular seatback position). I hope that the way it is described now is clearer—but we are open to suggestions!

6. I been getting a lot of parents wants to use a latch and a seatbelt. What is the reason not to use both when a manual says do not use both?

This was answered in the webinar, but bottom line is we just have to follow what the manufacturers recommend. In very few cases, both the manufacturers say it is okay. (See page 23 and 24 for a summary of stances on the subject of using LATCH and seat belt simultaneously.) As I

mentioned, the LATCH Working Group concluded many years ago that the two shouldn't be used together (noted on page 23). Of course, always stay tuned—it is possible for this to be revisited, and policies can change!

7. I did an inspection a few weeks ago and saw something I never have. One of the latch brackets in the seat of the car was cracked. I told the mother to not use that seat location and why. I also told her to contact the car manufacturer immediately. Was this the correct information?

Oh, absolutely! Even a bar that looks fine to an untrained eye after a crash might not be safe and should be inspected at the dealership. If you see an actual crack, it's even more appropriate to be cautious. The nice thing is that we nearly always have a suitable backup option— installation using the seat belt. (Good catch, by the way!)

8. Mercedes uses ISBs too, right?

This question was also answered in the webinar. In a nutshell, yes, some M-B vehicles have ISBs, but they are a different type than Ford's. M-B says to use theirs only with the company's own car seat models (see M-B in both App. B and App. A for this guidance). Therefore, the inflatable seat belt policies of the various car seat manufacturers are always specific to the Ford/Lincoln ISBs.

9. Sometimes the LATCH hardware can interfere with the vehicle seat belt in a crash (or vice-versa)

It is always advisable to check to make sure that car seats and all the hardware "get along." In general, we don't want car seats sitting on top of buckles or webbing rubbing awkwardly against other hard parts or other taut webbing. These situations can cause damage in crash and non-crash situations – and are often among the most difficult issues to assess as CPSTs in the field. If you see something that concerns you that can't be solved (like by moving the CR, using a different CR, etc.) the best advice I can give is to warn the caregiver and follow up by sending photos to the manufacturers' reps to get their input as to whether it's a dangerous problem or not.

10. The slide mentioned that TA kits are not always from "reliable" sources. Who would make kits that are "reliable?" Would this come from the CSM?

To my knowledge, the only reliable makers of retrofit TA kits are vehicle and CR manufacturers. These companies must adhere to federal regulations to ensure their products are safe. One never knows – another vendor (say, a seat belt supplier) could step in and offer this type of hardware in the future. But, even that would need to be very carefully vetted before it would be deemed suitable for use. So, until further notice, stick to parts made by the CR and vehicle manufacturers. And, as I said, there is a resource on our website to compare any kits found from third-party vendors against the legitimate part number supplied by the vehicle manufacturer.

11. Did you say that every manufacturer now says it's okay to use LATCH with booster seats?

No. All *vehicle* manufacturers now say that it's okay to use LATCH with a booster seat, but that's still provided doing so is okay by the CR manufacturer and the belt fit on the child is not impaired. There are still some CR brands that don't allow LATCH in booster mode, so be sure to check the owner's manual and the brand entry in Appendix A.

