

## Abstract Template

**TITLE:** Child car seat use in Kuala Terengganu

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### Abstract

This article discusses child car seat use in the Malaysian city of Kuala Terengganu. Based on observations (at and around a preschool) and interviews (with parents, a preschool practitioner, and a retired police officer) it appears that although some parents in Kuala Terengganu are aware of child cars seats, attitudes remain relaxed and usage is low. The following (often overlapping) explanations were identified: Cultural traits, economic factors, the media, the ‘generation gap’ and inconsistent law enforcement. Understanding these factors is critical for developing a culturally appropriate strategy for improving road safety culture. Many caregivers appear reluctant to spend their limited money on such child ‘accessories’ given that the *kampung* (village) ambiance provides a false sense of security. While some parents increasingly restrain their children, grandparents do not always cooperate. The emphasis on politeness towards and respect for the elderly therefore conflicts with the demands of rapid social change and causes some parents to fear for their children and resent the grandparents’ stubbornness. The absence of child car seat laws and the limited law enforcement also limits usage; people routinely ignore existing seatbelt laws. While in Malaysia’s current political landscape major social change would need to resonate with public opinion this may prove difficult given the heavy media restrictions. And while racial differences appear either small or non-existent, level of education – perhaps a proxy for engagement with modernity – may be significant. However, Kuala Terengganu is a conservative and traditional state with an overt tension between tradition and modernity.