



American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



Alaska Chapter

January 26, 2009

Alaska Chapter Executive Committee

President

Jodyne L. Butto, MD, FAAP
3340 Providence Drive, Ste. 466
Anchorage, AK 99508
Phone: 907/562-2423
Fax: 907/563-1170
E-mail: jlbuto@gci.net

Vice President

Lily J. Lou, MD, FAAP
3340 Providence Drive, Ste. 366
Anchorage, AK 99508-4616
Phone: 907/563-3026
Fax: 907/562-6445
E-mail: lilylou@mindspring.com

Chapter Executive Director

Janice Tower
7645 Griffith Street
Anchorage, AK 99507
Phone: 907/346-8028
Fax: 907/346-8028
E-mail: jtower@alaska.com

Chapter Web site

www.aapalaska.org

AAP Headquarters

141 Northwest Point Blvd
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098
Phone: 847/434-4000
Fax: 847/434-8000
E-mail: kidsdocs@aap.org
www.aap.org

Jon Cook
PO Box 71577
Fairbanks, AK 99707

Dear Mr. Cook,

On behalf of the Alaska Chapter AAP I would like to lend our chapter's support for SB 72 that will update and modernize our Child Safety Seat laws to include the use of booster seats, and to spell out safe practices of child restraint devices that are appropriate for infants and children of all ages.

Seat belts are made for adults. Children should stay in a booster seat until adult seat belts fit correctly, usually when the child reaches 4' 9" in height and is between 8 and 12 years of age. The Alaska Chapter AAP recommends that state child safety seat laws are brought up to this standard.

Results from the 2007 National Survey of the Use of Booster Seats conducted by the National Center for Statistics and Analysis of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reveals alarmingly that booster seat use rates for children ages 6 and 7 dropped from 36 percent in 2006 to 25 percent in 2007. The study concludes that there is premature graduation of children from birth to age 12 to restraint types that are inappropriate for their height or weight.

SB 72 would help to alleviate confusion among parents and caregivers as to which safety devices are appropriate for their children. Alaska's pediatricians are happy to do their part by counseling parents during doctors' visits on how to keep their children safe while riding in vehicles.

Sincerely,

Jodyne L. Butto, MD, FAAP
President