

WMA RESOLUTION ON CHILD SAFETY IN AIR TRAVEL

Adopted by the 57th WMA General Assembly, Pilanesberg, South Africa, October 2006

1. Whereas air travel is a common mode of transportation and is used by people of all ages every day;
2. Whereas high standards of safety for adult passengers in air travel have been achieved;
3. Whereas strict safety procedures are being followed in air travel that greatly increase the chance of survival during emergency situations for properly secured adults;
4. Whereas infants and children are not always guaranteed adequate and appropriate safety measures during emergency situations in aircraft;
5. Whereas restraint and safety systems for infants and children have been successfully tested to reduce the risk of suffering injuries during emergency situations in aircraft;
6. Whereas child restraint systems have been approved for usage in standard passenger aircrafts and successfully introduced by several airlines;

Therefore, the World Medical Association

1. Expresses grave concern regarding the fact that adequate safety systems for infants and children have not been generally implemented;
2. Calls on all airline companies to take immediate steps to introduce safe, thoroughly tested and standardized child restraint systems;
3. Calls on all airline companies to train their staff in the appropriate handling and usage of child restraint systems;
4. Calls for the establishment of a universal standard or specification for the testing and manufacturing of child restraint systems; and
5. Calls on national legislators and air transportation safety authorities to:
 - a. require for infants and children, as a matter of law, safe individual child restraint systems that are approved for use in standard passenger aircraft;
 - b. ensure that airlines provide child restraint systems or welcome passengers using their own systems, if the equipment is qualified and approved for the specific aircraft;
 - c. ban the usage of inappropriate "Loop Belts" frequently used to secure infants and children in passenger aircraft;
 - d. provide appropriate information about infant and child safety on board of aircraft to all airline passengers.