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ROAD SAFETY NEWS

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BBC programme focused on child car seat restraints

Monday 17th March 2014

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Episode six of the [BBC Watchdog Test House](#) programme which was aired on 17 March focused on child car seat restraints, at the same time as new research shows that 50% of child restraint systems are incorrectly fitted.

Watchdog Test House, presented by Sophie Raworth and Lynn Faulds Wood, looks at how household products are tested and puts the makers' claims on trial. This particular episode will look at child restraints, highlighting the importance of safe installation.

The new research was published by [Child Seat Safety \(CSS\)](#) who featured in the programme as the BBC's experts on child in-car safety.

The CSS paper follows a 12-month project in which the data from around 1800 checks has been analysed. It looks at the "mistakes made by parents when fitting child restraints and children into cars".

The study was carried out at community check events and enforcement days across the country, and CSS says that the results are based on "standardised assessment and reporting".

The study concludes that instructions need to be easier to understand and educational messages need to be "constantly cascaded" to parents. It also advocates a "bigger push for the use of ISOFIX" and stresses the importance of joint working by all involved in child in-car safety.

CSS also says that three quarters (74%) of all faults were "easily rectifiable".

A [summary of the report](#) is available on the CSS website. For a copy of the full report [email CSS](#).

Child Seat Safety

Child Seat Safety was set up in 2011 by Julie Dagnall and Claire Waterhouse who between them have more than 45 years' road safety education, training and publicity experience. Child Seat Safety has developed the only nationally recognised qualification in child seat safety awareness. Accredited by the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH), the course is designed to assist retailers, manufacturers, public service safety advisors and emergency service personnel, in providing the right advice to parents and carers. The course is endorsed by Which? and Road Safety GB. Julie Dagnall is also Road Safety GB's specialist with regard to in-vehicle safety.



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In cycling safety campaigns / material, should cyclists always

Quite right, David,...it needed saying.

The inability or unwillingness of some of the public to do things correctly on the roads generally (not just fitting after-market products like this) astounds me on a daily basis.

Hugh Jones, Cheshire

[Agree \(5\)](#) | [Disagree \(0\)](#)

+5

I do feel that it is slightly unfair to lay the blame on a manufacturer, should a parent fail to properly install a child seat. Yes, some instructions are not that clear, or simple to follow, but one should never underestimate the stupidity of the great British public. I have seen some nightmares over the years, and most of them have not been the fault of the maker. There are plenty of people out there who simply refuse to read any sort of instructions, relying on their 'common sense'.

David, Suffolk

[Agree \(9\)](#) | [Disagree \(1\)](#)

+8

Perhaps they are aiming their item at parents and grandparents who are interested in the safety of children, rather than the "petrol heads" who watch Top Gear.

It's called getting your information across to the target audience and large number of them (but not all) will be daytime viewers.

Ruth Gore, Safer Roads Humber

[Agree \(19\)](#) | [Disagree \(0\)](#)

+19

There seems to be some debate as to the conclusions of the report, and that it is simply blaming parents. If you take the example of a DIYer, if they make a mistake building a cabinet - who is at fault, the manufacturer or the DIYer.

Not everyone interprets instructions in the same way, therefore asking for clarity has got to be a good thing.

Also we all need a bit of help at sometime, hence the reason for having trained and accredited advisors able to offer specialist help. I seem to recall that the Child Seat Safety website lists these advisors.

Malcolm Shales - Kent

[Agree \(16\)](#) | [Disagree \(0\)](#)

+16

Pete: Yes I was probably deliberately being obtuse - I know being sensible doesn't sit well with Top Gear's image - but it did occur to me if the BBC were so concerned, why tuck the item away on a daytime programme not obviously connected to motoring?

Hugh Jones, Cheshire

[Agree \(9\)](#) | [Disagree \(6\)](#)

+3

Hugh, thing is I don't think it would interest Top Gear's audience. Certainly not in this format, the old one maybe or Fifth Gear.

Pete

[Agree \(12\)](#) | [Disagree \(1\)](#)

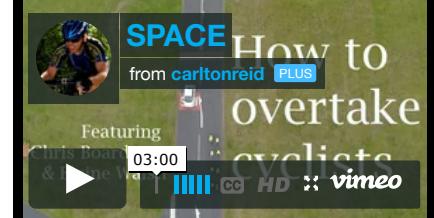
be shown wearing helmets?

YES	68%
NO	31%
NOT SURE	1%

(FINAL RESULT - 163 RESPONSES)

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+11

An excellent piece, nonetheless. Well done to all involved. A timely reminder of the ongoing in-car safety issues.

Jan James, CEO Good Egg Safety

[Agree](#) (14) | [Disagree](#) (0)

+14

I suppose it was too much to expect that an item on child in-car safety might have been included in the BBC's only motoring programme (Top Gear), so instead they include it in a programme covering safety in the HOME where, of course, one would naturally expect to find an item on child CAR seat safety.

Hugh Jones, Cheshire

[Agree](#) (4) | [Disagree](#) (14)

-10

Nick:

The report looks at the "mistakes made by parents when fitting child restraints and children into cars". The report therefore assumes that the mistake is made at the user end rather than the designer end.

I would also have thought that "joint working by all involved in child in-car safety" would naturally include the end users as it's them that has to make the correct selection and do or arrange the fitting.

Duncan MacKillop, Stratford on Avon

[Agree](#) (3) | [Disagree](#) (23)

-20

Duncan:

Not sure how you come to the conclusion that this study 'blames the parents'.

Among its conclusions are a call for instructions that are easier to understand and a "bigger push for the use of ISOFIX" - both of which lie with the manufacturers, not parents. It also stresses the importance of "joint working by all involved in child in-car safety" - again, nothing to do with parents.

Nick Rawlings, editor, Road Safety News

[Agree](#) (28) | [Disagree](#) (1)

+27

If a parent makes a 'mistake' in fitting a child seat then the problem lies with the design of the seat, not with the abilities of the parent. This is another example of bad-apple theory hard at work as it blames the parents for their stupidity/lack of skill rather than seeking to understand the underlying problem.

Duncan MacKillop, Stratford on Avon

[Agree](#) (5) | [Disagree](#) (30)

-25

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