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United States Patent Application Publication

20250248539

Kind Code

A1

Publication Date

August 07, 2025

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CHILD SEAT

Abstract

A child seat includes a seat portion and a front guard pivotally connected with each other, wherein the front guard is rotatable relative to the seat portion between an unfolded position and a folded position, a first spring configured to bias the front guard toward the unfolded position, a latch connected with the seat portion and operable to rotationally lock the front guard with respect to the seat portion, wherein the latch is engaged with the front guard for locking the front guard and disengaged from the front guard for unlocking the front guard, and a second spring configured to apply a biasing force adapted to urge the latch to engage with the front guard.

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Family ID: 66809933

Appl. No.: 19/190322

Filed: April 25, 2025

Foreign Application Priority Data

CN 201810360100.3

Apr. 20, 2018

Related U.S. Application Data

parent US continuation 18595715 20240305 parent-grant-document US 12303039 child US 19190322

parent US continuation 18137777 20230421 parent-grant-document US 11944211 child US 18595715

parent US continuation 17881841 20220805 parent-grant-document US 11696649 child US 18137777

parent US continuation 17113774 20201207 parent-grant-document US 11439250 child US 17881841

Publication Classification

Int. Cl.: **A47D1/02** (20060101); **A47D1/00** (20060101); **B60R21/00** (20060101); **B62B9/10** (20060101)

U.S. Cl.:

CPC **A47D1/02** (20130101); **A47D1/002** (20130101); **A47D1/006** (20130101); **B60R2021/0044** (20130101); **B62B9/102** (20130101); **B62B9/104** (20130101)

Background/Summary

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION(S) [0001] This application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 18/595,715 filed on Mar. 5, 2024, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 18/137,777 filed on Apr. 21, 2023, now U.S. Pat. No. 11,944,211 B2, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 17/881,841 filed on Aug. 5, 2022, now U.S. Pat. No. 11,696,649 B2, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 17/113,774 filed on Dec. 7, 2020, now U.S. Pat. No. 11,439,250 B2, which is a continuation of US patent application Ser. No. 16/386,025 filed on Apr. 16, 2019, now U.S. Pat. No. 10,888,175 B2, which claims priority to China patent application no. 201810360100.3 filed on Apr. 20, 2018.

BACKGROUND

1. Field of the Invention

[0002] The present invention relates to child seats.

2. Description of the Related Art

[0003] Various juvenile products are available on the market for facilitating care and transport of young children. For example, a child stroller may be typically used to transport a child outdoor. The child stroller generally has a seat portion, a backrest and a front guard. During use, the front guard can be erected to forwardly restrain a child sitting on the child stroller. When the child stroller is unused, the front guard and the backrest may be folded to reduce the size of the child stroller for convenient storage. Because the front guard and the backrest are separate elements, multiple operating steps are usually required for folding the front guard and the backrest, e.g., first unlocking and folding the front guard, and then unlocking and folding the backrest. This may undesirably complicate the folding of the child stroller.

[0004] Therefore, there is a need for an improved design that is more convenient to operate, and can address at least the foregoing issues.

SUMMARY

[0005] The present application describes a child seat that is convenient to fold for storage.

[0006] According to one aspect, a child seat includes a seat portion and a front guard pivotally connected with each other, wherein the front guard is rotatable relative to the seat portion between an unfolded position and a folded position, a first spring configured to bias the front guard toward the unfolded position, a latch connected with the seat portion and operable to rotationally lock the front guard with respect to the seat portion, wherein the latch is engaged with the front guard for locking the front guard and disengaged from the front guard for unlocking the front guard, and a second spring configured to apply a biasing force adapted to urge the latch to engage with the front guard.

Description

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] FIG. 1 is a perspective view illustrating an embodiment of a child seat;

[0008] FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional view of the child seat shown in FIG. 1 taken along a vertical section plane;

[0009] FIG. 3 is a cross-sectional view illustrating the child seat with a backrest frame disposed in another deployed position different from that shown in FIG. 2;

[0010] FIGS. 4a and 4b are two cross-sectional views illustrating exemplary operation for folding the backrest frame and a front guard of the child seat; and

[0011] FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view of the child seat taken along another vertical section plane different from that of FIG. 2.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EMBODIMENTS

[0012] Reference is made to FIGS. 1-5 to describe an embodiment of a child seat **100**. Referring to FIGS. 1-5, the child seat **100** can include a seat portion **10**, a front guard **20**, a backrest frame **30** and a folding mechanism **40**.

[0013] The front guard **20** can include a transversal portion **24**, and two side end portions **26** respectively connected with the transversal portion **24** at a left and a right side thereof. The front guard **20** is pivotally connected with the seat portion **10** about a pivot axis **L1** that generally extends transversally from a left side to a right side of the seat portion **10**. The front guard **20** can thereby rotate about the pivot axis **L1** relative to the seat portion **10** between multiple angular positions, which can include a folded position as shown in FIG. 4b and an unfolded position for use as shown in FIGS. 2 and 3. According to an example of construction, the seat portion **10** can have two sidewalls **11** respectively provided at the left and right sides, and the front guard **20** can be disposed so as to transversally extend above the seat portion **10** with the two side end portions **26** of the front guard **20** respectively connected pivotally with two sidewalls **11** about the pivot axis **L1**. The front guard **20** can be folded toward a front of the seat portion **10** in the folded position with the transversal portion **24** of the front guard **20** lying adjacent to the front of the seat portion **10**. In the unfolded position, the transversal portion **24** of the front guard **20** can be positioned farther above the seat portion **10** so as to define a closed opening for placement of the child's legs between the seat portion **10** and the front guard **20**.

[0014] The backrest frame **30** can include a transversal portion and two side end portions **36** respectively connected with the transversal portion at a left and a right side thereof. The backrest frame **30** is pivotally connected with the seat portion **10** about a pivot axis **L2**, and can rotate about the pivot axis **L2** relative to the seat portion **10** for adjustment between multiple angular positions. According to an example of construction, the backrest frame **30** is disposed so as to transversally extend above the seat portion **10** with the two side end portions **36** of the backrest frame **30** respectively connected pivotally with the two sidewalls **11** of the seat portion **10** about the pivot axis **L2**. The pivot axis **L2** extends transversally from the left side to the right side of the seat portion **10** parallel to the pivot axis **L1**, and is disposed behind the pivot axis **L1** adjacent to a rear of the seat portion **10**.

[0015] According to an embodiment, the backrest frame **30** is adjustable relative to the seat portion **10** between multiple angular positions including a collapsed position and one or more deployed position for use. FIG. 4b illustrates the collapsed position in which the backrest frame **30** can be folded toward the front of the seat portion **10**. FIGS. 2 and 3 illustrate two exemplary deployed positions for use where the backrest frame **30** is positioned at two different angles relative to the seat portion **10**. A first deployed position of the backrest frame **30** may correspond to a reclining position as shown in FIG. 3, and a second deployed position of the backrest frame **30** may correspond to an upright position between the first deployed position and the collapsed position as shown in FIG. 2. A backrest adjustment mechanism **60** may be provided to lock the backrest frame **30** in any one of the deployed positions.

[0016] Referring to FIG. 1, the two sidewalls **11** of the seat portion **10** can respectively have two connectors **50** operable to detachably engage with two corresponding structures provided on a standing frame of a child supporting apparatus (not shown). Examples of child supporting apparatuses that can receive the installation of the child seat **100** can include, without limitation, child strollers, highchairs, and the like. The child seat **100** can be thereby installed and removed as desired on the standing frame of a child supporting apparatus.

[0017] Referring to FIGS. 2-5, the folding mechanism **40** can include a latch **41**, a linking part **42** and a spring **43**. The latch **41** and the linking part **42** can be movably assembled with the seat portion **10**. According to an embodiment, the latch **41**, the linking part **42** and the spring **43** may be disposed and concealed inside one of the two sidewalls **11**. The folding mechanism **40** can be thereby protected against undesirable damages or accidental actuation by a child sitting on the seat portion **10**, and the outer appearance of the child seat **100** would not be affected.

[0018] The latch **41** is operable to lock and unlock the front guard **20** with respect to the seat portion **10**. More specifically, the front guard **20** is locked in position relative to the seat portion **10** when the latch **41** is engaged with the front guard **20**, and is unlocked for adjustment relative to the seat portion **10** when the latch **41** is disengaged from the front guard **20**. For example, the latch **41** can engage with the front guard **20** for locking the front guard **20** in the unfolded position shown in FIGS. 2 and 3, and can disengage from the front guard **20** for adjustment of the front guard **20** between the unfolded position and the folded position shown in FIG. 4b. According to an example of construction, the latch **41** can be pivotally connected with the sidewall **11** of the seat portion **10** about a pivot axis L3, and can have a protrusion **411** that can engage with and disengage from a notch **21** provided on a peripheral edge **22** of the side end portion **26** of the front guard **20**. The pivot axis L3 can extend transversally from the left side to the right side of the seat portion **10** parallel to the pivot axis L1, and the protrusion **411** can be provided at an offset location from the pivot axis L3. The protrusion **411** of the latch **41** can engage with the notch **21** of the side end portion **26** for locking the front guard **20** in position, and disengage from the notch **21** for unlocking the front guard **20**.

[0019] It will be appreciated that the locking engagement between the latch **41** and the front guard **20** may also be achieved with a variant construction where a notch is provided on the latch **41** and a protrusion is provided on the side end portion **26** of the front guard **20** for engagement with the notch on the latch **41**.

[0020] Referring to FIG. 5, the spring **43** can be disposed between the seat portion **10** and the latch **41**. The spring **43** can apply a biasing action that urges the latch **41** to engage with the front guard **20** for locking the front guard **20** in the unfolded position. While the front guard **20** is unlocked and rotates relative to the seat portion **10**, the biasing action applied by the spring **43** on the latch **41** can cause the protrusion **411** of the latch **41** to remain in sliding contact with the peripheral edge **22** of the front guard **20**. According to an example of construction, the spring **43** may be a torsion spring that is disposed around the pivot axis L3 of the latch **41** and has two opposite ends respectively connected with the latch **41** and the sidewall **11** of the seat portion **10**.

[0021] Referring to FIGS. 1-5, the linking part **42** can be respectively coupled to the backrest frame **30** and the latch **41**. More specifically, the linking part **42** can be movably coupled to the backrest frame **30** so that a rotation of the backrest frame **30** from a deployed position toward the collapsed position can urge the linking part **42** in movement and actuate the latch **41** against the biasing action of the spring **43** to disengage and unlock the front guard **20**, as shown in FIG. 4a. Folding of the front guard **20** can be thereby facilitated. For example, a single operating step of rotating the backrest frame **30** to the collapsed position can unlock the front guard **20**, and then cause the backrest frame **30** to contact and push the unlocked front guard **20** to rotate in unison in the same direction to its unfolded position.

[0022] According to an example of construction, the linking part **42** may be coupled to the backrest frame **30** with a pivotal connection, and coupled to the latch **41** with a sliding and pivotal

connection. For example, the linking part **42** can include a rod portion **42a** and an end portion **42b** connected with each other, the end portion **42b** bending and projecting at a side of the rod portion **42a**. The linking part **42** comprised of the rod portion **42a** and the end portion **42b** may be formed integrally as a single part. The end portion **42b** of the linking part **42** can be pivotally connected with the side end portion **36** of the backrest frame **30** about a pivot axis **L4** that extends parallel to and spaced apart from the pivot axis **L2** of the backrest frame **30** and the pivot axis **L3** of the latch **41**. The rod portion **42a** of the linking part **42** can include an elongate slot **421** having two opposite ends **421A** and **421B**, and the latch **41** can have a pin **412** that is disposed through the elongate slot **421**. The pin **412** may be disposed in a cavity **413** of the latch **41**, and the rod portion **42a** connected with the pin **412** may be at least partially received in the cavity **413**.

[0023] Although the illustrated embodiment provides an exemplary construction for coupling the latch **41** to the linking part **42**, other variant constructions may be suitable. For example, a variant construction can provide an elongate slot in the latch **41**, and a pin may be fixedly connected with the linking part **42** and slidably disposed through the elongate slot to achieve a sliding and pivotal connection between the latch **41** and the linking part **42**.

[0024] During adjustment of the backrest frame **30** relative to the seat portion **10**, the linking part **42** can rotate relative to the backrest frame **30**, the latch **41** and the linking part **42** can slide and rotate relative to each other. For example, when the backrest frame **30** rotates in a first direction from a deployed position toward the collapsed position, the linking part **42** can move along with the backrest frame **30** through the cavity **413** in a direction that reduces a distance between the pin **412** and the end **421A** of the elongate slot **421** and increases a distance between the pin **412** and the other end **421B** of the elongate slot **421**. Conversely, when the backrest frame **30** rotates in a second direction opposite to the first direction (e.g., from the collapsed position toward a deployed position), the linking part **42** can move along with the backrest frame **30** through the cavity **413** in another direction that increases the distance between the pin **412** and the end **421A** of the elongate slot **421** and reduces the distance between the pin **412** and the other end **421B** of the elongate slot **421**.

[0025] Because the front guard **20** may need to be kept in the unfolded position for use in any deployed position of the backrest frame **30**, it may be desirable that the front guard **20** remains locked during adjustment of the backrest frame **30** between the deployed positions. According to an example of construction, the course of the pin **412** along the elongate slot **421** is configured to provide a range of travel for the linking part **42** that does not drive the latch **41** to move and unlock, which allows adjustment of the backrest frame **30** between the deployed positions while maintaining the front guard **20** in a locked state. As the backrest frame **30** rotates past the second deployed position shown in FIG. 2 and advances toward the collapsed position, the linking part **42** may move outside the aforementioned range of travel and urge the latch **41** to rotate and disengage from the front guard **20**. More specifically, the linking part **42** moving along with the backrest frame **30** can cause the end **421A** of the elongate slot **421** to contact with the pin **412** of the latch **41**, and then urge the latch **41** to rotate for disengaging from the side end portion **26** of the front guard **20**. The contact between the end **421A** of the elongate slot **421** and the pin **412** of the latch **41** may occur when the backrest frame **30** rotating toward the collapsed position travels past an intermediate position between the second deployed position and the unfolded position of the front guard **20**.

[0026] Accordingly, the folding mechanism **40** can keep the front guard **20** locked in the unfolded position for use while the backrest frame **30** is in the deployed positions or any intermediate position between the deployed positions, and can operate to unlock the front guard **20** only after the backrest frame **30** moves past the second deployed position of FIG. 2 toward the collapsed position.

[0027] Referring to FIGS. 2-5, the folding mechanism **40** can further include a spring **44** operable to bias the front guard **20** toward the unfolded position. Once the front guard **20** is unlocked, the

biasing action applied by the spring **44** may facilitate movement of the unlocked front guard **20** from the folded position to the unfolded position. According to an example of construction, the spring **44** may be an extension spring that is disposed inside the sidewall **11** of the seat portion **10** and has two ends respectively connected with one side portion of the front guard **20** and the sidewall **11** of the seat portion **10**.

[0028] Exemplary operation of the child seat **100** is described hereinafter with reference to FIGS. **1-5**. Suppose that the child seat **100** is to be switched from a configuration where the backrest frame **30** is in the first deployed position and the front guard **20** is locked in the unfolded state as shown in FIG. **3** to another configuration where the backrest frame **30** is in the collapsed position and the front guard **20** in the folded position as shown in FIG. **4b**. A caregiver can rotate the backrest frame **30** about the pivot axis **L2** toward the front of the seat portion **10**. As a result, the backrest frame **30** first rotates in a first direction from the first deployed position of FIG. **3** to the second deployed position of FIG. **2**, which results in a relative movement between the linking part **42** and the latch **41** and causes a displacement of the pin **412** along the elongate slot **421** that reduces the distance between the pin **412** and the end **421A** of the elongate slot **421** and increases the distance between the pin **412** and the other end **421B** of the elongate slot **421**. This relative movement between the linking part **42** and the latch **41** does not actuate the latch **41**, which can remain engaged with the side end portion **26** to lock the front guard **20** in the unfolded position.

[0029] As the backrest frame **30** travels past the second deployed position and continues rotating in the first direction toward the collapsed state, the linking part **42** moving along with the backrest frame **30** can urge the latch **41** to rotate against the biasing action of the spring **43** for disengaging and unlocking the front guard **20** via a contact between the end **421A** of the elongate slot **421** and the pin **412** of the latch **41**. FIG. **4a** illustrates the front guard **20** in an unlocked state while the backrest frame **30** is between the collapsed position and the second deployed position. The unlocked front guard **20** then can be rotated against the biasing action of the spring **44** from the unfolded position to the folded position, e.g., under a pushing action exerted by the backrest frame **30** on the front guard **20** as the backrest frame **30** continues to rotate toward the collapsed position. The front guard **20** and the backrest frame **30** can be thereby conveniently collapsed to the front of the seat portion **10** as shown in FIG. **4b**, the front guard **20** remaining unlocked in the folded position. In the fully collapsed configuration of FIG. **4b**, the pivot axes **L1**, **L3**, **L2** and **L4** can be sequentially arranged in that order along a lengthwise direction from a front to a rear of the seat portion **10**.

[0030] When the child seat **100** is to be switched from the configuration of FIG. **4b** to the configuration of FIG. **2**, a caregiver can rotate the backrest frame **30** about the pivot axis **L2** in a second direction opposite to the first direction toward the rear of the seat portion **10**. While the backrest frame **30** rotates in the second direction from the collapsed position toward the second deployed position of FIG. **2**, the front guard **20** can be rotated to the unfolded position. The biasing action applied by the spring **44** can assist in rotating the front guard **20** to the unfolded position. Once the front guard **20** reaches the unfolded position, the spring **43** can urge the latch **41** to engage and lock the front guard **20** in position.

[0031] In case the backrest frame **30** is adjusted rearward from the second deployed position of FIG. **2** to the first deployed position of FIG. **3**, the linking part **42** can move relative to the latch **41** in a direction that increases the distance between the pin **412** and the end **421A** of the elongate slot **421** and reduces the distance between the pin **412** and the other end **421B** of the elongate slot **421**, and the latch **41** can remain engaged with the front guard **20**. The pin **412** may be exemplary positioned adjacent to the end **421B** of the elongate slot **421** once the backrest frame **30** reaches the first deployed position. In the configuration of FIG. **3**, the pivot axes **L1**, **L3**, **L4** and **L2** can be sequentially arranged in that order along a lengthwise direction from a front to a rear of the seat portion **10**.

[0032] Referring to FIGS. **2-5**, according to an example of construction, the end portion **42b** of the

linking part **42** can have an edge **422**, and the side end portion **36** of the backrest frame **30** can have a limiting edge **31** that is adjacent to the edge **422** of the end portion **42b**. The edge **422** of the end portion **42b** may be a convex edge having a curved shape, and may face oppositely away from the rod portion **42b**. The limiting edge **31** can be a concave edge having a curved shape. During rotation of the backrest frame **30** relative to the seat portion **10**, the limiting edge **31** of the backrest frame **30** can remain adjacent to the edge **422** of the end portion **42b**. For example, the edge **422** of the end portion **42b** may be adjacent without contacting or in sliding contact with the limiting edge **31** of the backrest frame **30** during adjustment of the backrest frame **30** between the deployed positions. The limiting edge **31** may prevent an undesirable displacement of the linking part **42** that is not induced by a rotation of the backrest frame **30**, e.g., while the backrest frame **30** is held in any of the deployed positions. The linking part **42** can be thereby restrictedly positioned to prevent accidental unlocking of the latch **41** when the backrest frame **30** is adjusted to any of the deployed positions, which can assist in keeping the front guard **20** locked in the unfolded position.

[0033] In the aforementioned embodiment, the front guard **20** can be locked in the unfolded position with the latch **41** and unlocked by rotating the backrest frame **30** toward the collapsed position. According to a variant embodiment, the placement of the latch **41** and the linking part **42** may be interchanged so that the backrest frame **30** may be locked in a deployed position with the latch **41** and unlocked by rotating the front guard **20** toward the folded position. In this variant embodiment, the latch **41** can rotate to engage and disengage the side end portion **36** of the backrest frame **30** for locking and unlocking the backrest frame **30**, and the linking part **42** may be respectively coupled to the front guard **20** with a pivotal connection and to the latch **41** with a sliding and pivotal connection like previously described. The linking part **42** can be thereby movably coupled to the front guard **20** so that a rotation of the front guard **20** from the unfolded position toward the folded position can urge the linking part **42** in movement and actuate the latch **41** to disengage and unlock the backrest frame **30** for its convenient collapsing toward the front of the seat portion **10**.

[0034] According to another variant construction, the latch **41** may be slidably connected with the seat portion **10** so as to be movable for engaging one of the front guard **20** and the backrest frame **30**, and the linking part **42** may be a flexible element (such as a cable or a cord) respectively connected with the latch **41** and the other one of the front guard **20** and the backrest frame **30**. As the element (i.e., either the front guard **20** or the backrest frame **30**) coupled to the flexible element rotates in the folding direction, the flexible element can pull and actuate the latch **41** to disengage and unlock the other one of the front guard **20** and the backrest frame **30**.

[0035] Advantages of the structures described herein include the ability to conveniently fold a backrest frame and a front guard of a child seat. The child seat can have a latch and a linking part connected with each other, the latch being operable to lock one of the backrest frame and the front guard in position, and the other one of the backrest frame and the front guard being movable to drive the latch to unlock for folding of the backrest frame and the front guard. In particular, an embodiment may have the latch operable to lock the front guard, and the linking part may be coupled to the latch and the backrest frame so that a rotation of the backrest frame toward the collapsed position can actuate the latch to disengage and unlock the front guard. As a result, the backrest frame and the front guard can be folded with a reduced number of operating steps.

[0036] Realization of the child seat has been described in the context of particular embodiments. These embodiments are meant to be illustrative and not limiting. Many variations, modifications, additions, and improvements are possible. These and other variations, modifications, additions, and improvements may fall within the scope of the inventions as defined in the claims that follow.

Claims

1. A child seat comprising: a seat portion and a front guard pivotally connected with each other, wherein the front guard is rotatable relative to the seat portion between an unfolded position and a folded position; a first spring configured to bias the front guard toward the unfolded position; a latch connected with the seat portion, the latch being operable to rotationally lock the front guard with respect to the seat portion, wherein the latch is engaged with the front guard for locking the front guard and disengaged from the front guard for unlocking the front guard; and a second spring configured to apply a biasing force adapted to urge the latch to engage with the front guard.
2. The child seat according to claim 1, wherein the first spring has two ends respectively connected with the front guard and the seat portion.
3. The child seat according to claim 1, wherein the first spring is an extension spring.
4. The child seat according to claim 1, wherein the biasing force applied by the second spring urges the latch to engage with the front guard as the front guard rotates under a biasing action of the first spring.
5. The child seat according to claim 1, wherein the latch is pivotally connected with the seat portion.
6. The child seat according to claim 1, wherein the front guard is pivotally connected with the seat portion about a first pivot axis, and the latch is pivotally connected with the seat portion about a second pivot axis spaced apart from the first pivot axis.
7. The child seat according to claim 6, wherein the second pivot axis is below and behind the first pivot axis.
8. The child seat according to claim 6, wherein the second spring is a torsion spring disposed around the second pivot axis.
9. The child seat according to claim 1, wherein the front guard has a peripheral edge provided with a notch, and the biasing force applied by the second spring is adapted to urge the latch to engage with the notch when the front guard is in the unfolded position.
10. The child seat according to claim 1, wherein the latch is coupled to a linking part, the linking part being movable relative to the seat portion and the latch to urge the latch to move against the biasing force of the second spring for disengaging from the front guard.
11. The child seat according to claim 10, wherein the linking part extends rearward of the latch.
12. The child seat according to claim 10, wherein the linking part is coupled to the latch via a connection allowing relative sliding between the latch and the linking part.
13. The child seat according to claim 10, wherein one of the linking part and the latch includes an elongate slot, and the other one of the linking part and the latch has a pin disposed through the elongate slot.
14. The child seat according to claim 13, wherein the linking part is movable to urge the latch to disengage from the front guard via a contact between the pin and one end of the elongate slot.
15. The child seat according to claim 10, further comprising a backrest frame pivotally connected with the seat portion, the linking part coupling the latch to the backrest frame so that the backrest frame is rotatable to cause the latch to unlock the front guard.
16. The child seat according to claim 15, wherein the linking part is configured so that the front guard remains locked by the latch during adjustment of the backrest frame between a first and a second deployed position, and the latch is urged to disengage and unlock the front guard when the backrest frame rotates past the second deployed position and advances toward a collapsed position.
17. The child seat according to claim 15, wherein the linking part has an end portion pivotally connected with a side end portion of the backrest frame, the side end portion of the backrest frame having a limiting edge adjacent to the end portion of the linking part, the limiting edge preventing an undesirable displacement of the linking part that is not induced by a rotation of the backrest frame.
18. The child seat according to claim 17, wherein the limiting edge has a curved shape.

19. The child seat according to claim 1, wherein the seat portion has two sidewalls respectively provided at a left and a right side, and the front guard transversally extends above the seat portion with two side end portions of the front guard respectively connected pivotally with the two sidewalls of the seat portion.

20. The child seat according to claim 1, wherein the front guard is foldable toward a front of the seat portion.
