

Summary

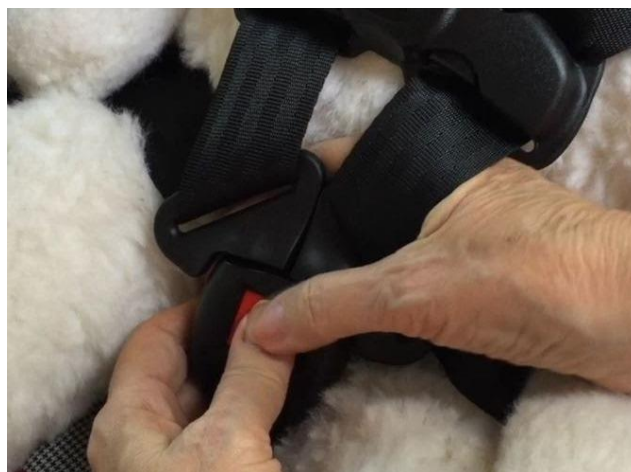
UnbuckleMe is a patent pending invention by Barbara Heilman, an Occupational Therapist, and her daughter Becca Davison. It is a small plastic tool that makes it easier to unbuckle a standard child's car seat buckle. It is an accessory that remains detached from the car seat, for safety reasons, but can be stored in an accessible location inside the car.



The Need

FMVSS require infant and child car seats to have a minimum release force of 9 lbs., to ensure children cannot prematurely unbuckle themselves. As the average age of first-time moms continues to climb and grandparents are increasingly providing childcare support, more adults are struggling to safely and comfortably operate their child's car seat buckle due to weakness, pain or just discomfort.

To remain safe, adults must be able to safely operate their children's car seats. This includes both buckling them up, and unbuckling them at the appropriate times. Three major car seat brands, including Graco and Evenflo, have recalled more than 5 million car seats since 2014 for problems related to ease of buckle release. There have also been cases of caregivers not properly buckling their children because they are "too hard to open". A solution is needed to ensure that all adults are able to quickly and comfortably remove their child from a car seat, both under normal circumstances and in an emergency.



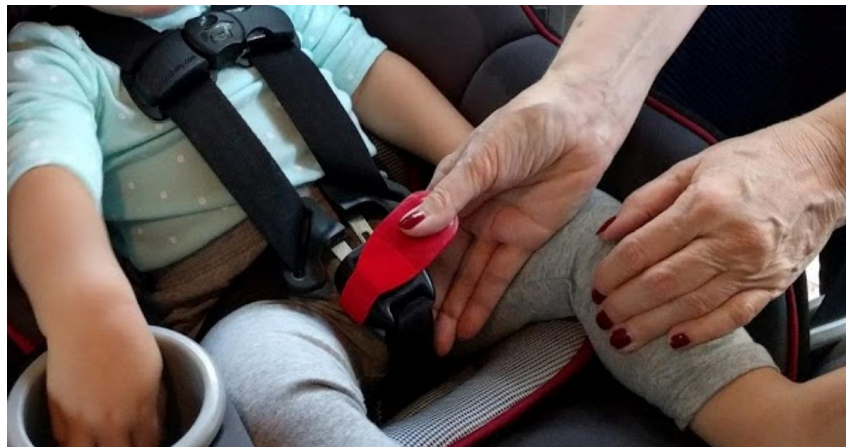
Product Description

UnbuckleMe is a small plastic tool that uses leverage to reduce the force required to unbuckle a child's car seat by more than 50%. UnbuckleMe was designed by an Occupational Therapist, who has experience adapting equipment for patients with disabilities of the hand. The inventor is also a Grandmother with arthritis who was frustrated that she could not safely and comfortably take her granddaughter out of the house without assistance from others.

UnbuckleMe has been designed to work with all standard push-button car seats that are distributed in the USA. Extensive testing has not been done on international models.

The body of UnbuckleMe will be made of a lightweight polypropylene and the handle & peg will be covered with a soft, "grippy" material that will provide additional comfort and stability.

UnbuckleMe provides a safe, convenient method for parents and grandparents to feel comfortable and confident taking their children on-the-go.



Competition & Differentiation

Few existing solutions exist in the marketplace, but each has significant shortcomings. The design, mechanics and performance of UnbuckleMe are all superior to existing products on the market. Furthermore, none of the existing solutions has reached mass distribution channels, leaving significant untapped market share for UnbuckleMe to capture.

One competitive product was designed for older children to unbuckle themselves (when mature enough, at the parents' discretion). It uses leverage to reduce the release force, but it remains permanently attached to the car seat, which introduces significant safety risks. Car seat manufacturers also void their warranty if any after-market products are attached to the car seat.

An additional product on the market is a round, flat shaped disk with a "post". It can be positioned above the buckle to push, but does not reduce the force required to unbuckle. It also requires gripping and torqueing of the wrist that is uncomfortable for those with hand/wrist problems. Finally, it can apply uncomfortable pressure by pushing on the child, and requires effort to stabilize.

Market Sizing

Core market statistics:

- Babies born each year in the USA: 4M
- Grandparents in the USA: 70M
- Grandparents living with children: 7M
- Grandparents who are primary caregivers of children: 2.7M
- Avg incidence rate of arthritis (estimated): up to 50% of women over 50 yrs old
- Avg incidence rate of carpal tunnel syndrome (estimated): 3-6% of adults
- Avg incidence rate of De Quervain's syndrome / "Mommy's Thumb" (estimated): 25-50% of new mothers

Additional markets identified:

- Parents/Caregivers with Parkinson's, Multiple Sclerosis, Cerebral Palsy, paralysis
- Parents/Caregivers with long fingernails
- Parents of older children who want a convenient way to *temporarily* enable their children to unbuckle the car seat, but keep out of reach while the car is in motion
- Elderly individuals in wheelchairs who require assistance unbuckling wheelchair safety buckles (UnbuckleMe has not yet been fully tested in this market)

Marketing Approach

UnbuckleMe launched with prototypes at the ABC Kids Expo in Las Vegas in October 2016, which is the largest industry trade show in the USA. The product received an outstanding response from media, buyers and consumers. UnbuckleMe samples have been distributed and tested across the US and Canada, and received exceptional reviews. UnbuckleMe has been presented at subsequent trade shows, including the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) and the ABC Spring Educational Conference, which all generated significant support and confirmation of demand. The latter resulted in purchase orders from 16 retail locations across the USA.

UnbuckleMe launched on Kickstarter in early 2017 and successfully raised 128% of its funding goal of \$10,000. This funding will be applied towards the creation of injection molded tooling, required for manufacturing. 343 backers have been guaranteed product delivery, when it becomes available in the fall of 2017.

UnbuckleMe will continue its marketing approach through website sales, and eventually, additional e-commerce platforms including Amazon. The team will pursue additional purchase orders from independent retail stores to continue marketing and educating consumers about the product.

UnbuckleMe was offered a licensing opportunity by a major company within the baby products industry, and the management team may consider this option in the future. At the present time, the team is in favor of pursuing its current marketing and sales strategy.

Management Team

UnbuckleMe was invented by Barbara Heilman, a Licensed and Registered Occupational Therapist. She is also a grandmother with arthritis. UnbuckleMe was co-founded with her daughter, Becca Davison, who has an MBA in Finance and Strategy. Becca and Barbara co-own the company as 50/50 partners. Barbara oversees the product development/design and Becca manages the day to day business operations and marketing efforts. Becca is a working mother to an 18-month old daughter and is expecting her second child in September 2017. She continues to work a full time corporate job, since UnbuckleMe has not yet reached a point of financial stability.



Sales Projections

To-date sales for UnbuckleMe include ~600 units from pre-sales through Kickstarter, ~20 units through the website, and 250 units from advance retail purchase orders. The current sales volume is expected to remain consistent on a quarterly basis (at a minimum), which would result in annual sales volume of ~3500. With additional marketing expenditure, consumer education and continued trade show exposure, the team believes that there is opportunity to achieve annual sales of 5,000. These figures are based on the US market. Further research is needed to evaluate the international demand and market potential.

The expected retail sales price is \$14.99, with a wholesale price of \$7.99. This retail pricing is consistent with existing competitive products, while UnbuckleMe offers greater benefits and value.

Next Steps

The management team remains highly passionate about UnbuckleMe and its future growth. Additional financial expenditures are anticipated, including ongoing marketing and consumer education, as well as legal fees for pursuing patent protection.

The team has cultivated a strong network of consumers, media supporters and industry advisors. They are confident that they have the skills, contacts and management experience to realize a successful future for their invention.

APPENDIX

I. Product Feedback from UnbuckleMe Testers

- "I was impressed with how **little effort** it took to release the buckle!"
- "Fabulous. **Made it so easy** getting our Granddaughter out of her car seat. Thank you!!!"
- "Oh my gosh **I love this thing**, this is the best."
- "We think this product is a hit!! My mother who has Parkinson's was able to use it to unbuckle my son **without umpteenth frustrated tries**... that means the world to both of us."
- "I am **THRILLED** with how the prototype turned out! **It is so easy to use!** Much easier on my wrists and super handy!"
- "Holy cow! It not only works but I **barely even had to use any pressure** or anything. That was amazing."
- "I love the UnbuckleMe and **will use it everytime.**"
- "**We love it!!!** You ladies are wonderful."
- "We **loved the versatility** of it. Each of us liked a slightly different method."
- "Works like a **charm!**"

II. Medical Endorsements

- "Many of my hand patients struggle with activities of daily living that require sustained pressure with their thumb. This product could help those patients who care for young children." -- Dr. Idris Gharbaoui, M.D., Orthopedic Hand Surgeon
- "I see so many women in our clinic with CMC joint arthritis that would benefit so much from this device." -- Dorit Aaron, OTR, MA, CHT, FAOTA

III. Press Exposure

