

Case Study 9: Kentin

Child's age, weight, height

19 month-old male, 25 pounds, 36 inches

Medical Diagnosis/condition

Spinal Muscle Atrophy (SMA), a neuromuscular disease in which the muscles weaken and waste away due to degeneration of motor neurons which are nerve cells in the spinal cord.

Reason for referral

Kentin's physician wanted an occupational therapy evaluation due to Kentin's significant lack of muscle control and his being on a ventilator.

Current child safety restraint

Rear-facing convertible child safety seat.

Other child passengers and restraints

None

Vehicle Year, Make and Model

1995, Chevy Tahoe

Child's Seating Position in Vehicle (X)

D		
		Kentin



Graco Safe Seat with forward facing recline

Vehicle Issues

None. The car seat has built-in lock offs.

Evaluation

Kentin had almost out grown his current child passenger restraint in height. Due to his complex respiratory issues and significant muscle loss Kentin would benefit from a new car seat which could be slightly reclined when riding in the car. His family understood the benefits of rear-facing but since his mother traveled alone with him, she wanted him forward facing due to his respiratory condition.

Outcome

The OT issued Kentin a new child passenger restraint named the Safe Seat manufactured by Graco. The Safe Seat is a forward facing only seat which can be positioned at different angles of recline. Kentin fit well in the car seat and, because of the recline, his head was no longer falling forward and compromising his airway. Kentin traveled with a ventilator, oxygen tank, suction machine, and an apnea monitor. An unoccupied seat belt was also used to secure some of Kentin's medical equipment, while the rest was wedged on the floor.