

Position Paper: Missouri Safe Transport of Children in the Pre-Hospital Setting

Purpose:

The Missouri EMS for Children (EMSC) Advisory Committee, composed of pediatric, emergency, trauma, and EMS professionals alongside family advocates, is committed to enhancing pediatric readiness across EMS agencies, emergency departments, inter-facility transports, and injury prevention programs. In alignment with national standards and best practices, this position statement addresses the essential components of safe pediatric transport in the pre-hospital environment.

Position Statement:

The Missouri EMS for Children Advisory Committee affirms that all children deserve to be transported as safely as possible during pre-hospital care. Recognizing the unique physiological and anatomical characteristics of pediatric patients, all EMS agencies in Missouri that transport children should implement and enforce comprehensive policies and procedures that prioritize safe, developmentally appropriate transport practices.

The Committee Recommends the Following Standards:

1. Policy Development

All EMS agencies that transport children must have formal, written policies that specifically address pediatric transport and addresses the following:

- Ongoing **training** for EMS personnel in pediatric transport safety,
- Adequate and approved **equipment** designed for the secure transport of children.

Background and Rationale:

This position aligns with national guidance, including the National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO) "Safe Transport of Children" recommendations, which emphasize the critical importance of proper restraint, crash-tested equipment, and education in pediatric EMS readiness. Pediatric patients are particularly vulnerable in motor vehicle crashes, and inappropriate or absent restraint significantly increases the risk of severe injury or death.

Commitment to Ongoing Improvement:

The Missouri EMS for Children Advisory Committee remains committed to supporting EMS agencies through education, technical assistance, and advocacy to ensure continuous improvement in pediatric transport safety. We encourage regular training, inter-agency collaboration, and adherence to emerging best practices and standards as the body of evidence continues to grow.

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