MULTIFUNCTION SEAT WRAP

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ABSTRACT

A seat wrap for use with a child’s car seat includes an elongate flexible pad having an absorbent surface layer atop a water resistant backing layer. The pad includes a back section and a seat section. Each section further includes respective center portions with opposed side portions. The seat wrap includes a first support member having a semi-rigid construction with a center portion and opposed side portions. The pad may be releasably attached to the first support member and the first support member may be releasably attached to the car seat. The seat wrap may also include a second support member for releasable attachment to the seat portion of the pad and to the car seat. The flexible pad may be shaped between an upright configuration and a recumbent configuration such that the pad may be removed from the car seat and used as a changing pad.
FIG. 6
MULTIFUNCTION SEAT WRAP

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] This invention relates generally to a seat wrap and, more particularly, to a user-friendly multifunction seat wrap for child safety seats.

[0002] Seat wraps (also called “seat covers”) are increasingly being utilized to keep infant and child car seats clean. Various seat wraps have been proposed in the art, such as in U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,478,453, 4,621,004, 4,761,052, 4,840,841, 4,883,701, 4,885,200, 4,891,454, 5,150,945, and 6,056,355. While the existing devices are assumably effective for their intended purposes, the existing proposals do not present a dual function of being useful as a diaper changing pad or having additional amusement and comfort features. A seat wrap that also serves as a diaper changing pad would eliminate the need for the adult to carry an additional changing pad while traveling, and additional features could comfort and entertain the infant or child. Therefore, the innovative seat wrap disclosed herein is clearly desirable.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0003] A seat wrap for use with a child’s car seat includes an elongate flexible pad having a center portion and a pair of opposed side portions. The seat wrap includes a first support member also having a center portion and side portions. The first support member, however, includes a semi-rigid construction such that it shapes the flexible pad when the first support member is releasably attached thereto. A second support member may also be included and attached to the pad at a location spaced apart from the first support member. Both of the support members may be releasably attached to the child’s car seat.

[0004] Therefore, the pad may be shaped in a manner complementary to the car seat so as to comfortably receive a child when the seat wrap is attached to the car seat. The support members may be selectively removed from the car seat so as to be used as a changing pad. The seat wrap includes an absorbent front surface layer and a water-resistant backing layer. The seat wrap may also include other novel features for added comfort and enjoyment to a child. Auxiliary electronic modules may be mounted to the pad such as lights, sound emitting devices, a heater, or even a vibration device or the like.

[0005] Therefore, a general object of this invention is to provide a seat wrap that is useful as a covering for a child’s car safety seat and convertible for use as a changing pad.

[0006] Another object of this invention is to provide a seat wrap, as aforesaid, that is easy to convert and use.

[0007] Still another object of this invention is to provide a seat wrap, as aforesaid, that includes an absorbent surface layer and a water-resistant backing layer.

[0008] Yet another object of this invention is to provide a seat wrap, as aforesaid, that may be shaped between upright and recumbent configurations.

[0009] A further object of this invention is to provide a seat wrap, as aforesaid, that includes electronic devices to comfort and entertain a child.

[0010] A still further object of this invention is to provide a seat wrap, as aforesaid, that is easy to disassemble for cleaning.

[0011] Other objects and advantages of this invention will become apparent from the following description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, wherein is set forth by way of illustration and example, an embodiment of this invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a seat wrap according to the present invention in use with a child’s car seat;

[0013] FIG. 2 is an exploded view of the seat wrap and car seat as in FIG. 1;

[0014] FIG. 3a is a front view of the seat wrap and car seat as in FIG. 1;

[0015] FIG. 3b is a sectional view of the seat wrap and car seat taken along line 3b-3b of FIG. 3a;

[0016] FIG. 4 is a rear perspective view of the seat wrap removed from the car seat and shaped in an upright configuration;

[0017] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the seat wrap removed from the car seat and shaped in a flattened or recumbent configuration; and

[0018] FIG. 6 is a block diagram showing electronic components associated with the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0019] A seat wrap according to the present invention will now be described in detail with reference to FIGS. 1 through 5 of the accompanying drawings. More particularly, a seat wrap 10 includes a pad 12 having an elongate construction, said pad 12 having forward surface layer 14 and a backing layer 16 (FIG. 3b). All pad materials are preferably constructed of materials that are machine washable and dryer safe. More particularly, the backing layer 16 should be constructed of a semi-rigid water-resistant material such as vinyl or nylon while the surface layer should be constructed of a soft and flexible absorbent material such as cotton or a cotton blend. It is understood, of course, that other materials having the aforementioned characteristics would also be suitable. Accordingly, the surface layer 14 is designed to absorb any liquids that may be spilled thereon while the backing layer 16 acts as a barrier to such spills in order to protect the child’s car seat 2. The surface layer 14 also provides an added cushion to the child’s car seat.

[0020] The pad 12 may also be viewed as having a back section 20 (also referred to as an upright section) and a seat section 30 (FIG. 4). The back section includes a back section center portion 22 sandwiched between opposed back section side portions 24. Similarly, the seat section 30 includes a seat section center portion 32 sandwiched between opposed seat section side portions 34. Shaping of the side portions of both the back and seat sections will be described in more detail below.

[0021] The seat wrap 10 further includes at least a first support member 40 having a first support member center portion 42 sandwiched between opposed first support member side portions 44. The first support member 40 includes a configuration complementary to a configuration of the
back section 20 of the pad 12 and may be releasably attached thereto (FIG. 4). Specifically, the pad back section 20 may be nested between the first support member side portions 44. The first support member 40 includes a semi-rigid construction so as to shape corresponding portions of the pad back section 20. The first support member 40 may further include one or more elastic straps 46 for releasable attachment to corresponding posts 4 mounted to the car seat 2 although complementary hook and loop fasteners or other suitable fasteners would also work. It should also be observed that the pad 12 defines a plurality of appropriately disposed slots 48 such that harness straps 6 of the car seat 2 may still be conveniently utilized by a user.

[0022] The seat wrap 10 may include a second support member 50 having a construction substantially similar to the construction of the first support member 40 described above. More particularly, the second support member 50 includes a second support member center portion 52 sandwiched between opposed second support member side portions 54. The second support member 50 includes a semi-rigid construction such that it shapes corresponding portions of the pad 12 when releasably attached thereto. The second support member 50 may also include elastic straps 56. Preferably, the first and second support member 40, 50 are spaced apart from one another when attached to the pad 12. As best shown in FIG. 4, the backing layer 16 of the back section 20 may be nested between the first support member side portions 44 and the backing layer 16 of the seat section 30 is nested between the second support member side portions 54 for shaping the pad 12 in the manner of a child car seat 2. The displaced placement of the support members also enables the generally flexible pad 12 to be shaped in a generally upright configuration (FIG. 4) or in a generally flat or recumbent configuration (FIG. 5).

[0023] Further, the seat wrap 10 according to the present invention may include a plurality of additional electronically controlled features for the comfort and entertainment of a child. An electronics box 60 housing various electronic features may be attached to the first support member 40 (FIGS. 2, 4, and 5). More particularly, a power supply 62 may be positioned in the electronics box 60 and be electrically connected to a conventional light 64 or LED, sound emitting device 66, heater 68, vibrato 70, or other such device (FIG. 6). It is understood that the vibrato 70 and heater 68 may actually be positioned between the backing layer 16 and surface layer 14 and be electrically connected to the power supply 62 such that the vibration or heat is better positioned relative to a child’s body. Or, the vibrato and heater may be coupled to the electronics box or to the first support member 40 itself. A control unit 72 is preferably connected to the power supply 62 for controlling the above described electronic components. In addition, one of the back section side portions 24 may define one or more apertures 26 through which music, other sound, or lights may flow (FIG. 1). Still further, a remote control unit 74 may be included separate from said control unit 72 for allowing an adult to remotely actuate any of the electronic features described above. Preferably, the remote control feature would be accomplished through traditional signal transmission and receiving means.

[0024] In use, at least the first support member 40 may be attached to the car seat 2 by attaching the elastic straps 46 to corresponding car seat posts 4 or, alternatively, with corresponding hook and loop fasteners (not shown). Then the pad 12 may be nested appropriately in the first support member 40 and the car seat harness straps 6 extended through the corresponding slots 48 so that a child may be seated on the pad 12 and secured into the car seat 2. Optionally, the audible, visual, vibratory, or heat features may be actuated at the electronics box for the child’s amusement and comfort. If it becomes desirable to change the child’s diaper, the child may first be removed from the seat in the traditional manner. Then, the entire seat wrap 10 may be removed from the car seat 2 and moved from the upright or seated configuration to the generally flat or recumbent configuration (FIG. 5) and positioned on a vehicle seat or floor, whereby to change the child’s diaper.

[0025] It is understood that while certain forms of this invention have been illustrated and described, it is not limited thereto except insofar as such limitations are included in the following claims and allowable functional equivalents thereof.

What is claimed:
1. A seat wrap for use with a child’s car seat, comprising:
   an elongate pad having a flexible configuration; and
   first support member releasably attached to said elongate pad and having a semi-rigid construction for shaping said pad when attached thereto, said first support member being releasably attachable to the car seat.
2. The seat wrap as in claim 1, wherein:
   said pad includes a center portion and opposed side portions; and
   said first support member includes a center portion and opposed side portions, said first support member side portions being angularly offset from said first support member center portion to shape said pad side portions into sidewalls when said pad is attached to said first support member.
3. The seat wrap as in claim 1, further comprising:
   a second support member releasably attached to said pad and displaced from said first support member, said second support being releasably attached to the car seat such that said pad is movable between a seated configuration and recumbent configuration.
4. The seat wrap as in claim 1, wherein said pad includes an absorbent surface layer atop a waterproof backing layer.
5. The seat wrap as in claim 1, further comprising:
   a housing attached to said first support member; and
   a power supply positioned in said housing.
6. The seat wrap as in claim 5, further comprising a vibrator electrically connected to said power supply and operatively attached to said first support member for vibrating said first support member and said pad.
7. The seat wrap as in claim 6, further comprising a light electrically connected to said power supply and attached to said first support member.
8. The seat wrap as in claim 7, wherein said pad defines an aperture adjacent said light.
9. The seat wrap as in claim 5, further comprising an audio device electrically connected to said power supply and attached to said first support member.
10. The seat wrap as in claim 5, further comprising a heater electrically connected to said power supply and coupled to said first support member.

11. The seat wrap as in claim 5, further comprising:
   - a vibrator electrically connected to said power supply and operatively attached to said first support member for vibrating said first support member and said attached pad;
   - a light electrically connected to said power supply and attached to said first support member;
   - an audio device electrically connected to said power supply and attached to said first support member;
   - a heater electrically connected to said power supply and attached to said first support member; and
   - a control unit electrically connected to said power supply, said vibrator, said light, said audio device, and said heater for selectively activating said vibrator, said light, said audio device, and said heater, said control unit being positioned in said housing.

12. The seat wrap as in claim 11, further comprising a remote control separate from said control unit, said remote control being in communication with said control unit.

13. The seat wrap as in claim 1, wherein the child’s car seat includes a seat harness, and wherein said pad defines a plurality of slots for allowing the seat harness to pass therethrough.

14. The seat wrap as in claim 1, wherein said pad and said first support member are selectively attached together with a plurality of complementary hook and loop fasteners.

15. The seat wrap as in claim 1, wherein said first support member is selectively attached to the car seat with a plurality of complementary fasteners.

16. The seat wrap as in claim 1, wherein said pad is washable.

17. A seat wrap for use with a child’s car seat, comprising:
   - an elongate pad having a back section and a seat section, said back section having a back section center portion and opposed back section side portions;
   - a first support member releasably attached to said back section for shaping said back section, said first support member having a first support member center portion and opposed first support member side portions, said first support member side portions being angularly offset from said first support member center portion for shaping said back section side portions into sidewalls when said back section of said pad is attached to said first support member;
   - a housing attached to said first support member;
   - a power supply disposed in said housing; and
   - a vibrator electrically connected to said power supply and operatively attached to said first support member for vibrating said first support member and said pad.

18. The seat wrap as in claim 17, further comprising:
   - a control unit electrically connected to said power supply and said vibrator for selectively activating said vibrator; and
   - a remote control unit separate from said control unit for selectively transmitting a signal to actuate said control unit.

19. The seat wrap as in claim 17, further comprising:
   - a light electrically connected to said power supply and attached to said first support member;
   - an audio device electrically connected to said power supply and attached to said first support member;
   - a heater electrically connected to said power supply and attached to said first support member;
   - a control unit electrically connected to said power supply, said vibrator, said light, said audio device, and said heater for selectively activating said vibrator, said light, said audio device, and said heater, said control unit being positioned in said housing; and
   - a remote control unit separate from said control unit, said remote control unit having means for actuating said control unit.

20. The seat wrap as in claim 17, wherein said seat section includes a seat section center portion and opposed seat section side portions; said seat wrap further comprising:
   - a second support member releasably attached to said seat section for shaping said seat section, said second support member having a second support member center portion and opposed second support member side portions, said second support member side portions being angularly offset from said second support member center portion for shaping said seat section side portions into sidewalls when said seat section of said pad is attached to said second support member.

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