WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

What is claimed is:

1. An infant car seat comprising:

a seat shell including a seat portion and a back portion extending from the seat portion;

a carrying handle mounted to the seat shell, the carrying handle being movable relative to the seat shell; and

a side impact protection (SIP) device affixed to an exterior surface of the seat shell.

2. The infant car seat of claim 1, wherein the SIP device is arranged at the back portion.

3. The infant car seat of claim 2, wherein the back portion of the seat shell includes at least one sidewall, the SIP device being arranged at an exterior of the at least one sidewall.

4. The infant car seat of claim 1, wherein the SIP device includes a contour to prevent interference with the carrying handle as the carrying handle transforms between a front position and a rear position.

5. The infant car seat of claim 4, wherein a portion of the carrying handle is receivable within the contour of the SIP device as the carrying handle rotates into the rear position and into alignment with the SIP device.

6. The infant car seat of claim 2, wherein the carrying handle is attached to the seat shell via at least one handle hub, the SIP device being positioned between the at least one handle hub and a rear of the back portion of the seat shell.

7. The infant car seat of claim 2, wherein at least one of the SIP device is located proximate to the at least one handle hub and the SIP device is behind the at least one handle hub.

8. The infant car seat of claim 1, wherein the SIP device is arranged at the seat portion.

9. The infant car seat of claim 9, wherein the SIP device is arranged proximate to a front end of the seat portion.

10. The infant car seat of claim 10, wherein the SIP device has a contour complementary to an adjacent portion of the seat shell.

11. The infant car seat of claim 10, further comprising soft goods, the soft goods being positionable about a portion of the seat shell, wherein the SIP device is arranged between the seat shell and the soft goods.

12. A child seat system for installation on a vehicle seat, the child seat system comprising:

a support base;

a child seat connectable to the support base, the child seat including a seat body having a seat portion and a back portion extending from the seat portion; and

a side impact protection (SIP) device arranged at an exterior of the child seat or the support base, the SIP device being configured to permanently deform in response to application of a force to the SIP device.

13. The child seat system of claim 12, wherein the SIP device is configured to collapse in response to application of the force.

14. The child seat system of claim 13, wherein the SIP device includes a body having at least one weakened region formed therein, the SIP device being collapsible at the at least one weakened region.

16. The child seat system of claim 14, wherein the at least one weakened region is at least one of formed by a material having a reduced strength relative to the child seat, formed by a slot, formed by a recess, and formed by connecting two discrete components.

17. The child seat system of claim 12, wherein the SIP device is removably connectable to the child seat.

18. The child seat system of claim 17, wherein the SIP device is removably connectable to the child seat when in a permanently deformed configuration.

19. A child seat comprising:

a body including a seat portion and a back portion extending from the seat portion;

a headrest operably coupled to the back portion, the headrest being movable relative to the back portion between a first position overlapping the back portion and a second portion vertically offset from the back portion; and

at least one side impact protection (SIP) device arranged at an exterior of the headrest.

20. The child seat of claim 19, wherein the headrest includes a headrest back portion and at least one headrest side member extending from the headrest back portion toward a front of the headrest, the at least one SIP device being arranged at the at least one headrest side member.

21. The child seat of claim 20, wherein the at least one headrest side member includes a lip extending from a top to a front of the headrest, the at least one SIP device being positioned at least partially underneath the lip.

22. The child seat of claim 20, wherein the at least one SIP device is removably connectable to the headrest of permanently affixed to the headrest.

23. The child seat of claim 19, wherein the at least one SIP device is permanently affixed to the headrest.

24. The child seat of claim 19, wherein the at least one SIP device has a first hardness and the headrest has a second hardness, the first hardness being less than the second hardness.

25. The child seat of claim 19, wherein the at least one SIP device is movable with the headrest relative to the back portion.

26. The child seat of claim 25, wherein the at least one SIP device is positionable in overlapping arrangement with the back portion.