

## Safety Conscious or Throw-Away Society?

Contributed by Kimberly Schick-Puddicombe  
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So my point! Yes, I believe there should be restrictions and guidelines for car seats, and I am grateful for the Canadian standards being so high, but why every country is so vastly different is beyond me. Why are perfectly good car seats tossed when I believe that they could be re-inspected and sent to a third world country to help protect those children less fortunate?

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Something for you to Ponder!

Before Christmas, I was driving home at dusk on a busy highway with lots of oncoming traffic when a deer ran straight in to our truck. I had both children with me, sleeping in their car seats, only our 21 month old even woke up with the ruckus. It scared the bejesus out of me and all I can remember is legs and eyes rolling over the window and then I knew what happened. I stopped and couldn't control myself from shaking; a nice man who witnessed the accident stopped and checked to see if we were okay.

{bot\_wrgoogle}We walked back to see if, by some miracle, the deer would need help but the only ones in need of help was us. No one was hurt. With this much damage and the fact that the truck was not drivable I called 911 and they informed me that the kids must remain strapped in car seats until the police arrived to take the report, which was over 90 minutes later. Only a mom knows how to keep a toddler entertained while strapped in a car seat for that long. We needed a tow truck as I pretty much tore the front end of the truck off, but to the amazement of the police, the tow truck driver and myself, the air bag didn't even go off. No damage to any other part of the vehicle other than the front end. The insurance company advised us that, because the kids were in the car seats when the accident happened, we would have to forfeit both car seats and would have to replace them. Of course, insurance would cover them up to a specific dollar value. (Don't even get me started about how some people rape the insurance industry with fraudulent insurance claims that cost us all in the end). If the children had not been in them we would not have to replace them. Even though there was no physical damage to the seats, or even close to them, they had been in an accident. This is the law, just black and white. I asked what they would do with the car seats and was told that they would cut the straps and they would be tossed into the garbage. Perfectly good car seats pitched in the landfill.

So recently while in New Zealand, we rented car seats instead of lugging them all across the country and the seats we have now would probably never pass Canadian safety code. My daughter is in a car seat with only a 3 point harness and is dated July 2004. My son is in a booster seat with a strap that he must sit on and the seat belt is weaved into it prior to being buckled into the car seatbelt lock. There is no shoulder harness to hold the seatbelt in place over his right shoulder so it moves up and down and provides no restraint whatsoever. He can sneak under the strap and reach across to his sister and pulls his arm in and out as he pleases no matter how many times we tell him it is not safe and why he should keep his arm under.

So my point! Yes, I believe there should be restrictions and guidelines for car seats, and I am grateful for the Canadian standards being so high, but why every country is so vastly different is beyond me. Why are perfectly good car seats tossed when I believe that they could be re-inspected and sent to a third world country to help protect those children less fortunate? And I do realize that in some countries, motorbikes are the normal mode of transportation and a car seat wouldn't work in that case. Many countries you normally just see moms with a baby in a sling strapped to the front and a tiny tot holding on tight as can be behind, sometimes there is even more than one on the back. I am sure we could make better use of car seats that could go through an inspection process and be redistributed. I would like to find some country that would be happy to have these donated car seats for their children to have some type of safety.

So my questions for you to ponder is are we so safety conscious that we are willing to fill our landfill with products that could fit into the 3 R's and be reused or am I out to lunch in thinking that they could never be good to anyone?

Kimberly Schick-Puddicombe is the Founder and Publisher of Moms, Dads and Kids. & The Little Black Book for busy families". Her transition from full time marketer with a demanding career to full time mom with 2 fabulously active kids had her on a constant search for things to keep them occupied so she launched Alberta fun finder website <http://www.momsdadsandkids.com>