



## CHILDREN'S CAR SEAT CAMPAIGN for greater safety Federal Minister of Transport Tiefensee issues an appeal to parents

*Children's car seats are continually being improved, but most children are still not properly secured when they're riding in cars. This is the conclusion reached by the German Association of Toy and Game Retailers (BVS), the German Society for the Protection of Children (DKB), the Deutsche Verkehrswacht (DVW) (an organization that promotes road safety), the German Insurance Association (GDV) and the German policemen's union (GdP) — and that has motivated these organizations to intensify their advocacy of children's safety in vehicles. Accordingly, they have created the CHILDREN'S CAR SEAT CAMPAIGN, whose founding is being announced at Kind+Jugend 2007 in Cologne. The cooperative campaign will focus on informing parents about children's safety in vehicles, training retailers of children's car seats, and awarding a seal of quality to producers of safe car seats.*

The quality of children's car seats has been continually improved in recent years, and the German consumer advocacy association Stiftung Warentest as well as the motorists' association ADAC recently awarded **their highest accolade, "very good"**, for the first time ever in this product segment. However, children riding in cars in Germany are still living dangerously. According to field studies conducted by the Federal Highway Research Institute (BAST) in 2006, children's car seats were improperly used in 64.7% of all the cases investigated. In the sampling, 31.2% of the **children's car seats** were **improperly installed** or only loosely attached. What's more, 68.8% of all the children were **improperly secured in the car seats**. In most cases, the safety belts had not been pulled tight enough, were fastened at the wrong height, or were stretched across the child's neck. Steffen Kahnt, the coordinator of the CHILDREN'S CAR SEAT CAMPAIGN, commented as follows: *"The most expensive children's car seat does no good at all if it is improperly installed. But everyone who has ever strapped a child into a child's safety seat knows that feeling of insecurity as you ask yourself: Is the seat properly secured? Is the seat belt in the right position? Such questions are being asked every day by mothers, fathers and grandparents. We have launched our campaign in order to give them support."*

Traffic safety organizations and auto clubs are already committed to giving parents the advice they need via special events. However, there's no substitute for **expert**

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consultation when parents are buying a car seat for their child. Peter Jahn, the safety expert working with the CHILDREN'S CAR SEAT CAMPAIGN, had this to say: *"Everybody wants only the best for their child. When people are buying children's car seats, their first contact is the salesperson in the store for baby products or the special retail shop for children's outfitting. The salespeople must have the necessary expertise concerning children's car seats, and in some cases they even have to install the car seat in the customer's vehicle. That gives young parents a greater sense of security from the very start."* In the future, shoppers looking for a children's car seat will be able to identify specially trained salespeople with the help of a newly developed badge. The first training sessions will begin in 2008.



The German federal government has hailed the new safety campaign for the youngest road users, in view of the fact that most of the children who are injured in traffic accidents are not pedestrians or bike riders but car occupants. This is why the German Minister of Transport Wolfgang Tiefensee made the following point in his address at the official founding conference of the CHILDREN'S CAR SEAT CAMPAIGN: *"The CHILDREN'S CAR SEAT CAMPAIGN which is being founded today is an important step in the right direction. I would like to take this opportunity to expressly thank everyone involved in this sector initiative. And I'd like to call on all parents to take advantage of this outstanding offer from the manufacturers and suppliers of children's safety systems and get expert advice when they are buying and installing children's car safety seats."*

You can find a summary of the report **"Improper Use of Children's Safety Systems in Passenger Vehicles"** published by the Federal Highway Research Institute (BAST) at [http://www.bast.de/cln\\_005/nn\\_42640/DE/Publikationen/Berichte/unterreihe-m/2007-2004/m178.html](http://www.bast.de/cln_005/nn_42640/DE/Publikationen/Berichte/unterreihe-m/2007-2004/m178.html)

The CHILDREN'S CAR SEAT CAMPAIGN is sponsored by the German Association of Toy and Game Retailers (BVS), the German Society for the Protection of Children (DKB), the Deutsche Verkehrswacht (DVW) (an organization that promotes road safety), the German Insurance Association (GDV) and the German policemen's union (GdP). (Status: 29th August 2007)

The CHILDREN'S CAR SEAT CAMPAIGN is promoted by the manufacturers Britax Römer, Dorel Germany (Maxi Cosi) and Concord, as well as the key sector cooperatives and retail companies Ardek/proBABY, BabyOne and IGEKA. (Status: 29th August 2007)

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