CHILD GARMENT AND RESTRAINING DEVICE

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ABSTRACT

A garment and restraining device is provided comprising an attachment for attaching a leash or tether and a tether attached to the attachment of the garment for controlling or restraining a child.
CHILD GARMENT AND RESTRAINING DEVICE

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims priority to U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 61/197,289 filed Oct. 24, 2008, which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0002] The present disclosure generally relates to garments to be worn by a child, and more particularly to garments having safety features.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Anyone who has cared for small children knows the difficulties that may be encountered in attempting to lead or control a child when they do not wish to be controlled, or in attempting to grasp a child that has wandered away. In addition, anyone who has a child can relate to the fear of a child being kidnapped.

[0004] Even if a caregiver is able to grasp the child by the arm or hand, a child is still free to undergo considerable range of movement because the caregiver often lacks sufficient leverage to control the child. Conventional clothing fails to restrain the person wearing the clothing when it is necessary to do so, for example, to prevent a child from running out into traffic.

[0005] It is therefore desirable to provide an article of clothing for restraining the person wearing the article of clothing. It would be further desirable if the article of clothing included a restraining device that is removable.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] Accordingly, an article of clothing is provided for controlling the child wearing the clothing in which the restraining device is easily removable.

[0007] In one embodiment of the child’s garment and restraining device of the present invention, the garment includes a restraint or control having one or more handles or loops incorporated into the garment, such that the one or more handles or loops are positioned approximately on the exterior surface of the garment on the person’s back. It is envisioned that the handle or loop may include material which is stitched directly to the garment or is removable. Alternatively, the handle or loop may be eyelets or rings which are integrated into the garment or is removable.

[0008] In particular, the one or more handles are used as a point of attachment for at least one leash or tether, which a caregiver can manipulate to control or restrain a child wearing the garment. It is envisioned that the garment can be a shirt, blouse, jacket, or the like, without departing from the spirit of the present invention. It is also envisioned that the garment of the present invention may include a handle or loop which is positioned approximately on one or more shoulders of the person wearing the garment. Furthermore, it is envisioned that the garment of the present invention may include at least one handle or loop which is positioned approximately on the back of the person wearing the garment as well as at least one handle or loop which is positioned approximately on one or more shoulders of the person wearing the garment.

[0009] In another embodiment, the child’s garment and restraining device includes at least one removable strap, such that the strap is positioned approximately on the back of the person wearing the garment. In particular, the strap provides a point of attachment for a leash or tether, which a caregiver can manipulate to control or restrain a child wearing the garment. Alternatively, the strap may provide an area which the child’s caregiver may grab to control or restrain the child. It is envisioned that the garment of the present invention may include a removable strap which is positioned approximately on one or more shoulders of the person wearing the garment. Furthermore, it is envisioned that the garment of the present invention may include at least one removable strap which is positioned approximately on the back of the person wearing the garment as well as at least one removable strap which is positioned approximately on one or more shoulders of the person wearing the garment.

[0010] In another embodiment, the garment has a first piece of material, such that the material is positioned around a child’s chest, stomach and/or back, under the arms of the child. The garment includes a second piece of material which is inserted into the first piece of material to secure the first piece of material around the child’s chest, stomach and/or back. The second piece of material further includes a stop, such as a cord stop, which is positioned on the child’s back. The second piece of material is inserted into the first piece of material, such that pulling the second piece of material locks the second piece of material in place. After locking the second piece of material in place, the caregiver may attach a leash or tether to the stop of the second piece of material, which a caregiver can manipulate to control or restrain a child wearing the garment. In one particular embodiment, both the first material and the second material are on the inside of the garment and the cord stop is a buttonhole type opening, thus allowing for a full design on the front of the garment.

[0011] In another embodiment, the garment includes a first piece of material having a hook or loop, such that the first material is positioned around a child’s chest, stomach and/or back, under the arms of the child and the hook or loop is positioned approximately on the back of the child. The garment includes a second piece of material which is tied such that the first piece of material is maintained around the child’s chest, stomach and/or back. The caregiver may attach a leash or tether to the hook or loop of the first piece of material, which a caregiver can manipulate to control or restrain a child wearing the garment.

[0012] In one embodiment, the garment includes eyelets or rings on each side of the garment. It is envisioned that the eyelets or rings may be disposed on each side of the garment and may be used as a point of attachment for at least one leash or tether, which a caregiver can manipulate to control or restrain a child wearing the garment. When the caregiver uses the leash to restrain the child they will pull the eyelets or rings which will tighten the garment, thereby providing for better control around the child’s body. Preferably, the eyelets or rings will be discrete, such that they will be tight against the article of clothing, thereby avoiding the possibility that the eyelets or rings will catch another object. The eyelets or rings may be sewn inside the article of clothing and/or covered with material such as Velcro or otherwise hidden. In an alternative embodiment, the tether is connected approximately in the middle of the tether and is attached to at least one eyelet or ring on each side of the garment. Following attachment of the tether to at least one eyelet or ring on each side of the garment,
a second tether is connected to the first tether, which a caregiver can manipulate to control or restrain a child wearing the garment.

In one embodiment, the garment is a jacket having a piece of material sewn around the jacket. A heavy-weight strap containing slide-release buckles is inserted into the material. The buckle is closed over the jacket zipper. A caregiver can secure the child by hooking the strap onto the heavy-weight strip of the jacket.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The above and other objects, features and advantages of the invention will become more readily apparent from the description below with reference to the drawings wherein:

FIGS. 1 and 2 are front and rear views, respectively of an embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 3 is a sectional view of first and second strips attached to a garment;

FIG. 4 is a detailed view of a cord stop connected to the first and second strips;

FIGS. 5 and 6 are front and rear views, respectively, of a second embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 6A illustrates an alternative embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 7 illustrates a snap clip leash;

FIGS. 8 and 9 are front and rear views, respectively, of another embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 10 illustrates a twin snap dip leash;

FIGS. 11 and 12 are front and rear views, respectively, of yet another embodiment of the invention;

FIGS. 13 and 14 are, respectively, front and rear views of yet another embodiment of the invention; and,

FIG. 15 is a partly sectional, perspective detail view of a portion of the embodiment of FIGS. 13 and 14.

Detailed reference numerals indicate similar parts throughout the figures.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The exemplary embodiments of the child’s garment and restraining device disclosed are discussed in terms of garments for children and more particularly, in terms of children’s garments which may be used as restraining devices or safety devices. It is envisioned that the child’s garment and restraining device disclosed provide for facile control or restrain of a child. It is further envisioned that the present disclosure may be employed to control or restrain individuals of all sizes, including adults.

The present invention may be understood more readily by reference to the following detailed description of the invention taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, which form a part of this disclosure. It is to be understood that this invention is not limited to the specific devices, methods, conditions or parameters described and/or shown herein, and that the terminology used herein is for the purpose of describing particular embodiments by way of example only and is not intended to be limiting of the claimed invention. Also, as used in the specification and including the appended claims, the singular forms “a,” “an,” and “the” include the plural, and reference to a particular numerical value includes at least that particular value, unless the context clearly dictates otherwise. Ranges may be expressed herein as from “about” or “approximately” one particular value and/or to “about” or “approximately” another particular value. When such a range is expressed, another embodiment includes from the one particular value and/or to the other particular value. Similarly, when values are expressed as approximations, by use of the antecedent “about,” it will be understood that the particular value forms another embodiment.

The following discussion includes a description of a child’s garment and restraining device and related components of the child’s garment and restraining device in accordance with the principles of the present disclosure. Alternate embodiments are also disclosed. The garment of the present invention, and the components thereof, may be fabricated from materials suitable for children’s garments, including cotton, polyester, spandex, nylon, or a combination thereof, depending on preference. The garment of the present invention may be one of a variety of different types of garments including but not limited to upper garments such as T-shirts, polo shirts, dresses, jackets, and tank tops without departing from the spirit of the invention. Reference will now be made in detail to the exemplary embodiments of the present disclosure, which are illustrated in the accompanying figures.

Referring now to FIGS. 1 to 4, the child’s garment and restraining device 100 of the present invention includes a garment 101 having a restraining band assembly 110 positioned around a child’s stomach or chest and back, under the arms of the child, as shown in FIG. 1. The restraining band assembly 110 preferably includes flexible outer first band 111 defining an interior channel 111a in which a second flexible band 112 is disposed as shown in FIG. 3. Preferably, outer first band 111 is securely attached to garment 101 by, for example, sewing, stitching or any means suitable for the purposes described herein. Alternatively, outer first band 111 is removable and can be used in conjunction with any suitable garment of a child’s wardrobe. Outer first band 111 can be fabricated from grosgrain fabric in any suitable width or color. Preferably, outer first band 111 has a highly visible, bright color, fluorescent color and/or is made of highly reflective material such as that commonly available material to make clothing more accessible at night in the headlights of oncoming motor vehicles. The second flexible band 112 can be fabricated from grosgrain fabric, or any other fabric. Optionally, second band 112 can be fabricated from an elastic or stretchable material such as spandex.

Referring now to FIGS. 2 and 4, the restraining band assembly 110 includes a cord stop 113 fixedly attached to the first band 111. The second band 112 extends out of the interior channel 111a and over middle bar 113a of the cord stop. The cord stop 113 can be fabricated from any material suitable for the purposes described herein such as plastic, metal, ceramic and the like.

The restraining band assembly 110 is used in connection with a leash such as leash 120 illustrated in FIG. 7. Leash 120 includes a tether 121 of suitable length and preferably of slash resistant material, which is held at one end by the child’s caretaker and may include a band loop (not shown) to facilitate secure holding of the tether 121. The other end of the leash includes a swivel attached snap link mechanism 122 including a loop 123 defining a gap, an activation slide button 124, and a spring mounted projection 125 extending across the gap in loop 13. To employ the restraining band assembly 110, the caretaker opens the snap link 122 by using the slide button 124 to move the projection 125. The caretaker then
clips the open loop 123 onto the exposed portion of the second band 112 extending across the cord stop 113, and then allows the snap link to close. The leash can then be held to restrain the child wearing the garment and restraining device 100. Various leashes such as described herein and other leashes with alternative snap link connectors are well known and commercially available.

[0033] Referring now to FIGS. 5 to 7, in an alternative embodiment 200 which includes garment 101 and restraining band assembly 210, the restraining band assembly 210 includes flexible outer first band 111 and second flexible band 112 disposed inside of outer first band 111 as described above. As with embodiment 110 flexible band 111 of the assembly 210 can be fixedly attached to the garment or optionally removable therefrom. However, in the restraining band assembly 210, the second flexible band 112 extends out of the flexible outer first band 111 in the front of the garment 101 and thereby exposes two end portions, which can be pulled to tighten the restraining band assembly 210, and tied into a knot 115.

[0034] Referring to FIG. 6, the restraining band assembly includes a link 213 to which a snap link 122 of a leash 120 can be removably attached.

[0035] Referring to FIG. 6A, the restraining band assembly 210 can be sewn into the inside of the garment 101. At the back of the garment the second flexible band 112 can be exposed through a hole 102 in the garment and link 213 disposed around the second band 112 to permit snap link attachment by a leash 120. Moreover, garment 101 can optionally include a fabric flap 105 positioned above hole 102 with a Velcro® hook and loop type fastener 106 on an inner surface of the flap 105 and a corresponding Velcro® fastener 107 positioned below hole 102. Flap 105 can be lifted to gain access to link 213 or closed over hole 102 to prevent rain or debris from entering the hole 102. Also, in the closed position, flap 105 prevents the link 213 from catching on branches or other obstructions.

[0036] Referring now to FIGS. 8, 9 and 10, yet another embodiment 300 of the invention includes a restraining band assembly 310 connected to garment 101. Retaining band assembly 310 includes a flexible outer first band 111 and a second flexible band 112 disposed therein as described above. The restraining band assembly 310 extends across the front of the garment 101 at around the chest level of the garment. However, as seen in the rear view of the garment 101 as shown in FIG. 9, the restraining band assembly terminates in two eyelets or links 311a and 311b located at opposite left and right sides of the garment. These rings serve as connection points for a two-snap link leash as shown in FIG. 10. Alternatively, or in addition, one or more loops 320 can be fixed to garment 101 at the shoulders, and the snap links of the leash attached thereto.

[0037] More specifically, leash 130 includes a tether 131 attached to a first snap link mechanism 132. Snap link mechanism 132 is connected to two other tethers 133 and 135, each terminating with snap links 134 and 136, respectively. For use in connection with restraining band assembly 310, snap link 134 is connected to ring 311a and snap link 136 is connected to link 311b. Alternatively, leash 130 can be employed to restrain two children using the previously described embodiments of the invention.

[0038] Referring now to FIGS. 11 and 12, embodiment 400 of the invention includes garment 101 having a front closure 402 such as a zipper, buttons, Velcro® type closure and the like. Restraining band assembly 410 includes flexible outer first band 111 and a second flexible band 112 disposed therein as described above. The restraining band assembly 410 extends around garment 401 at about the chest level. The second flexible band 112 extends outside the flexible outer first band 111 at the front of the garment. Each exposed end of the second flexible band 112 is connected to a respective piece of a two-piece snap-together buckle 413. As can be seen from the rear view shown in FIG. 12, restraining band assembly 410 includes a link 414 attached to the rear of the flexible outer first band for connection to a snap link of a leash as described above with respect to the embodiment 210. Also, the restraining band assembly 410 can be sewn into the interior of the garment 401 with an opening in the rear for exposure of the second flexible band 112 and connection of a link thereto, as illustrated in FIGS. 6A and 6B, and also can optionally include a protective flap 105 such as shown in FIG. 6A.

[0039] FIGS. 13 to 15 illustrates an embodiment 500 of the invention wherein the outer first band 111 is sewn or otherwise secured to the inside surface of garment 101 (e.g., a shirt) with the second flexible band 112 slidably disposed within the space between the outer first band 111 and the inside surface of the garment 101. Two eyelets 103 are positioned at the back of the garment and the second flexible band 112 extends outside the garment passing through the eyelets 103 as shown. The exposed portion of the second flexible band 112 between the eyelets 103 can be grasped by the snap link of the leash.

The outer first band is preferably sewn along its edges to the inside surface of the garment with fine stitching so that it is essentially seamless with the shirt. That is, the joining of the outer first band 111 to the inside of garment 101 presents no seam or other aspect which is readily visible from the outside. The outer first band 111 and the inside surface of the garment define a channel 118 through which second flexible band 112, for example a grosgrain ribbon, is movable so as to provide adjustability and better control of the child. More specifically, when the leash is clipped onto the second flexible band 112 tension on the leash draws some of the second flexible band 112 out of the channel 118. This gently constricts the restraining device around the child for greater control. For example, if the child suddenly tries to dart away from the caregiver, the restraining device will automatically provide added restraint. Also, the adjustability of the restraining device can accommodate children of different sizes by the caregiver drawing out some of the second flexible band 112 to take up slack in the event the garment is too loose fitting.

[0040] The components of the child’s garment and restraining device are fabricated from materials suitable for such a garment, depending on the particular application and/or preference. One skilled in the art, however, will realize that such materials and fabrication methods suitable for assembly and manufacture, in accordance with the present disclosure, would be appropriate.

[0041] It will be understood that various modifications may be made to the embodiments disclosed herein. Therefore, the above description should not be construed as limiting, but merely as exemplification of the various embodiments. Those skilled in the art will envision other modifications within the scope and spirit of the claims appended hereto.
What is claimed is:

1. A child restraint system comprising:
   a) a garment having front, back and left and right sides;
   b) a restraint assembly including at least a first band in contact with and extending at least partially around the garment, and means for connection to a tether.

2. The child restraint system of claim 1 wherein the restraint assembly includes a first outer band at least partially defining an interior channel and a second flexible band extending through the interior channel.

3. The child restraint system of claim 1 wherein the outer band is fixedly attached to the garment.

4. The child restraint system of claim 2 wherein the means for connection to a tether includes a cord stop positioned at the back of the garment and connected to the first outer band, wherein said second flexible band extends out of the first outer band and across the cord stop.

5. The child restraint system of claim 2 wherein the means for connection to a tether comprises a link attached to the outer band at the back of the garment.

6. The child restraint system of claim 5 wherein the second flexible band includes two opposite end portions which extend out of the first outer band at the front of the garment.

7. The child restraint system of claim 3 wherein the garment includes an opening at the back thereof, said second flexible band extending across said opening, and wherein the means for connection to the tether includes a link connected to the second flexible band at said opening.

8. The child restraint system of claim 7 further comprising flap positioned above the opening and movable between an open position wherein said hole is exposed and a closed position wherein said hole is covered and wherein said flap includes a first hook and loop type fastener strip and said garment includes a corresponding second hook and loop type fastener strip to secure the flap when in the closed position.

9. The child restraint system of claim 2 wherein the restraint assembly extends around the front of the garment and terminates at each of the left and right sides of the garment, wherein the means for connection to a tether includes first and second links attached respectively to each end portion of the restraint assembly at each of the left and right sides of the garment.

10. The child restraint system of claim 6 wherein each end portion of the second flexible band is connected to a respective portion of a two part snap connection buckle.

11. The child restraint system of claim 1 further including a leash having a tether with at least one snap link connector.

12. The child restraint system of claim 9 further including a leash having a tether with at least two snap link connectors.

13. The child restraint system of claim 1 wherein the garment is a shirt, blouse, jacket.

14. The child restraint system of claim 1 wherein said second flexible band is fabricated from an elastic material.

15. The child restraint system of claim 2 wherein the first outer band and/or the second flexible band is made of a grosgrain fabric.

16. The child restraint system of claim 2 wherein the first outer band is made of a material which is brightly colored, fluorescent, and/or highly reflective.

17. The child restraint system of claim 2 wherein the first outer band is sewn into the interior of the garment, the back of the garment includes two eyelets, and the second flexible band extends outside of the garment between the eyelets.

18. A child restraint system comprising:
   a) a garment;
   b) attachment device incorporated into the garment for connecting a leash; and
   c) a leash releasably connected to said attachment device.

19. The child restraint system of claim 18 wherein the attachment device comprises a first outer band at least partially defining an interior channel and a second flexible band extending through the interior channel.

20. The child restraint system of claim 19 wherein the first outer band is sewn into the interior of the garment, the back of the garment includes two eyelets, and the second flexible band extends outside of the garment between the eyelets.