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Telford

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(54) **ADJUSTABLE CHILD CARRIER**

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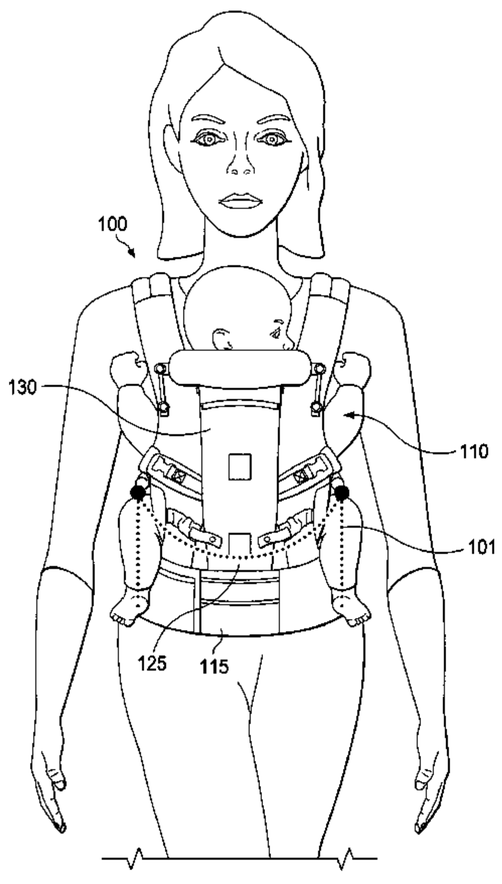
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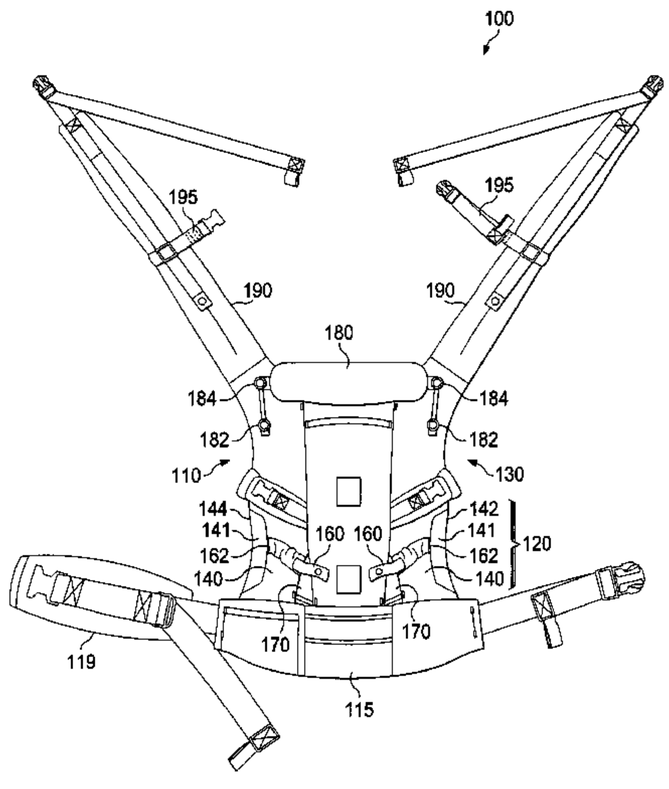
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An adjustable child carrier includes an adjustable bucket seat that can be adjusted to accommodate children of a wide range of sizes. The child carrier includes one or more adjustments that work alone or in cooperation to adjust the depth and width of the bucket seat area provided by the child carrier. The carrier is capable of supporting children of various sizes in an ergonomic position appropriate for the child's size.

20 Claims, 9 Drawing Sheets





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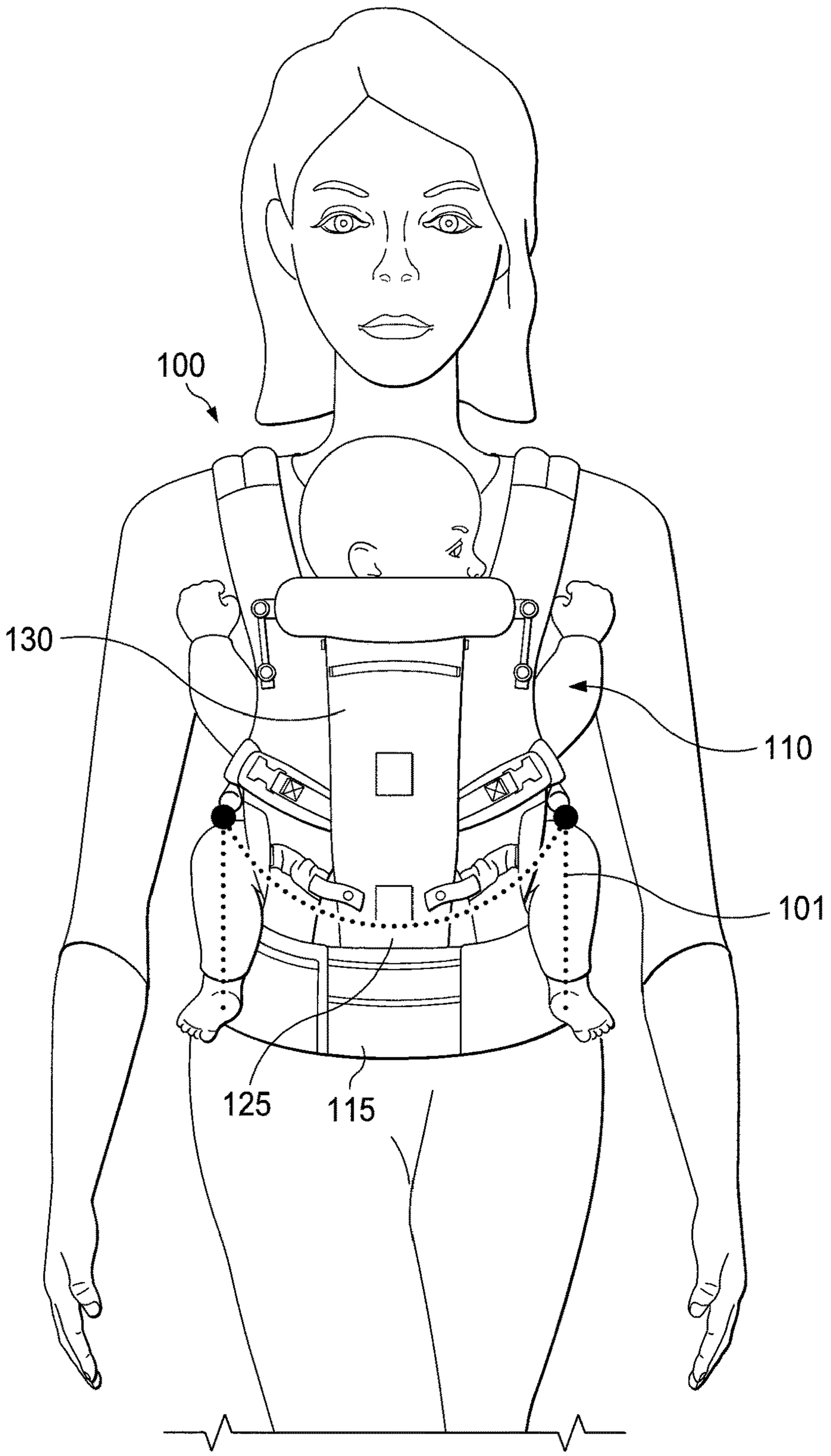


FIG. 1

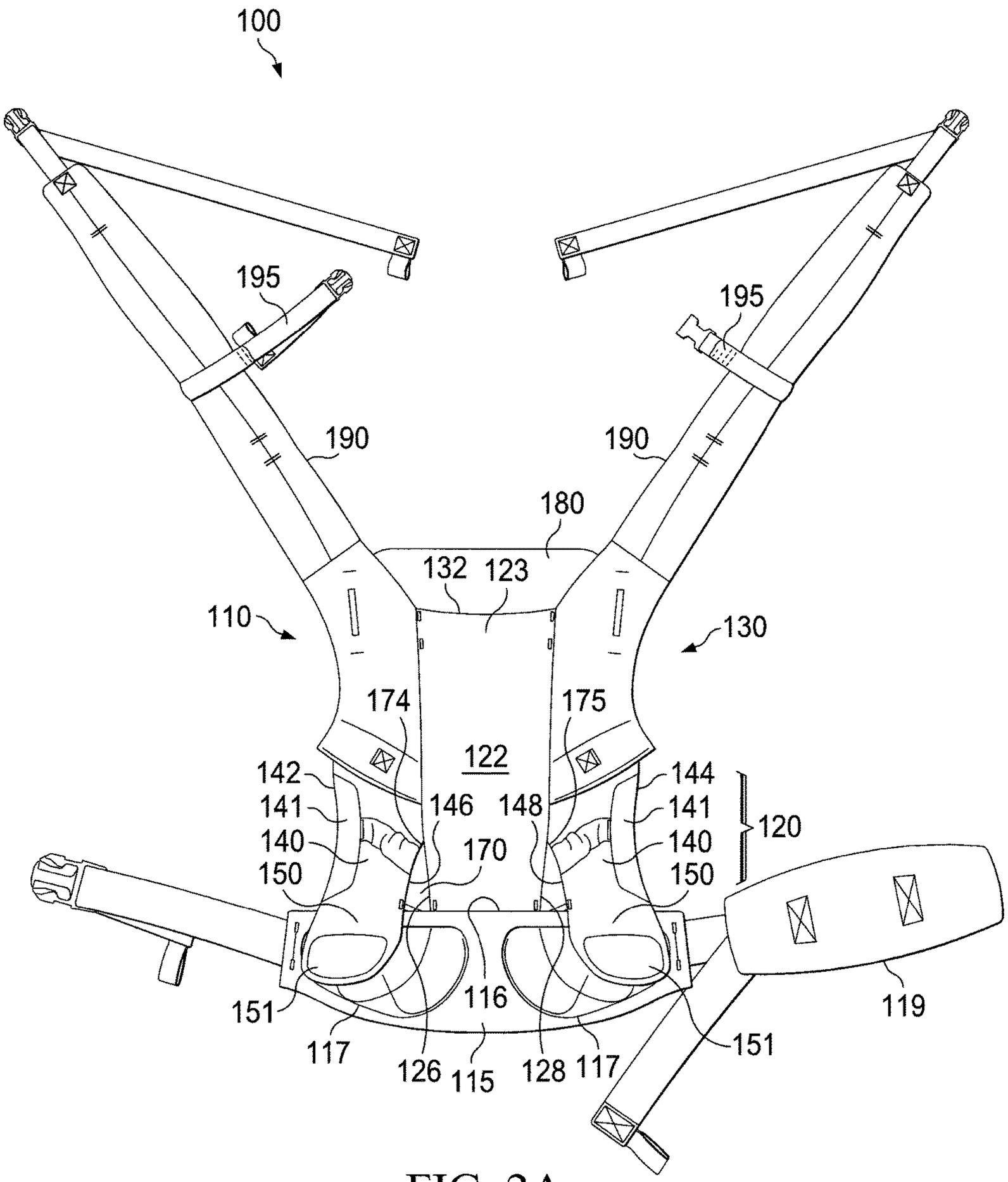

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FIG. 2A

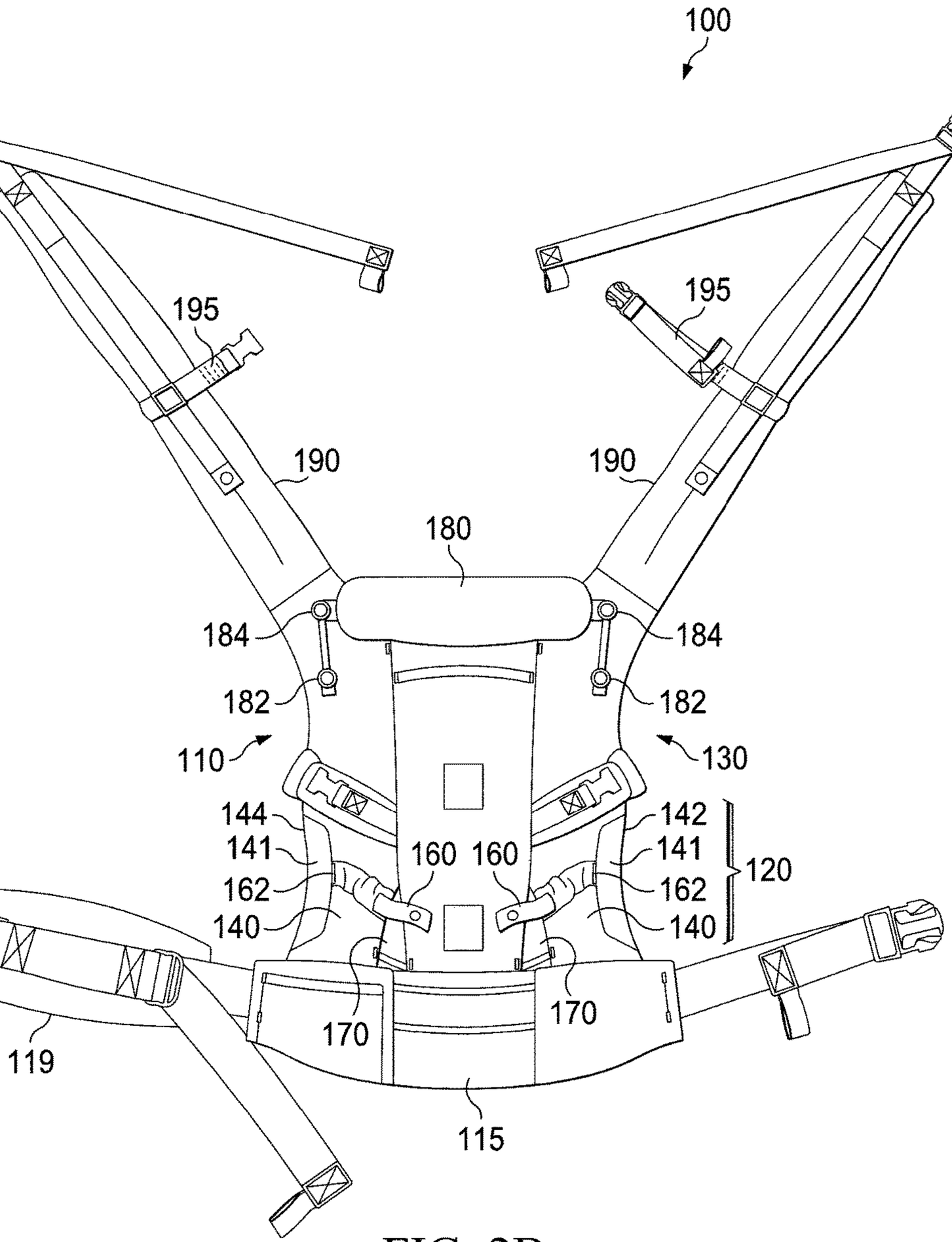

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FIG. 2B

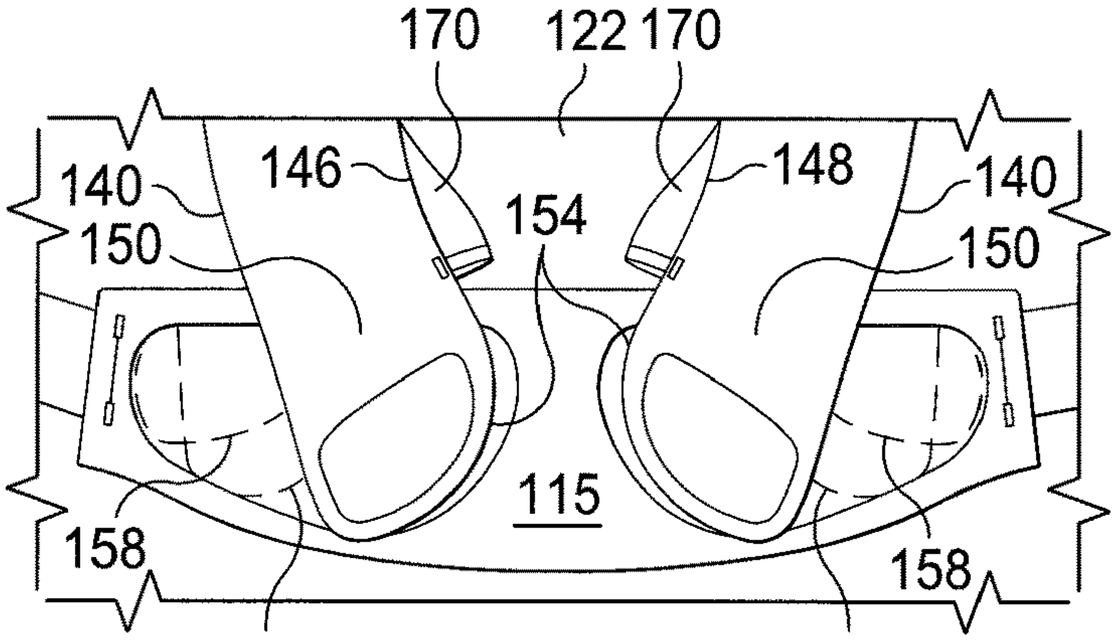


FIG. 3A

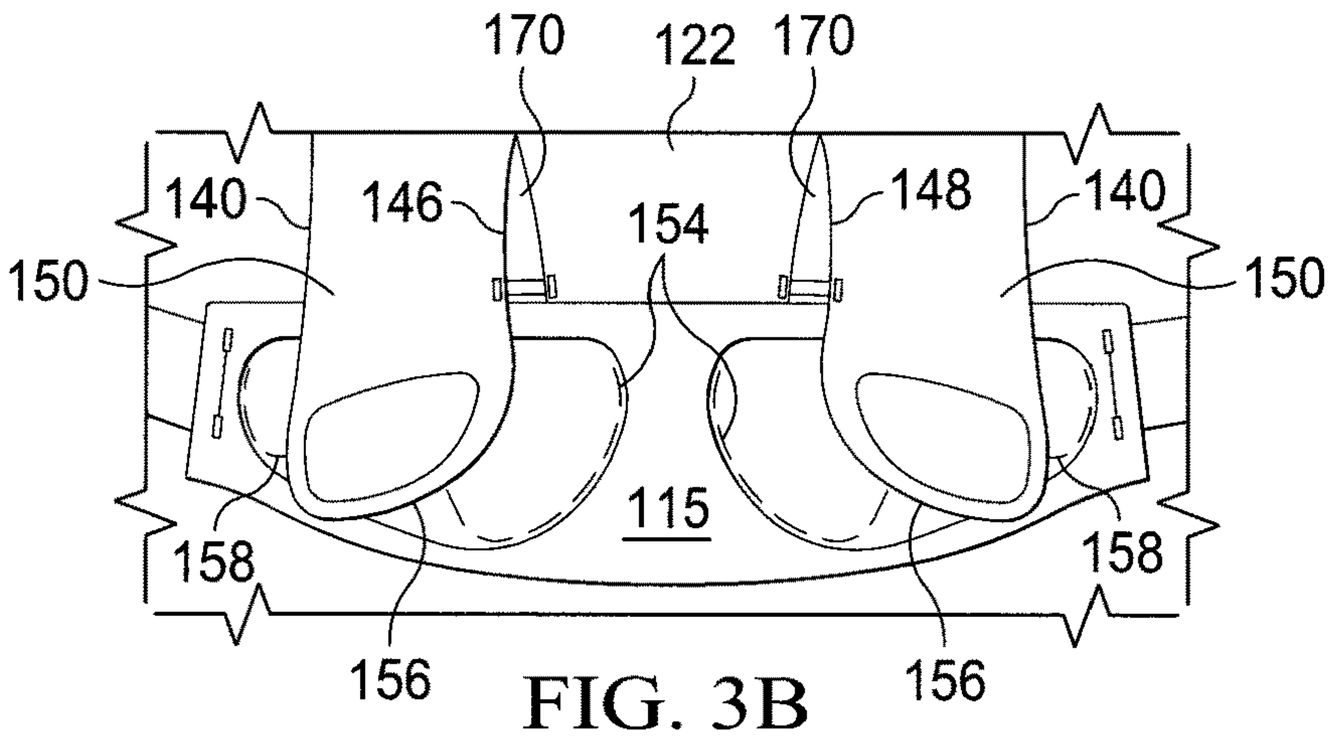


FIG. 3B

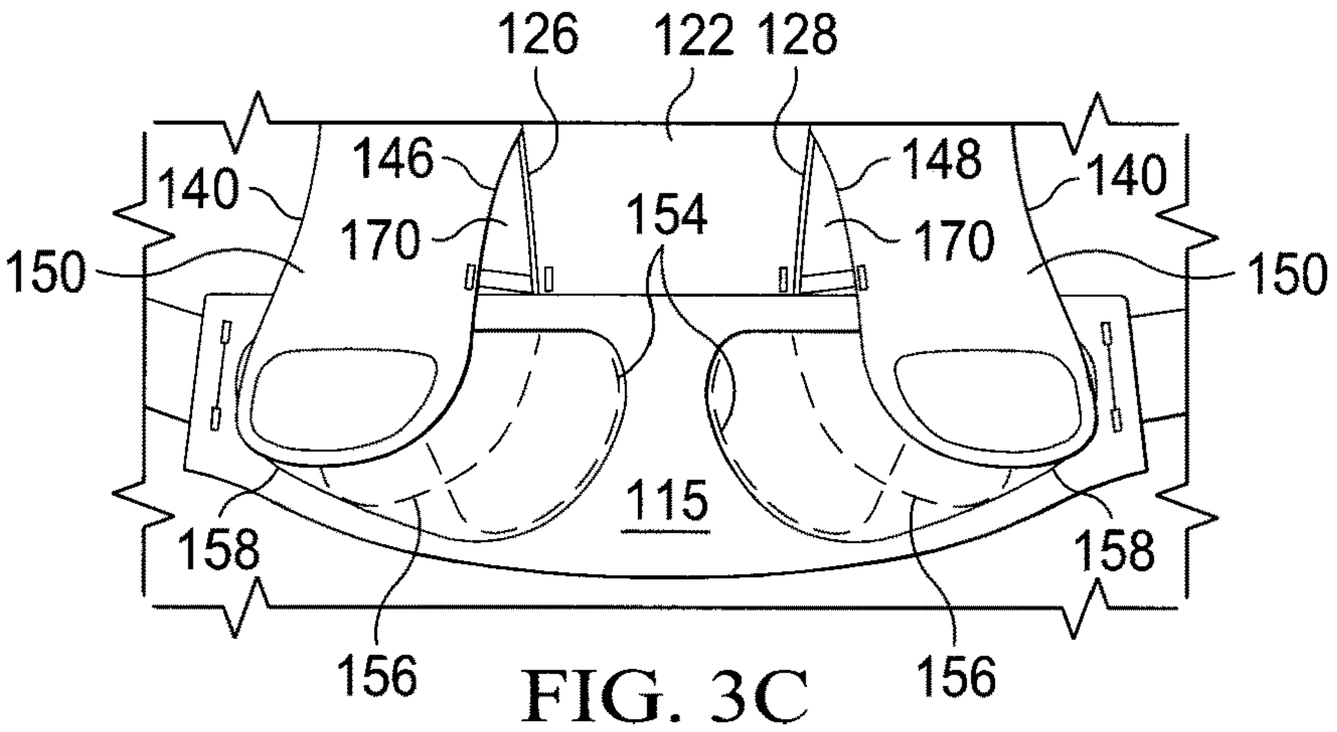


FIG. 3C

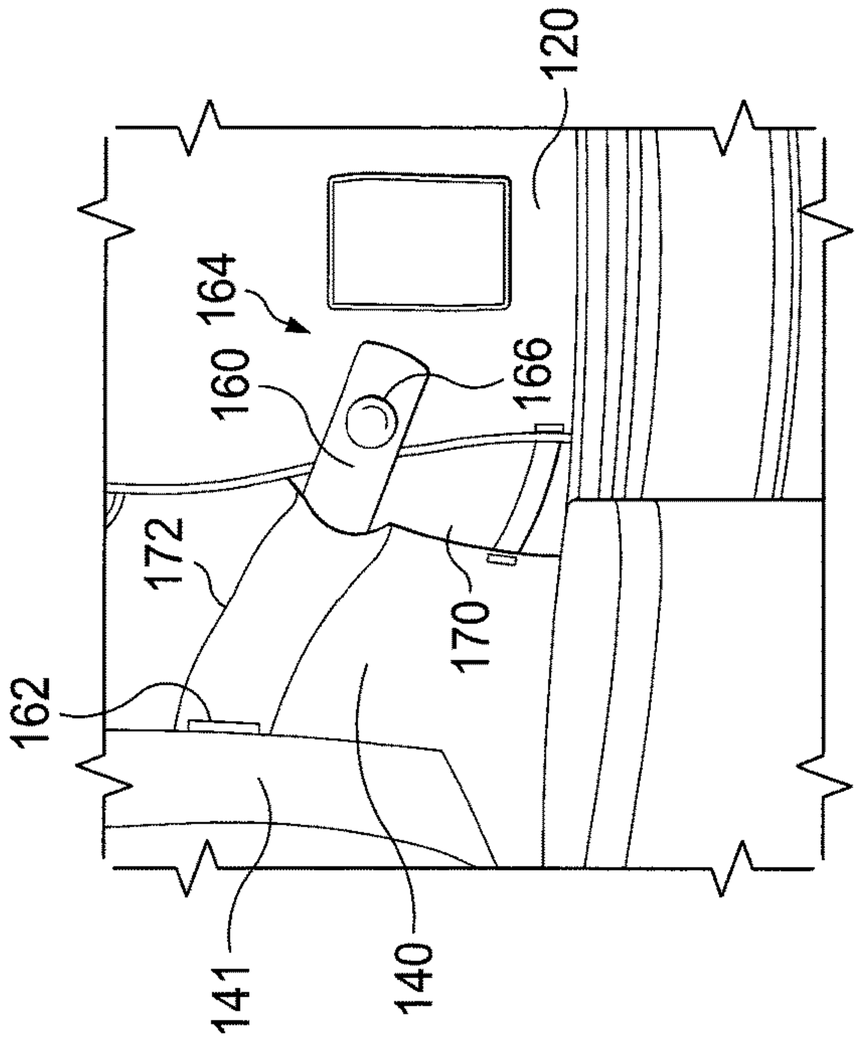


FIG. 4C

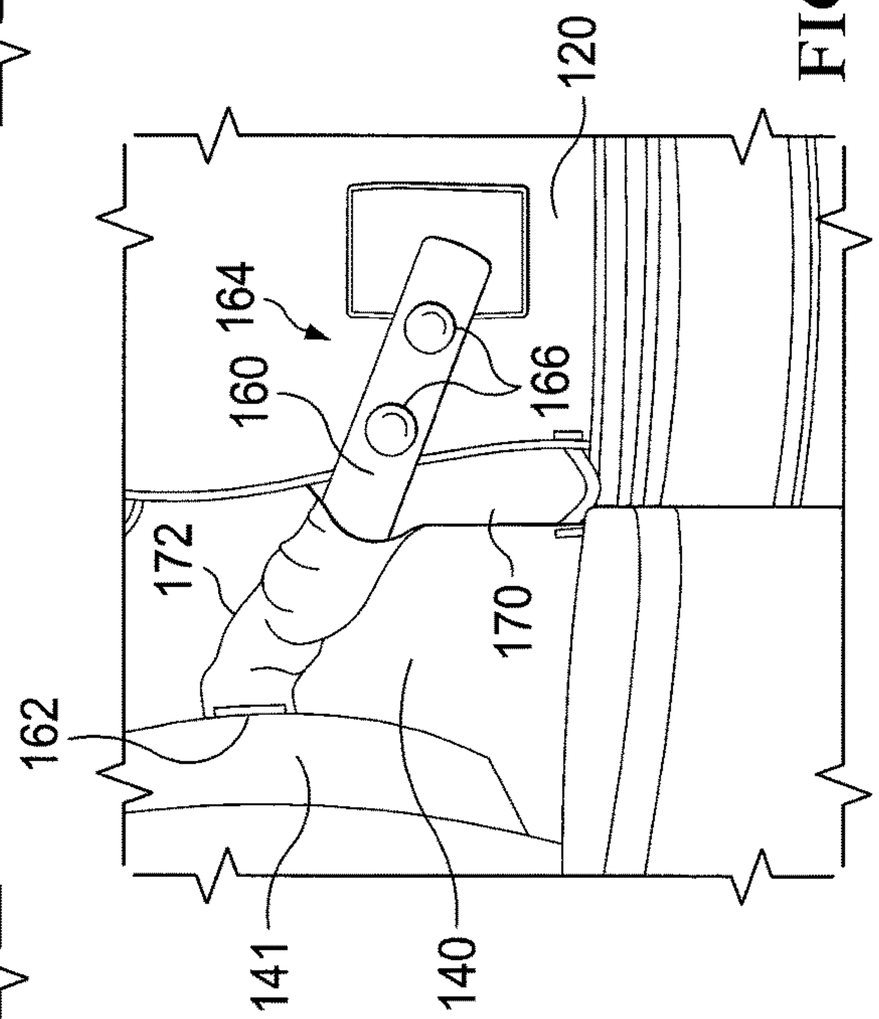


FIG. 4B

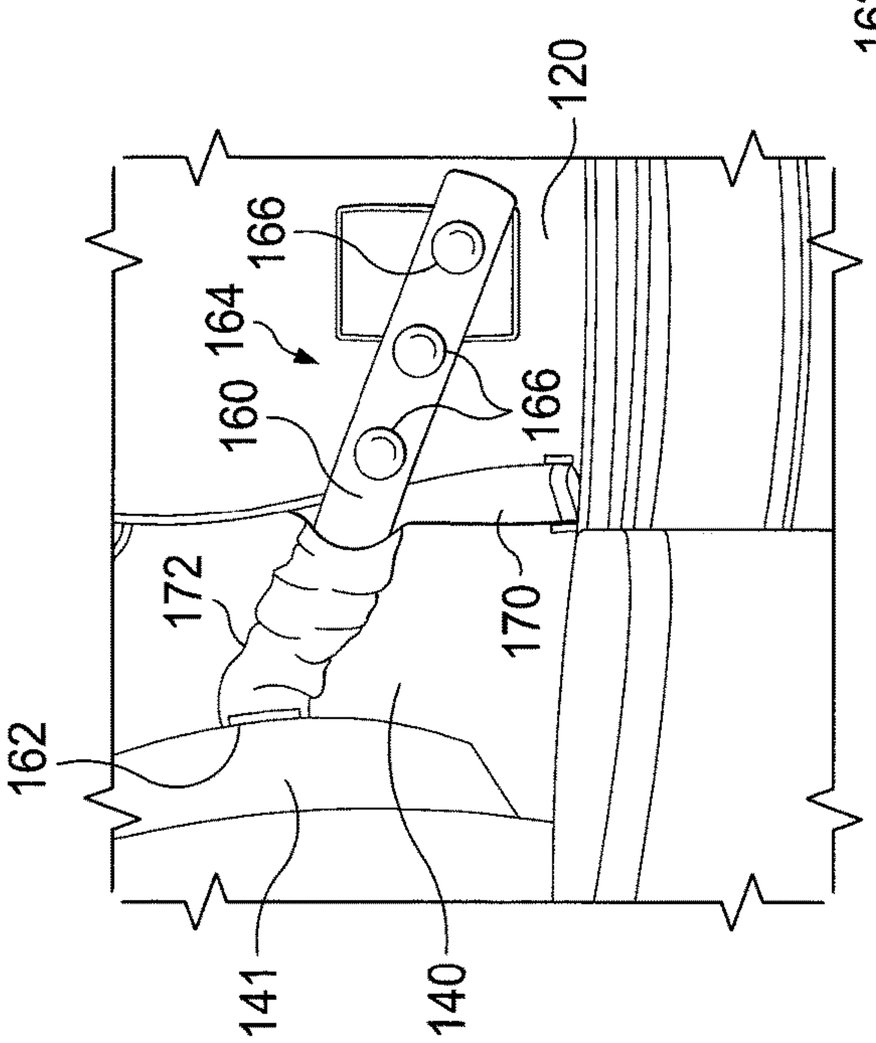


FIG. 4A

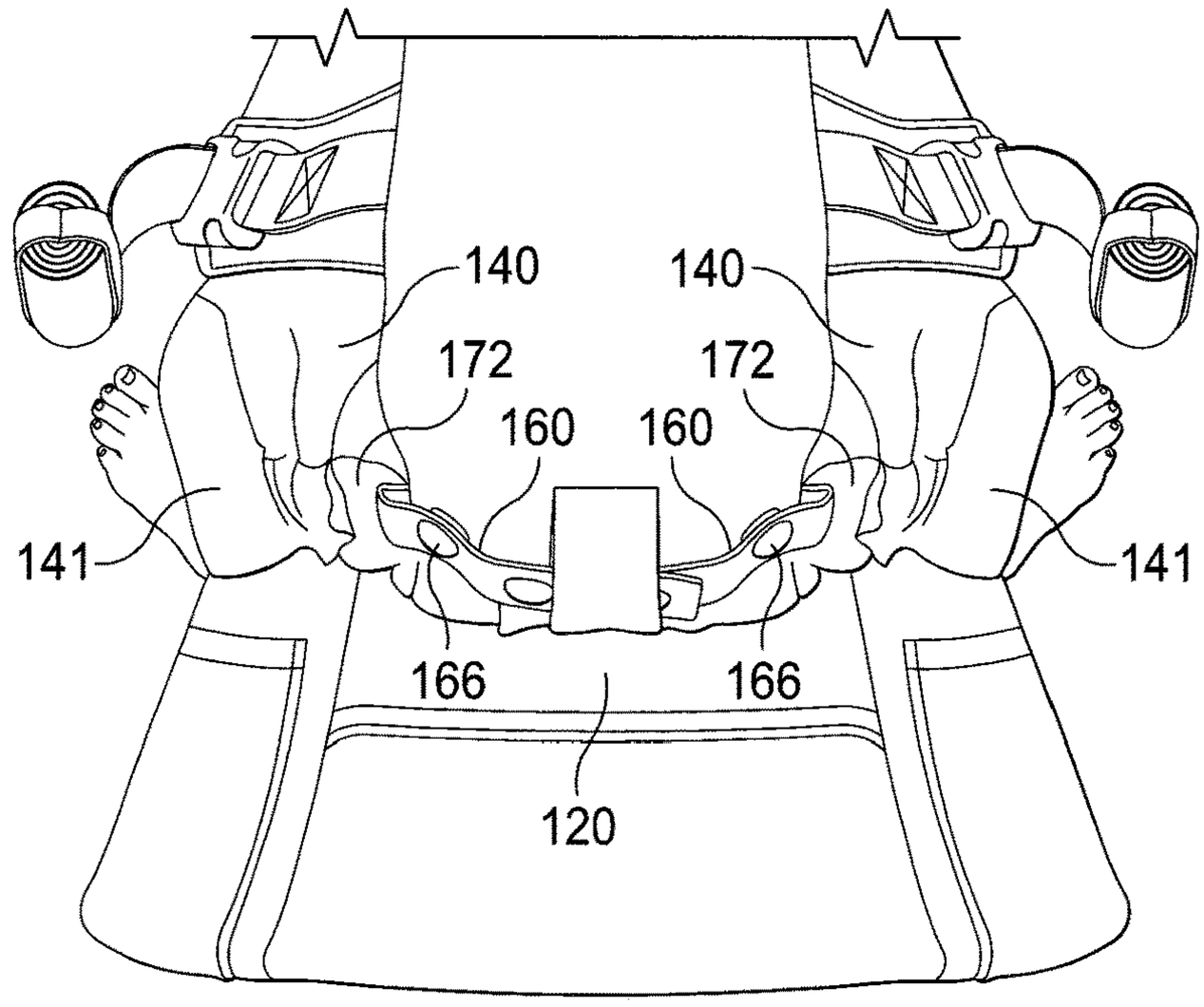

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FIG. 5A

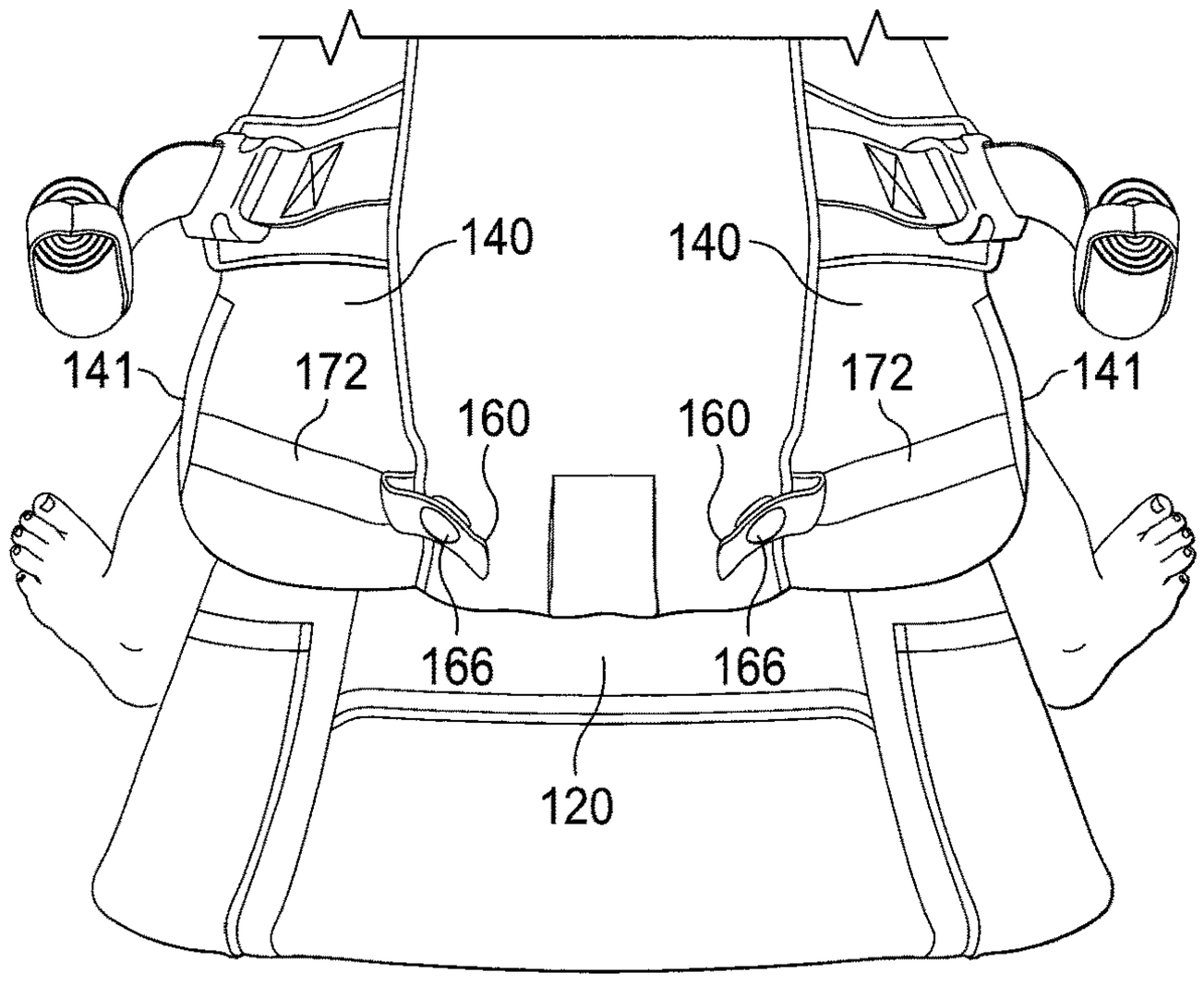

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FIG. 5B

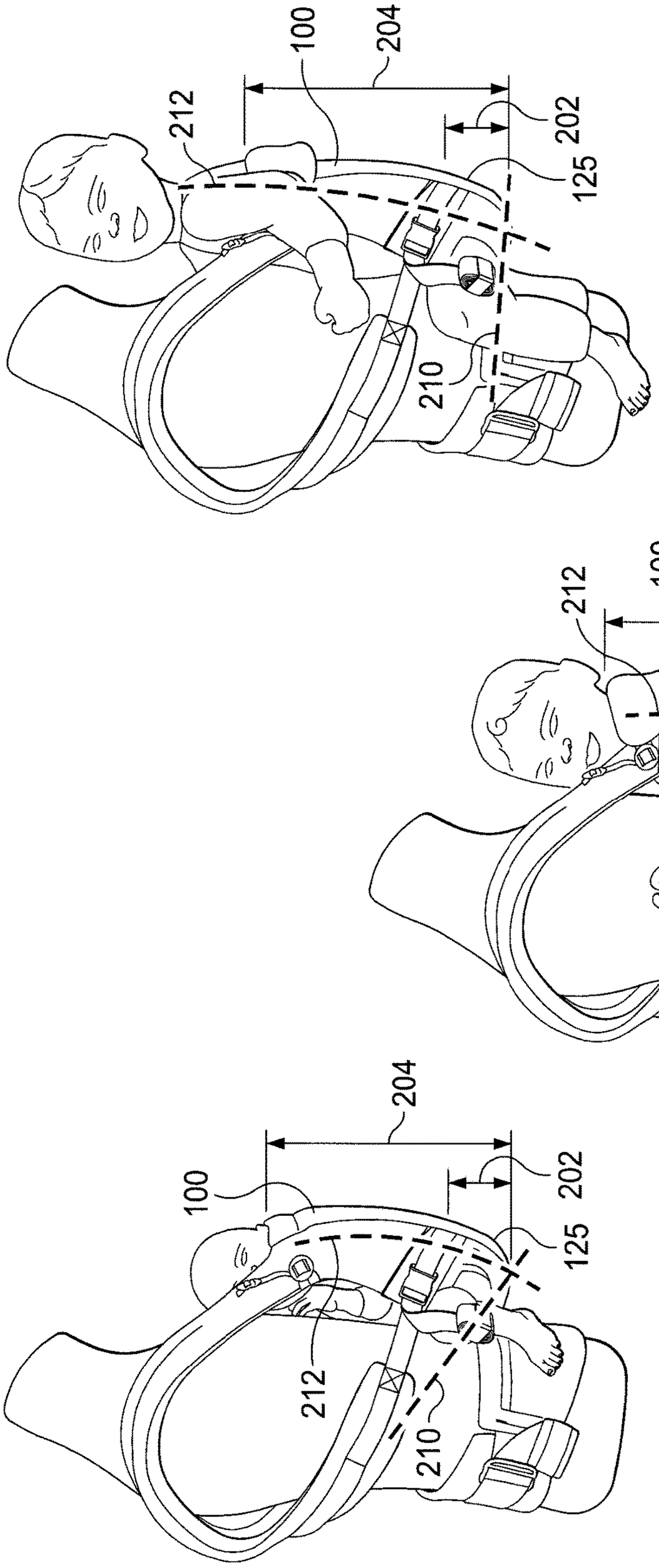


FIG. 6C

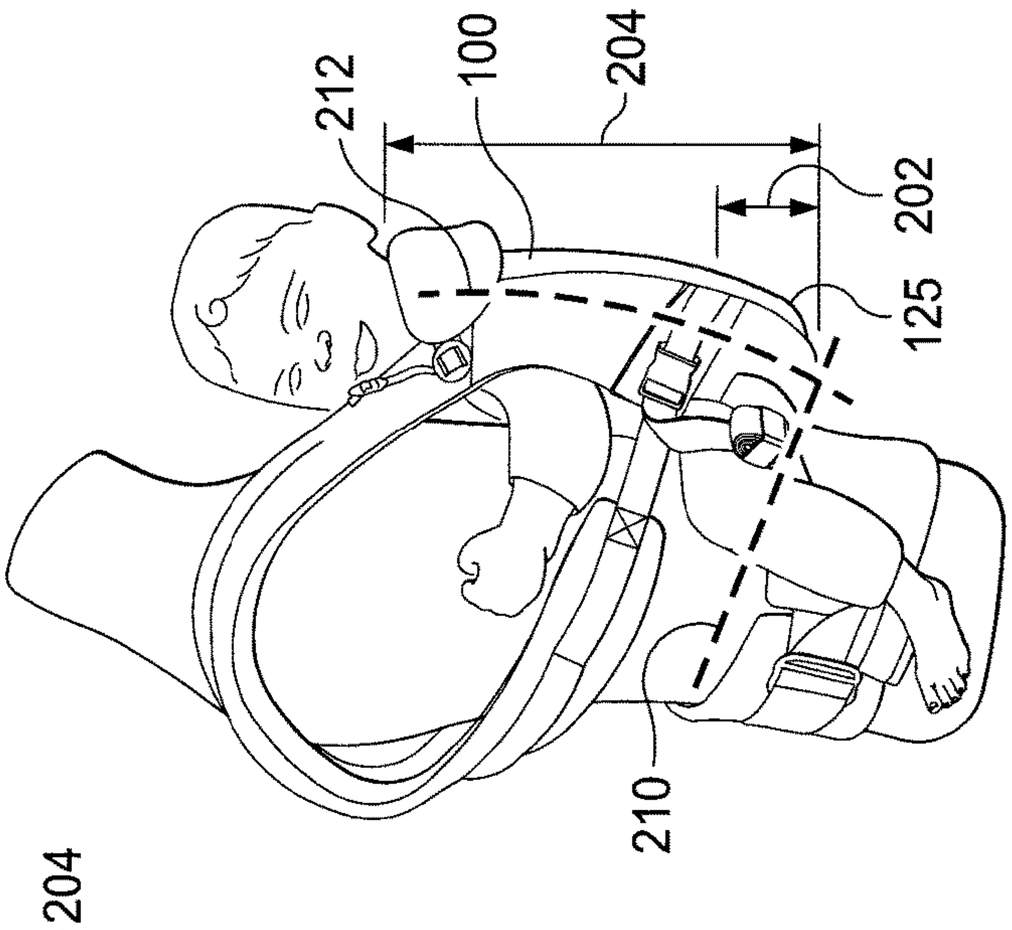


FIG. 6B

FIG. 6A

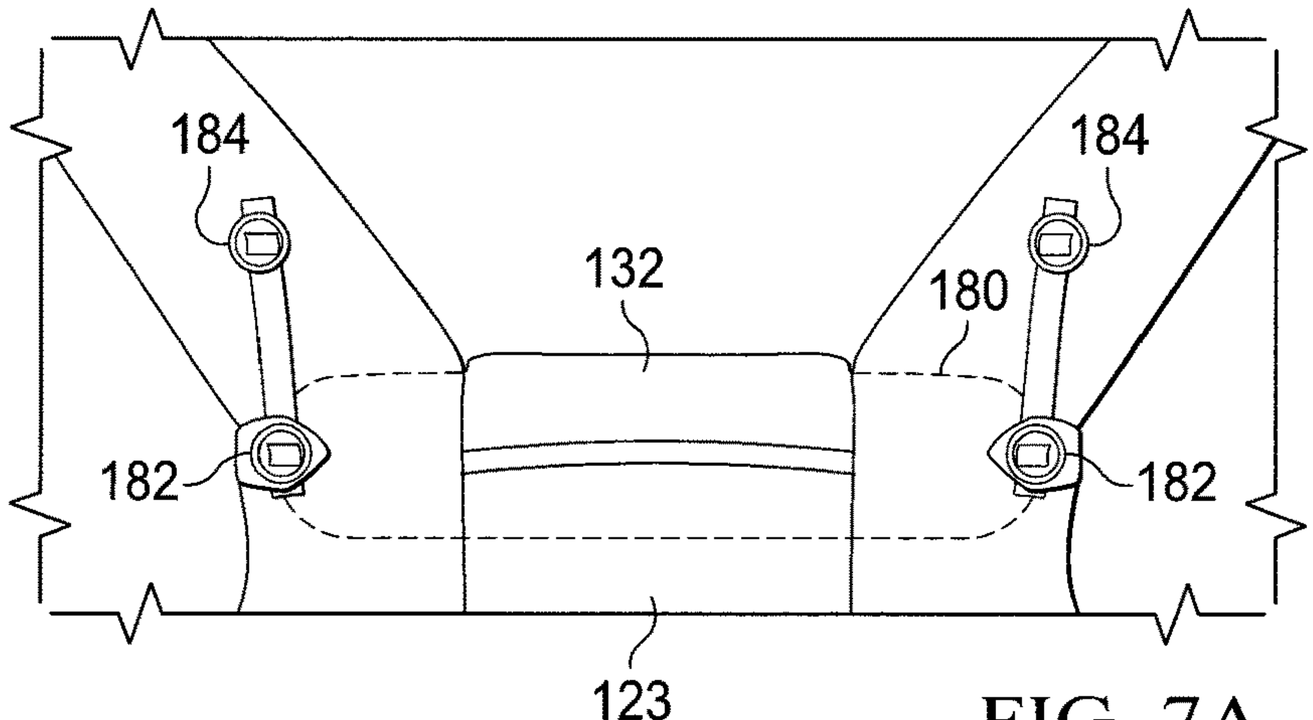


FIG. 7A

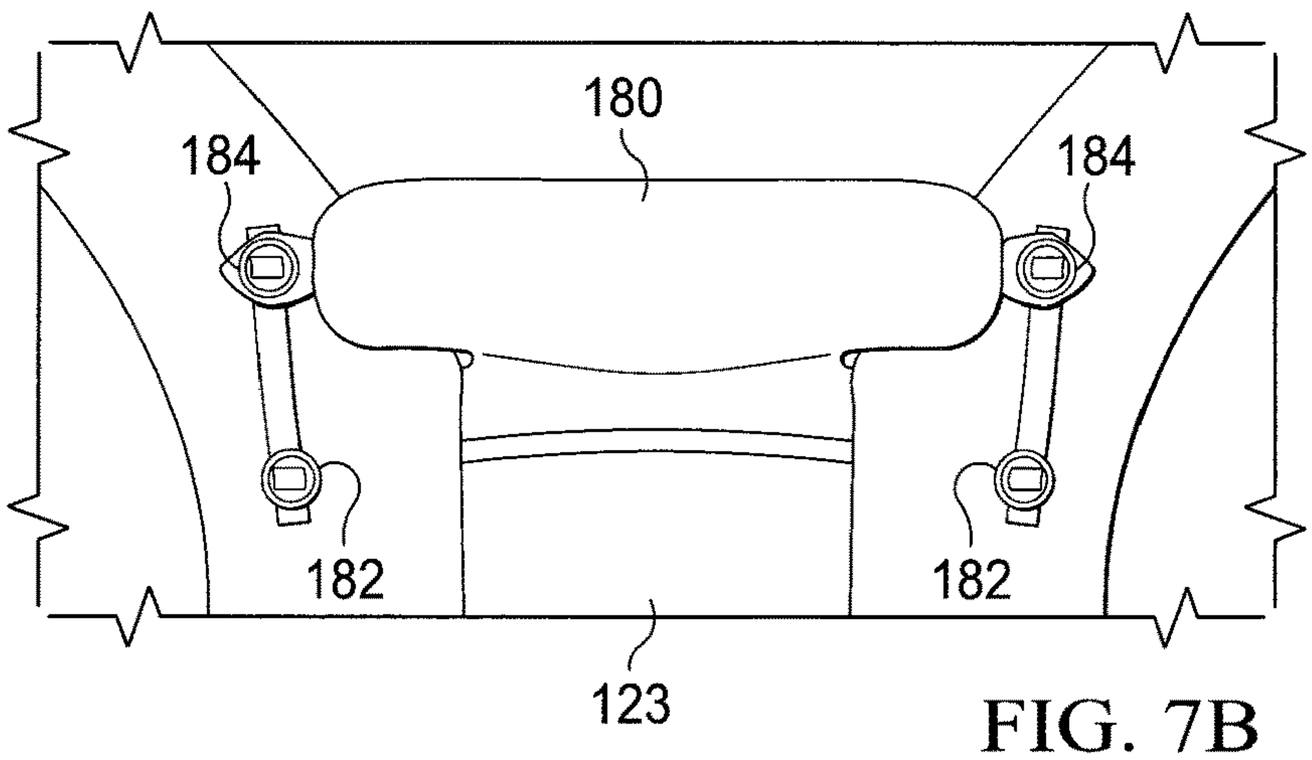


FIG. 7B

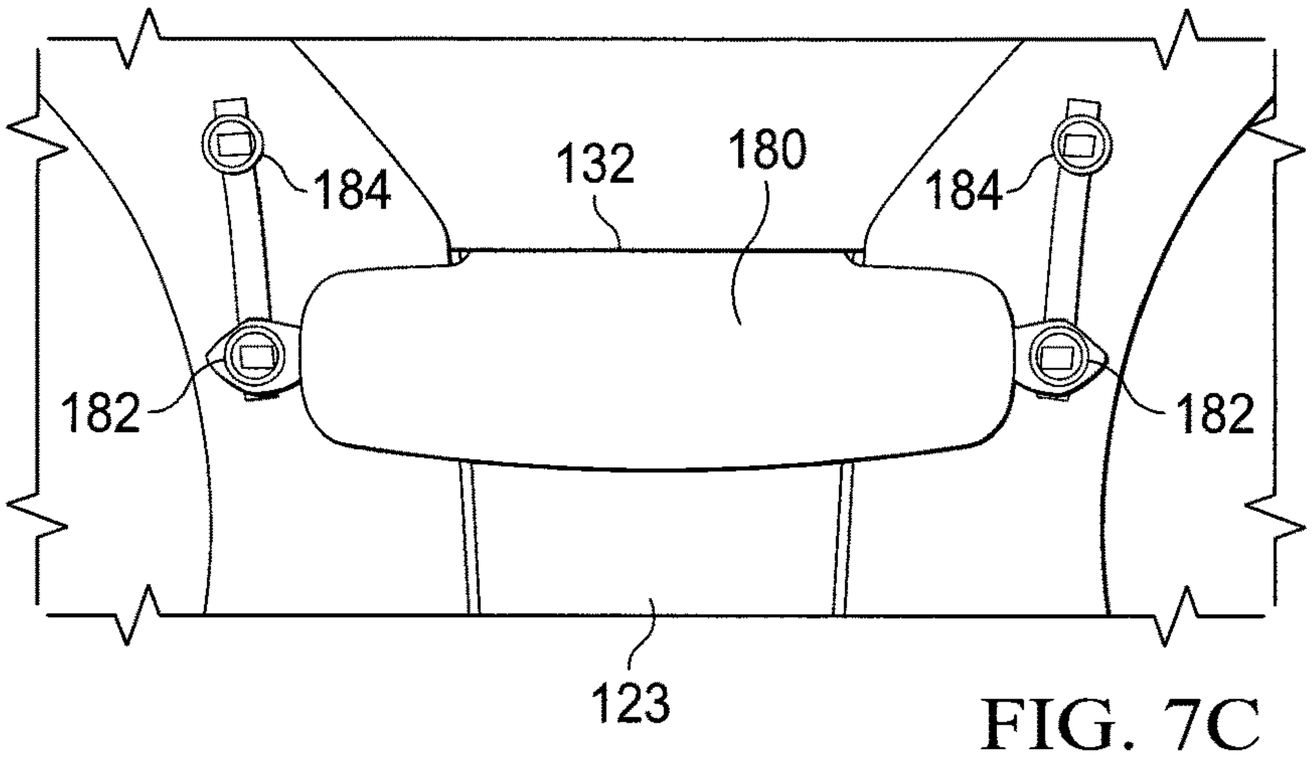


FIG. 7C

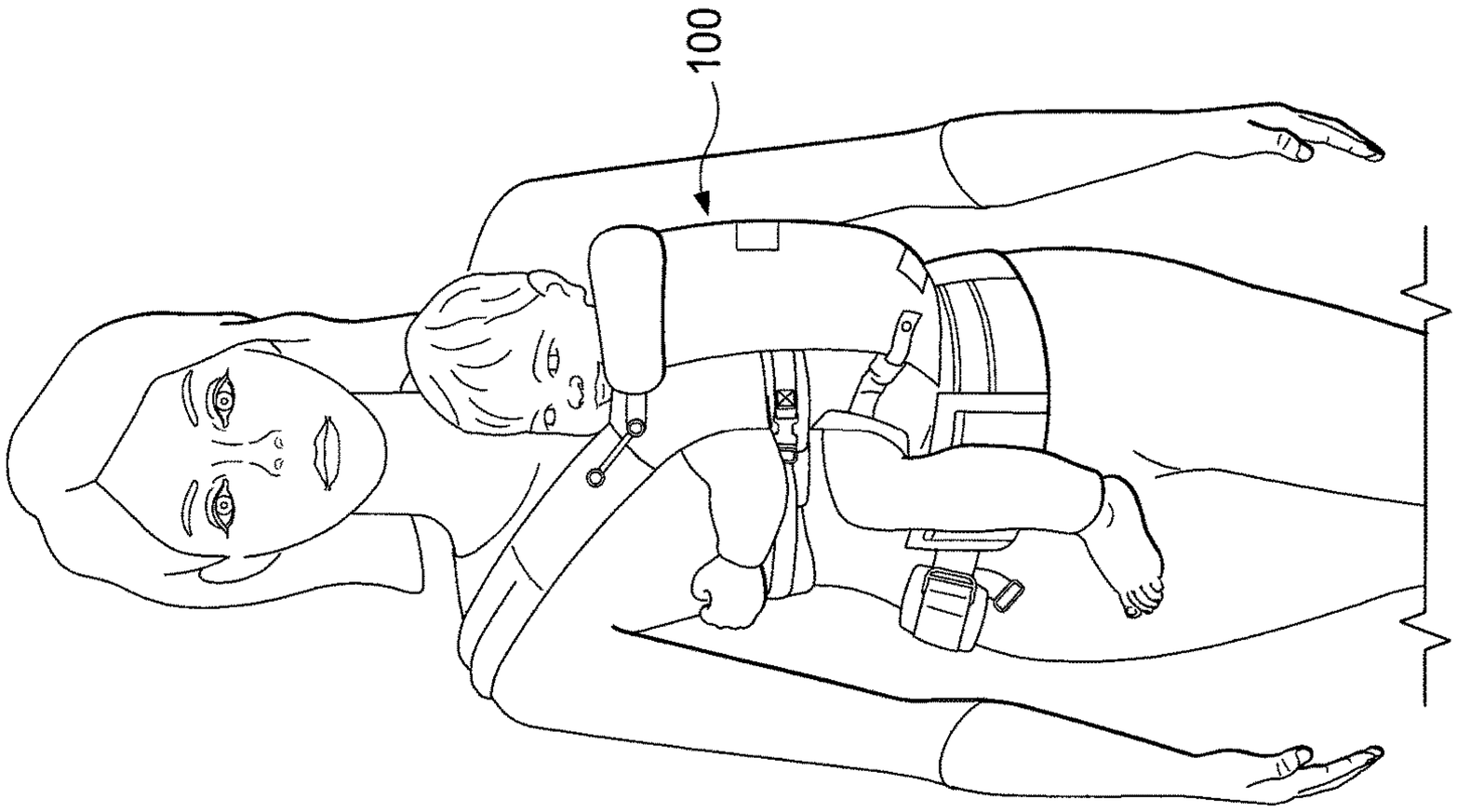


FIG. 9

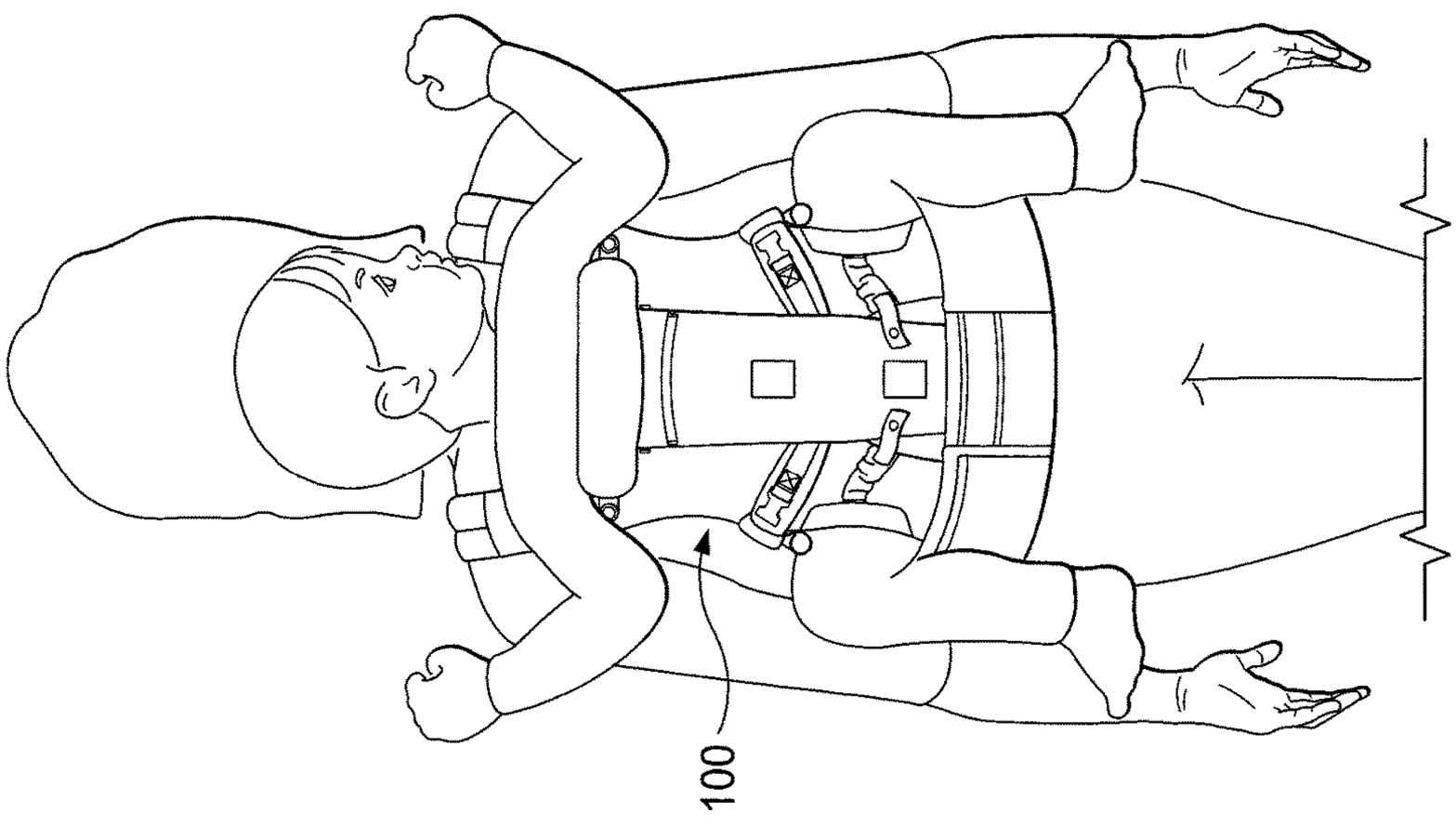


FIG. 8

ADJUSTABLE CHILD CARRIER

RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit of priority under 35 USC § 119(e) to U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 62/248,745 by Rodney Telford, filed Oct. 30, 2015 and entitled "Baby Carrier," of which the entire contents are incorporated herein by reference.

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present disclosure relates to child carriers. Even more particularly, the present disclosure relates to a child carrier that is adaptable to ergonomically carry a child as the child grows.

BACKGROUND

Various child carriers are currently available for transporting a child by a parent or other individual. Child carriers have become popular for carrying infants and toddlers because they afford the wearer freedom of hand and arm movement while carrying a child. In pursuit of child safety, some of these devices have become overly complex involving, among other things, rigid seats and frames which considerably increase the weight of the carrier and cannot accommodate for the growth of the child. These complex carriers are relatively heavy and place an undue strain upon the wearer, particularly in the lumbar region. In addition, because of the size of many of the present day carriers, they can only be worn on the back thus denying the child the comfort and security of a position where a child and its mother may be in a face-to-face relationship.

Soft structured carriers have become increasingly popular because they are lighter, less cumbersome and more comfortable to wear. These carriers incorporate padding, stitching and fabrics, rather than a rigid frame, to provide the structure. However, some soft-structured carriers hold a child in an upright position with the child's legs hanging down and the base of the child's spine supporting the child's bodyweight. This position may not be optimal for infant and other young children. While an adult spine has four curves, a young child's spine only has two curves. A majority of a young child's spine will form a C-shape (so-called total kyphosis). Positioning a young child, particularly an infant, in an upright position may unduly limit curvature of the spine and puts stress on the infant's sacrum. This can cause the infant's pelvis to tilt backward limiting leg and hip movement, which may impede healthy development of the infant's pelvis.

Moreover, conventional soft structured carriers are usually designed for a very limited age, weight and size of child and make compromises regarding the shape of the carrier to accommodate a range of ages. Even if a carrier supports ergonomic positioning of the child at one age/weight/size, positioning a child in an ergonomic position through the range of ages while utilizing the same carrier poses a problem as different children develop at different rates and the anatomy and physiology of children changes dramatically between infancy and toddlerhood.

A carrier designed for infants or younger babies may not accommodate a child as the child grows into toddlerhood because the seat and back support portions of the carrier will become too small. In an attempt to make carriers more adaptable, some carriers provide additional panels that can be unfolded and added to the seat to widen the seat and/or back panels that can expand (e.g., by unfolding additional back panel material or attaching new panels) to accommodate the child's growth. However, simply widening the seat or lengthening the carrier does not adequately address proper ergonomics.

On the other hand, a carrier designed for older children may not properly support an infant. One solution to this problem is the use of a specially designed "infant insert." In general, an infant insert is an accessory that incorporates additional padding and structure and makes it possible to carry a small infant in a carrier that would not otherwise properly support the infant. However, not all carriers support the use of infant inserts. Moreover, depending on design, infant inserts may be cumbersome, non-intuitive, and easily lost. In particular, the use of a separate infant insert may require that parents keep track of two separate devices and may significantly increase the difficulty of configuring the carrier for a wearer, the wearing of the carrier, or the ingress and egress of a child to the carrier.

Due to the foregoing issues, parents often opt for changing carriers as the child ages.

SUMMARY

Embodiments described herein provide a wearable child carrier that can be adapted to a baby's size and provide ergonomic positioning of the child throughout the range of the carrier adjustability.

According to one embodiment, a child carrier includes a waist belt adapted for securing about a wearer's hips and a main body coupled to the waist belt, where the main body adapted to form a child carrying area in cooperation with a wearer's torso. The main body can include a torso support portion configured for supporting at least the torso of a child; and an adjustable bucket seat configurable in a plurality of bucket seat configurations, each of the plurality of bucket seat configurations having a different bucket seat depth and bucket seat width and adapted to support a child in a corresponding size range in a spread squat position. In one embodiment, the plurality of bucket seat configurations comprises a configuration adapted to support an infant in a spread squat position without an infant insert. The plurality of bucket seat configurations may include a configuration adapted to support a toddler in a spread squat position.

The child carrier can include one or more adjustment areas adapted to adjust the bucket seat depth and the bucket seat width. In one embodiment, the child carrier has a minimum wearable height that is dependent on the bucket seat depth.

In accordance with one aspect, the plurality of bucket seat configurations comprises a first configuration adapted to support a child in a first size range in a first spread squat position; and a second configuration adapted to support a child in a second size range in a second spread squat position. The first configuration may have a first bucket seat width and first bucket seat depth and the second configuration may have a second bucket seat width and a second bucket seat depth, wherein the first bucket seat width is less than the second bucket seat width and the first bucket seat depth is greater than the second seat bucket depth.

In one embodiment, the main body further comprises a seat center portion coupled to the waist belt and torso support portion and thigh supports disposed on either side of the seat center portion. The thigh supports can be adapted to pass under and support a child's thighs and cooperate with the seat center portion to form the bucket seat. The carrier can further include a base width adjuster coupled to each

thigh support. The base width adjusters can be configured for selective coupling to the waist belt in multiple locations to adjust a width of the main body at the waist belt. The base width adjusters can also be configured for selective coupling to the waist belt in multiple locations to adjust the bucket seat depth.

The child carrier may include one or more fabric shaping members adapted to control a bulge of the bucket seat. As one example, the fabric shaping members may comprise darts disposed between the thigh supports and the seat center portion, where the darts are adapted to open or close responsive to adjustment of the base width adjusters. The base width adjusters may be configurable in a first setting corresponding to a maximum bucket seat depth and a second setting corresponding to a minimum bucket seat depth, wherein the darts or other fabric shaping members have a first shape corresponding to the first setting and a second shape corresponding to the second setting.

In accordance with one embodiment, the seat center portion comprises laterally outer edges and the thigh supports comprise laterally inner edges. The fabric shaping members may be disposed between the laterally outer edges and the laterally inner edges. The base width adjusters can be adjustable through rotation to rotate the laterally inner edges relative to the laterally outer edges to open or close the fabric shaping members. Furthermore, adjusting the base width adjusters can increase or decrease the bucket depth/shape.

The carrier may further include thigh width adjusters comprising thigh width adapters coupled to the thigh supports where the thigh width adapters can adjust the width of the bucket seat.

The carrier may also include a neck support configurable in an inside folded down position in which the neck support is positioned in the child carrying area to support a child's neck. The neck support may also be configured in an extended position to provide additional carrier length and support for a larger child, or additional neck support and coverage for a sleeping baby. The neck support may also be configurable in an outside folded down position.

According to one embodiment, a method of configuring a child carrier can comprise: for a child to be carried, adjusting a bucket seat of the child carrier to a child's size and positioning the child in a child carrying area of the child carrier such that the child is supported in an ergonomic spread squat position. Adjusting the bucket seat to the child's size can include configuring a depth of the bucket seat by coupling base width adjusters of the child carrier to a waist belt of the child carrier at positions for a base width setting corresponding to the child's size and adjusting thigh width adapters to adjust a width of the bucket seat. Configuring the depth the bucket seat may further comprise rotating the base width adjusters to open or close darts. The method may further include configuring an adjustable neck support to fill a portion of the child carrying area and support a child's neck.

Embodiments described herein provide an advantage over prior carriers because the ergonomic bucket seat gradually adjusts to a growing baby from newborn to toddler, to ensure baby is seated in an ergonomic spread-squat, natural "M shape" position at multiple stages.

As an additional advantage, embodiments described herein can provide an adjustable seat shape that does not require adding to or removing structure from the carrier to change the seat shape. For example, some embodiments can accommodate infants and larger children without requiring an infant insert for an infant.

Embodiments described herein can provide another advantage by allowing for easy adjustment of the carrier seat shape without adding or removing panels from the seat.

Embodiments described herein can provide another advantage by providing a carrier with a wearable length that can be adjusted without requiring complicated mechanisms to extend the overall length of the carrier.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a better understanding of these and other objects of the invention, reference will be made to the following detailed description of the invention which is to be read in association with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

FIG. **1** is a diagrammatic representation of an adult wearer carrying a child in an adjustable carrier;

FIG. **2**A is a diagrammatic representation of an inside view of one embodiment of an adjustable baby carrier;

FIG. **2**B is a diagrammatic representation of an outside view of one embodiment of adjustable carrier;

FIG. **3**A is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a base width adjuster in a first base width adjuster configuration;

FIG. **3**B is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a base width adjuster in a second base width adjuster configuration;

FIG. **3**C is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a base width adjuster in a third base width adjuster configuration;

FIG. **4**A is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a carrier with thigh width adjusters in a first thigh width adjuster configuration;

FIG. **4**B is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a carrier with thigh width adjusters in a second thigh width adjuster configuration;

FIG. **4**C is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a carrier with thigh width adjusters in a third thigh width adjuster configuration;

FIG. **5**A is a diagrammatic representation of another view one embodiment of a carrier with thigh width adjusters in the first thigh width adjuster configuration;

FIG. **5**B is a diagrammatic representation of another view of one embodiment of a carrier with thigh width adjusters in the third thigh width adjuster configuration;

FIG. **6**A is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a carrier with bucket seat in a first seat configuration;

FIG. **6**B is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a carrier with bucket seat in a second seat configuration;

FIG. **6**C is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a carrier with bucket seat in a third seat configuration;

FIG. **7**A is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a carrier with a neck support in a first neck support configuration;

FIG. **7**B is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a carrier with a neck support in a second neck support configuration;

FIG. **7**C is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a carrier with a neck support in a third neck support configuration;

FIG. **8** is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a wearer wearing a carrier in a back carry position;

FIG. **9** is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of a wearer wearing a carrier in a side carry configuration.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Child carriers and related methods and the various features and advantageous details thereof are explained more fully with reference to the nonlimiting embodiments that are illustrated in the accompanying drawings and detailed in the following description. Descriptions of well-known starting materials, processing techniques, components and equipment are omitted so as not to unnecessarily obscure the invention in detail. It should be understood, however, that the detailed description and the specific examples, while indicating preferred embodiments of the invention, are given by way of illustration only and not by way of limitation. Various substitutions, modifications, additions and/or rearrangements within the spirit and/or scope of the underlying inventive concept will become apparent to those skilled in the art from this disclosure.

The present disclosure relates to child carriers that allow a child, including an infant, to be carried in a manner that supports the child and maintains the child's pelvis and thighs in a preferred ergonomic position through a range of ages. In particular, embodiments described herein provide carriers that support the child's bottom, pelvis and thighs in a desired position. Embodiments described herein also allow a child to be carried on the front or back or to the side of the person carrying the child. The carrier can be worn by a user in front of, in back of or to the side of the wearer with the child's weight carried near the wearer's center of gravity and close to the wearer's front, back or side in a front, back or side position, respectively.

The adjustable child carrier can be configured to accommodate children of a wide range of sizes in a front, rear or side carrying position while supporting the child's hips, pelvis, bottom and both upper thighs when the child is being carried in various orientations. For example, embodiments of a child carrier as disclosed herein may provide an adjustable child carrier usable with a newborn children (infant) (e.g., around 7 pounds) and additionally with children all the way to up to around 45 pounds or more.

In accordance with one aspect of the present disclosure, a carrier includes a bucket seat for a child and one or more adjustment areas that when adjusted serve to adjust a depth of the seat bucket and a height of the child carrier. When adjusted to a newborn setting, the carrier is configured such that the depth of the seat bucket may be at a maximum. Conversely, when adjusted to its maximum, or largest size, setting (e.g., a setting for the largest child the carrier is designed to accommodate) the depth of the seat bucket may be at a minimum. When the depth of the bucket seat is at a maximum the thighs may be supported such that the angle of the thighs of the child relative to the coronal plane may be greatest and when the depth of the bucket seat is at a minimum the thighs may be supported such that the angle of the thighs of the child relative to the coronal plane may be the smallest. Similarly, then, the bucket seat is at a maximum, the carrier may be configured such that the carrier maintains a child carried therein with relatively more curve in their spine than when the bucket seat is at a minimum depth.

A child carrier may include one or more adjustment points that work alone or in cooperation to adjust the shape of the bucket seat area provided by the child carrier. These adjustment points may include base width adjusters adapted to adjust the width of the main panel of the baby carrier at a point where the main panel is coupled to the waistband of the carrier. The adjustment of the width of the base of the main panel may serve to provide maximum shape for the bucket area and thus maximum depth of the bucket seat area when adjusted to the narrowest setting for newborn babies and the minimal depth of the bucket seat area for the largest children when adjusted to the widest setting.

Another adjustment point provided by embodiments may be thigh width adjusters. These thigh width adjusters are configured to adjust the width of the main panel of the baby carrier at a point in the main panel configured to accommodate the thighs of a child. The thigh width of the main panel may be smallest at the tightest or smallest setting of the thigh width adjusters for newborn babies and widest at its largest or loosest setting (which may be fully released or not engaged) for the largest children (e.g., that the carrier is designed to accommodate).

These adjustment points may also work in cooperation to adjust the baby carrier. For example, the thigh width adjusters may also serve as more granular adjustment for the bucket area within the range of gross adjustment provided by the base width adjuster.

The carrier of certain embodiments may also be configured to adjust in height. In certain embodiments, the length of the physical carrier from the top edge of the waist belt at the center to the top edge of carrier at the center remains consistent, however, the wearable height changes depending on the setting of the bucket seat size. With the base width at its smallest/narrowest setting the bucket seat is deeper consuming more of the carrier length measurement, thus leaving less measurement for the wearable height while with the base width at is largest/widest setting the bucket seat is shallow consuming less of the carrier length measurement, thus leaving more measurement for the wearable height.

Embodiments of such carriers may also include an adjustable neck support. Such a neck support or collar that may be positioned according to the direction the child is facing, the size of the child, or other criteria. The adjustable neck support may be rotatable relative to the main panel such that the neck support may be extended increasing the center height of the carrier giving additional back or neck support for a child (depending on the size of the child). The neck support may also be folded back away from the wearer to reduce the height of the carrier (e.g., for non-infant children). The neck support may also be folded down into the carrier toward the wearer such that it may reside inside the child carrying area to give an infant or other child additional head or neck support.

Embodiments as disclosed herein may therefore provide an adjustable child carrier configured to accommodate children of a wide range of sizes in a front, rear or side carrying position. Embodiments may thus be sized appropriately to carry an infant without the use of an additional infant insert. Configured according to such a setting, the carrier may be adapted for placement of a child in a child carrying area of the child carrier with the infant's knees raised. In one embodiment, when adjusted to accommodate an infant the carrier is adapted to support the infant in a position with the infant's femur at an angle of 90-120 degrees from the coronal plane. Additionally, the carrier can be adapted to support the infant in a position with the infant's knees at 45-60 degrees from the median plane. In particular embodiments, the carrier can be adapted to promote a spread-squat-position.

The carrier can be ergonomic for the wearer as well. A padded waist belt may provide lumbar support and may

cooperate with shoulder straps (that may attach to the same or opposite sides of the carrier) that can form a configurable harness that can position the carrier in a front, side or back carry position while distributing the weight evenly to the wearer. The carrier may be adjusted such that the child is positioned close to the wearer's center of gravity which distributes the child's weight evenly. In some embodiments, the harness may be adjusted so that a majority of the child's weight is transferred to the wearer's hips.

FIG. **1** is a diagrammatic representation of an adult wearer carrying a child in an adjustable carrier **100**. Adjustable carrier comprises a main body **110** coupled to a waist belt **115**. Main body **110** includes a torso support portion **130** and a bucket seat **125**. The torso support portion **130** is configured for supporting the upper body of the child while in the carrier **100**. The seat **125** is configured for supporting the legs, hips and posterior of the child in an ergonomic position. As discussed in more detail below, embodiments of adjustable carrier **100** can include various adjustments such that carrier **100** can be adjusted as the child grows to support the child in an ergonomic spread squat position appropriate for the weight or size of the child with the child's pelvis, bottom and thighs all being supported. In an ergonomic spread squat position (also known as the "frog leg", "frog", "squat spread" or "M" position) (indicated by line **101**) the flexion at the hip joint is at least 90° and in some cases is 110° to 120° from the coronal plane, and the spreading angle can average at approximately 45-55° from the median plane. As carrier **100** is adjustable, the angle of the hips and spread can depend on the settings of the carrier **100** and developmental stage of the child.

In one embodiment, the carrier can be adapted to support the child in a position with the child's femur approximately 90° to 120° (or other elevated position) from the coronal plane and to position the child's knees with an amount of spreading. The amount of spreading may depend on the developmental stage of the child and orientation with a newborn having less than 30°, then approximately 30°, then approximately 35°-40° and so on so, such that the final spread is approximately 40°-45°, though other amounts of spreading may be achieved including (e.g., for example approximately 55°). In one embodiment, the spreading may be at least 20° degrees from the median plane. The child's weight can be distributed across the child's bottom, thighs and back so that the sacrum does not bear too much weight and the child can rest with a more naturally curved "C" spine in a spread squat position that is believed to be better for pelvic development. It can be noted, however, that the child can be positioned in any comfortable position, preferably emphasizing a supportive posture rather than a posture where the child is primarily sitting on his or her sacrum.

FIG. **2**A is a diagrammatic representation of an inside view of one embodiment of an adjustable baby carrier **100** and FIG. **2**B is a diagrammatic representation of an outside view of one embodiment of adjustable carrier **100** (FIGS. **2**A and **2**B are referred to collectively herein as FIG. **2**). Carrier **100** comprises a main body **110** coupled to a waist belt **115**. Main body **110** includes an upper torso support portion **130**, a seat portion **120** and thigh support areas **140**. Carrier **100** may also include shoulder straps **190** and a chest strap **195**. A child can be supported in a child carrying area created by the main body **110** in cooperation with the wearer's torso. Torso support portion **130** is configured to support upper body of the child while in the carrier while seat portion **120** cooperates with adjustable thigh support areas **140** to form an adjustable bucket seat **125** (FIG. **1**) adapted to ergonomically position the child's legs and hips. Waist belt **115** and shoulder straps **190** provide a harness that distributes the child's weight to the wearer. Chest strap **195** can be used to secure left and right shoulder straps together.

Bucket seat portion **120** and thigh support areas **140** are adapted to pass from the outer side of the child carrying area (the side away from the wearer's torso) to inner side to form supportive and adjustable bucket seat **125**. Inner end portions of thigh support areas **140** can be selectively coupled to waist belt **115** by base width adjusters **150** that are configurable for adjusting the width and depth of the bucket seat **125**. Thigh width adjusters **160** can also be provided to provide additional width adjustment. Thus, the bucket seat **120** can be adjusted to accommodate a range of ages/sizes/weights.

The supportive and adjustable bucket seat **125** can have a generally concave (e.g., "C" shape) inner profile from the inward side to the outward side and from right to left. Seat side edges **142**, **144** (formed by the edges of thigh support areas **140**) can be higher than the center of the seat and can be spaced such that the side edges pass under and around the child's thighs at a distance from the child's hips such that the child's legs (e.g., above the knee) do not dangle down. In some embodiments, thigh support areas **140** may provide additional support. In particular, in certain embodiments the thigh support areas **140** may include gathers, elastic material or another type of biasing material.

Bucket seat portion **120** comprises a seat center portion **122** that is coupled to waist belt **115** or other portion of carrier **100** at one end and to upper torso support portion **130** at the other end. Seat center portion **122** may be formed from a single piece of material, or may be formed from multiple pieces of material, multiple layers of materials, or multiple materials. The junction between upper torso support portion **130** and seat center portion **122** may be a substantially seamless transition. For example, in one embodiment, a center panel **123** may form seat center portion **122** and an upper torso center panel such that seat center portion **122** and the upper torso center panel comprise a unitary construction of one or more layers of material. In other embodiments, the junction may include seams, edges or other features delineating between upper torso support portion **130** and seat center portion **122**.

Thigh support areas **140** are disposed to the left and right of seat center portion **122**. Thigh support areas **140** may be selectively coupled to waist belt **115** by base width adjusters **150** such that thigh support areas **140** pass under and around the child's thighs at a distance from the child's hips where the portion of the thigh support areas **140** that pass under and around the child's thighs is higher than the child's bottom so that the child's knees are lifted. The thigh support areas **140** can have sufficient stiffness such that the child's thighs may be encouraged to spread by the thigh support areas **140** or wearer's torso. In one embodiment, thigh support areas **140** provide areas of thigh padding **141** to support the child's thighs.

Base width adjusters **150** may be coupled to respective thigh support areas **140**. In one embodiment, base width adjusters **150** may comprise flaps or tabs coupled to thigh support areas **140**. In the illustrated embodiment, base width adjusters **150** are coupled to a respective thigh support areas **140** by virtue of being part of the same thigh support straps. However, other configurations may also be used. In any event, base width adjusters **150** can be selectively coupled to waist belt **115** to couple thigh support areas **140** of main body **110** to waist belt **115**.

Base width adjusters **150** can be used to adjust the width of the base of main body **110** where it connects to waist belt

115. A fastening mechanism **151** of base width adjusters **150**, such as a hook and loop material, buttons, snaps, zipper, etc., can cooperate with a corresponding fastening mechanism **117** on waist belt **115** to couple thigh support areas **140** to waist belt **115**. The fastening mechanisms **117**, **151** are configured such that the base width adjusters **150** may be coupled to the waist belt **115** in multiple positions or throughout a range of positions.

The width of bucket seat **125** proximate to waist belt **115** can be adjusted by changing the position at which base width adjusters **150** are secured to waist belt **115**. For example, moving the bottom ends of base width adjusters **150** laterally inboard (rotating base width adjusters **150** inward) decreases the width of main body **110** at the point main body **110** meets waist band **115** and may serve to decrease the width of the bucket seat where thigh support areas **140** pass under the child's thighs. Moving the ends of base width adjusters **150** more laterally outboard (rotating base width adjusters **150** laterally outward) increases the width of the main body **110** where it is coupled to the waist belt **115** and may increase the bucket seat width where the thigh support areas **140** pass under the child's thighs.

Base width adjusters **150** can be used to control the depth of the bucket seat **125**. In a minimum (or narrowest) base width setting the base width adjusters **150** may be fastened to the waist belt **115** such that they are maximally proximate one another toward the center axis of the waist belt **115** (given the range or number of positions possible). In this minimum base width setting carrier **100** is configured such that the depth of the seat bucket **125** may be at a maximum. In a maximum (or widest) base width setting, the base width adjusters **150** may be fastened to the waist belt **115** such that they are maximally distal one another away from the center axis of the waist belt **115** (given the range or number of positions possible). In this maximum (or widest) base width setting, carrier **100** is configured such that the depth of the bucket seat **125** may be at a minimum.

Bucket seat portion **120** may include one or more shaping members to facilitate shaping the bucket seat. In one embodiment, bucket seat portion **120** includes gusset portions **170** that span the gap between the respective inner edges **146**, **148** of thigh support areas **140** and the laterally outer edges **126**, **128** of seat center portion **122**. Gusset portions **170** may be fastened to seat center portion **122** at or proximate to laterally outer edges **126**, **128** and to thigh support areas at or proximate to laterally inner edges **146**, **148** to form a first dart having a dart apex **174** generally pointing toward the bottom of the bucket seat **125** and dart legs defined by the connections at or proximate to edges **126**, **146** and a second dart having a dart apex **175** and dart legs defined by the connections at or proximate to edges **128**,**148**. The dart legs can be closed or opened to gather or release the darts. In particular, by adjusting base width adjusters **150** to decrease the angle between seat center portion **122** and thigh support areas **140**, the dart legs can be closed and darts deepened. Consequently, bucket seat **125** can bulge further and take on a deeper curve. Conversely, adjusting base width adjusters **150** to increase the angle between seat center portion **122** and thigh support areas **140** opens the dart legs and makes the darts formed by gusset portions **170** shallower. Consequently, the bucket seat **125** formed by carrier **100** will be shallower. While, in the above embodiment, the shaping members are darts, other shaping mechanisms can be used to control the fullness of bucket seat **125** including, but not limited to pleats, gathers or tucks.

Referring briefly to FIGS. **3**A, **3**B and **3**C (collectively FIG. **3**), FIG. **3** illustrates the operation of one embodiment of base width adjusters **150**. In FIG. **3**, the base width adjusters **150** can be secured to waist belt **115** to either side of the lateral centerline of main body **110** to adjust the width of carrier **100** at thigh support areas **140**. In the embodiment illustrated, hook and loop material is used to secure the base width adjusters **150** to waist belt **115** on the side of waist belt **115** sandwiched between waist belt **115** and the wearer. This can increase the hold of the hook and loop material when in use because of the pressure against the base width adjusters **150**.

In the embodiment of FIG. **3**, each base width adjuster **150** is secured to waist belt **115** in one of three positions **154**, **156**, **158**. These positions may correspond to particular size ranges of children. In FIG. **3**A, base width adjusters **150** are secured at positions **154** corresponding to a minimum (or narrowest) base width setting. In FIG. **3**B, base width adjusters **150** are secured at positions **156** corresponding to a moderate base width setting. In FIG. **3**C, base width adjusters **150** are secured at positions **158** corresponding to a maximum (or widest) base width setting.

It can be noted that base width adjusters **150** as illustrated essentially rotate from a pivot point as they are adjusted. Thus, not only does the lateral position of the attachment position change, the vertical position does as well (e.g., positions **154**, **156** and **158** for a base width adjuster **150** are both laterally and vertically displaced from each other). The use of a rotational motion like this provides a greater change in bucket depth for a given lateral change. Other embodiments, however, could use a more linear motion (e.g., in which the attachment positions are horizontally aligned). Furthermore, positions **154**, **156** and **158** are provided by way of example. In the embodiment illustrated, base width adjusters **150** can be coupled to fastening mechanism **117** in a continuous range of positions. Other embodiments may provide discrete attachment points.

Referring to FIG. **3**A, base width adjusters **150** are fastened to the waist belt **115** such that they are maximally proximate one another toward the center axis of the waist belt **115** (given the range or number of positions possible). However, because laterally inner edges **146**, **148** of thigh support areas **140** are drawn close to laterally outer edges **126**, **128** (hidden by gusset portion **170**) of seat center support part **122**, gusset portions **170** form deeply curved darts. Put another way, by fastening base width adjusters **150** to waist belt **115** such that they are maximally proximate one another, the laterally outer edges of gusset portions **170** may be drawn toward the laterally inner edges of gusset portions **170**, creating a corresponding greater curve or dart shapes in gusset portions **170**. This serves to shape bucket seat portion **120** to increase the depth of the bucket seat portion.

Referring to FIG. **3**C, the base width adjusters **150** are secured at positions **158** corresponding to a maximum (or widest) base width setting. In this configuration, the laterally inner edges **146**, **148** are rotated away from the respective laterally outer edges **126**, **148** of FIG. **3**C. In other words, the dart legs are opened to release the darts and create less shape (curve) at the end of the gusset portions **170**. By fastening base width adjusters **150** to waist belt **115** such that they are maximally distal one another (again, given the range of possible setting for coupling base width adjusters **150** to waist belt **115**), tension may be maintained on outer edges of gusset portions **170** such that gusset portions **170** remain relatively flat. As such, bucket seat portion **120** may be maintained in a relatively flat or less shaped configuration, serving to minimize the depth of the bucket seat **125**.

Base width adjusters **150** primarily adjust the width of the seat proximate to waist belt **115**. However, moving away

from waist belt **115**, the seat (edges **142**, **144**) may flare out. With reference to FIG. **2**, thigh width adjusters **160** may be provided to adjust the width of the seat away from waist belt **115**. In particular, thigh width adjusters **160** may be adapted to adjust the width of the bucket seat where edges **142**, **144** of thigh supports **140** pass under the child's thighs. Thigh width adjusters **160** can be used to pull in thigh support areas **140** so that thigh support areas **140** do not extend past the child's knee and thus prevent thigh support areas **140** from straightening the child's legs or overspreading the child's legs.

In certain embodiments, thigh width adjusters **160** may be coupled to respective thigh support areas **140** and are configured to adjust the width of the carrier at the level of thigh support areas **140**. In accordance with one embodiment, each thigh width adjuster **160** may be a piece of material(s) (webbing or other material) that is coupled at a first end **162** to the respective thigh support area **140** proximate to support portions **141** and includes a second end that can be selectively coupled to main body **110** (e.g., to seat center portion **122** or elsewhere). The thigh width adjusters **160** can act as a drawstring system, one on each side, to adjust the width of carrier **100** at thigh level by pulling the thigh support areas **140** laterally inward and thereby further adjusting the width of carrier **100** at the child's thighs.

Referring briefly to FIGS. **4**A, **4**B and **4**C (collectively FIG. **4**) and FIGS. **5**A and **5**B (collectively FIG. **5**), the operation of one embodiment of thigh width adjusters **160** is illustrated. Thigh width adjusters **160** can be selectively coupled to bucket seat portion **120** to pull thigh support areas **140** laterally inward a desired amount. FIG. **4**, for example, illustrates the thigh width adjuster **160** secured in three positions corresponding to a narrowest (tightest) setting (FIG. **4**A, FIG. **5**A), a moderate setting (FIG. **4**B) and a widest (loosest) setting (FIG. **4**C, FIG. **5**B).

In the embodiment illustrated, each thigh width adjuster **160** includes a strip of material that is fastened at first end **162** to the outside of a respective thigh support area **140** proximate to the thigh padding **141** (e.g., near the respective outer edge **142**, **144**). The thigh width adjuster **160** runs laterally inboard through a fabric tunnel **172** to a distal portion **164** that includes a plurality of spaced thigh width adjuster fasteners **166** (e.g., snaps, buttons, hook and loop, etc.) that can be selectively fastened to a corresponding fastener on bucket seat portion **120** of main body **110**.

In FIG. **4**A, the thigh width adjuster fastener **166** that is closest to the respective thigh support area **140** is fastened to the corresponding fastener on the bucket seat portion **120**. This position corresponds to a narrowest thigh width adjuster setting and, as illustrated in FIG. **5**A, thigh support area **140** is gathered inward to decrease the width of carrier **100** at the child's thighs. Conversely, fastening the fastener **166** that is farthest from the respective thigh support area **140** to bucket seat portion **120**, as shown in FIG. **4**C, may achieve the widest setting of the thigh width adjusters **160**. When the thigh width adjusters **160** are in the widest setting position of FIG. **4**C, the outer edges of the thigh support areas **140** can spread out as illustrated in FIG. **5**B, thus widening carrier **100** at the child's thighs.

As can be understood from the foregoing, the base width adjusters **150** and the thigh width adjusters **160** may work in cooperation to adjust the carrier **100**. In accordance with one embodiment, base width adjusters **150** can be used for adjustment of seat depth and provide a gross adjustment of seat width, while thigh width adjusters **160** may serve as granular adjustments for width within the range of gross adjustment provided by the base width adjusters **150**. For example, at a particular setting of the base width adjusters **150** of the carrier **100**, the width of the carrier **100** at thigh support areas **140** may be narrowest with the thigh width adjusters **160** at their smallest or narrowest (tightest) setting and largest with the thigh width adjusters **160** at their widest (loosest) setting.

Carrier **100** may also adjust in height based on other settings of carrier **100**. In particular, adjusting base width adjusters **150** adjusts the wearable back height (length from bottom of bucket seat **125** to top edge **132**). This occurs because the length of the physical carrier material from the top edge **116** of the waist belt **115** at center to the top edge **132** of main body **110** at center remains consistent such that the wearable back height changes depending on the setting of the bucket seat size. A deeper bucket consumes more length of material between edges **116** and **132**, thus leaving less measurement for the wearable height On the other hand, a shallower bucket consumes less length of material between edges **116** and **132**, thus leaving more measurement for the wearable height.

Thus, adjusted to a smallest child mode (e.g., an infant mode) (base width at its smallest/narrowest setting) the bucket seat **125** may be deeper consuming more of the carrier length measurement, thus leaving less measurement for the wearable height (length from bottom of bucket seat **125** to top edge of carrier center panel **123** at center is at its shortest height). Adjusted to a largest child mode (e.g., a toddler mode) (base width at its largest/widest setting) the bucket seat **125** is shallow consuming less of the carrier length measurement, thus leaving more measurement for the wearable height (length from bottom of bucket seat **125** to top edge of carrier center panel **123** at center at its longest height). The carrier thus adjusts to the height of the child based on adjustment to the bucket seat.

Carrier **100** may be adjusted to provide ergonomic support for the child regardless of the size of the child through a supported range. In accordance with one embodiment, carrier **100** can be set for an infant with base width adjusters **150** and thigh width adjusters **160** set at their narrowest settings. In this configuration, the bucket seat will be at its deepest with higher walls at the thigh support areas **140** lifting the child's thighs and knees to a greater angle and into a spread squat position appropriate for that size child. Similarly, carrier **100** can be set for the largest child with the base width adjusters **150** and the thigh width adjusters **160** at their widest settings. In this configuration, the bucket seat may be at its shallowest depth with lower walls at the thigh support areas **140** lifting the child's thighs and knees to a lesser angle and into a spread squat position appropriate for a larger sized child.

Thus, the adjustable bucket seat is configurable in a plurality of configurations having different seat bucket depths and seat bucket widths. The different configurations can be adapted to support a child in a corresponding size range in a spread squat position. For example, in one embodiment, bucket seat can have a first configuration adapted to ergonomically carry a child of 20-24 inches (generally corresponding to an infant of 0-3 months and over 7 pounds) in a spread squat position appropriate for the infant without requiring an infant insert. Furthermore, the carrier can have a second configuration adapted to ergonomically carry a child of 24-28 inches (generally corresponding to an older baby of 3-9 months) in a spread squat position appropriate for that child's size. In addition, the carrier, in this example, can have a third configuration adapted to ergonomically carry a child of 28 inches or

greater (generally corresponding to an older baby or toddler of 9-48 months (up to the carrying capacity of the carrier or the wearer)). The first configuration can correspond to the base width being at the narrowest setting (deepest bucket seat) (an infant mode), the second configuration can correspond to the base width being at a moderate setting and the third configuration can correspond to the base width being at a widest setting (shallowest bucket seat) (a toddler mode). It can be noted that the ranges provided above are provided by way of example and not limitation. Furthermore, the seat may have other configurations.

The user can thus adjust the bucket seat **125** to support the child in an ergonomic spread squat position appropriate for the weight or size of the child with the child's pelvis, bottom and thighs all being supported. The child's weight can be supported so that the child is squatting in the seat rather than sitting with the child's weight primarily on the sacrum. The child can be supported with the knees higher than the bottom, in some cases higher than 90 degrees. The bucket seat **125** can be adjusted to form a sling or pouch that is wider than the child's hips in which the child's bottom is supported. The thigh support areas **140** can be adjusted pass under and around the child's thighs at a distance from the child's hips such that the portions of thigh support areas **140** that pass under and around the child's thighs are higher than the child's bottom to lift the child's knees. The thigh support areas **140** can have sufficient stiffness to encourage the child's thighs to spread by the thigh support straps or wearer's torso.

FIGS. **6**A, **6**B and **6**C (collectively FIG. **6**) are diagrammatic representations of one embodiment of carrier **100** adjusted to accommodate various sized children. FIG. **6**A corresponds to the minimum base width setting of FIG. **3**A, FIG. **6**B corresponds to a moderate base width setting of FIG. **3**B and FIG. **6**C corresponds to the maximum base width setting of FIG. **3**C. Through adjustment of base width adjusters **150** and thigh width adjusters **160**, the width of bucket seat **125** and the depth of bucket seat **125** (indicated by depth **202**) can be configured. Furthermore, because the length of material of carrier **100** available to support the back depends on the depth of bucket seat **125**, adjusting base width adjusters **150** also adjusts the minimum wearable height **204** of carrier **100**. As illustrated in FIG. **6**, the wearable height **204** of carrier **100** increases with decreasing bucket depth.

With all settings set for a small baby, the seat center portion **122**, gusset portions **170** and thigh support areas **140** cooperate to form a deep bucket seat **125** as illustrated in FIG. **6**A. The deep bucket seat **125** with higher walls at the thigh (under the knee) tends to lift the child's knees (indicated by line **210**) to the appropriate spread squat position and promotes rounding of the back into a c-shape (indicated by line **212**). Moreover, a deeper bucket seat **125** shortens the wearable height **204**. Thus, the configuration of FIG. **6**A may be suitable for infants. As the child grows, the child's spine should naturally straighten and the child will require less knee support. Base width adjusters **150** and thigh width adjusters can be adjusted to widen bucket seat **125** and provide additional back support length to support the child's lengthening spine. As shown in FIG. **6**B and FIG. **6**C, for example, carrier **100** the bucket seat **125** may be adjusted to provide less knee lift, but enough to maintain an appropriate spread squat position (e.g., for an older baby in FIG. **6**B and for a toddler in FIG. **6**C) and allow the child to rest with a straighter back.

Returning to FIG. **2**, carrier **100** may also include an adjustable neck support **180**. Adjustable neck support **180** may be extended to increase the center height of carrier **100**, giving additional back or neck support for a child (depending on the size of the child). The neck support **180** may also be folded back away from the wearer to reduce the height of the carrier (e.g., for non-infant children). The neck support **180** may also be folded down toward the wearer such that it may reside inside the child carrying area to give an infant or other child additional head or neck support. The size, shape and position of neck support **180** can be selected so that neck support **180** will fit behind and support the average infant's neck when neck support **180** is folded into the carrier.

Complementary extended position securing mechanisms and complementary non-extended position securing mechanisms such as, but not limited to, buttons, snaps, d-rings and clips or hooks, patches of hook and loop material or other securing mechanism, can be provided so that adjustable neck support **180** can be secured in an extended position or folded back and secured in a non-extended position.

FIGS. **7**A, **7**B and **7**C illustrate one embodiment of adjustable neck support **180** in an inside folded down configuration, an extended configuration and an outside folded down configuration respectively. In the inside folded down position of FIG. **7**A, adjustable neck support **180** can be adapted to partially fill the inside of the carrying area of carrier **100** to give infants with insufficient head control more head and neck support (see also FIG. **6**A). Adjustable neck support **180** can also be configured in the outside folded down configuration of FIG. **7**B to provide additional volume in the carrier as the child grows (see also FIGS. **6**B and **6**C). Neck support **180** can be configured in the extended mode (flipped up) as illustrated in FIG. **7**C to increase the center back length, giving additional back support for toddlers or head and neck support for non-infant babies. Neck support **180** may be positioned according to the size of the child, or other criteria.

According to one embodiment, adjustable neck support **180** may be joined to main body **110** proximate to top edge **132**. The coupling may form a generally horizontal hinge that allows adjustable neck support **180** to flip over edge **132** from the inside folded down configuration to the outside folded down configuration. In the embodiment illustrated, adjustable neck support **180** may be secured in the inside folded down configuration and outside folded down configuration using first set of neck support fasteners **182** and may be secured in the extended configuration using a second set of neck support fasteners **184** located above the first set of neck support fasteners **182**. Preferably, but not necessarily, the neck support fasteners are located on the outside of main body **110**.

With reference again to FIG. **2**, shoulder straps **190** can be configured to form a loop and attach on either side of the lateral centerline of carrier **100**. In other embodiments, shoulder straps may be worn in an "x" configuration. Each shoulder strap **190** may connect to upper torso support portion **130** at one or more locations to pull upper torso support portion **130** toward the wearer. A shoulder strap may also couple to main body **110** of carrier **100** above thigh support areas **140** or other portion of carrier **100** on the same side, or an opposite side, of the centerline where the shoulder strap **190** is coupled to the upper torso support portion **130**. Shoulder straps **190** may be adjustable and, in some cases, can be re-configured to support multiple carrier positions, such as a front carry, side carry position (hip carry) or back carry position.

Waist belt **115** may have a lumbar support portion **119** and be configured to rest on the wearer's hips. Preferably, the harness is configured so that the child's weight is evenly

distributed to the wearer's hips and shoulders and even more preferably such that the child's weight is distributed evenly to the wearer's hips and shoulders and in some cases primarily to the wearer's hips rather than shoulders. In some cases, 70 percent or more of the child's weight can be distributed to the wearer's hips through waist belt **115**, thereby promoting wearer comfort and diminishing wearer fatigue.

In accordance with one aspect of the present disclosure, carrier **100** can be a soft structured carrier that incorporates padding, stitching and fabrics to provide structure. Main body **110**, including upper torso support portion **130**, bucket seat portion **120**, thigh supports **140** and thigh width adjusters **150** can be flexible and can be formed primarily of natural or synthetic fibers without a rigid frame. As would be understood by a person of ordinary skill in the art, however, some components, such as buckles, fasteners, etc. of a soft structured carrier may be formed of hard plastics, metals and the like.

Carrier **100** may include one or more panels formed from a single piece of material or multiple pieces of material, multiple layers of materials, or multiple materials. For example, in some embodiments, upper torso support portion **130** may be formed with an inner layer selected for comfort against a child's skin and an outer layer selected for breathability, fashion, stain resistance, etc. Upper torso support portion **130** may have straight edges, tapered edges for an area of increased width or decreased width, or otherwise configured for comfort or security of a child or a user. Similarly, bucket seat portion **120** may include one or more panels formed from a single piece of material, or may be formed from multiple pieces of material, multiple layers of materials, or multiple materials. The junction between upper torso support portion **130** and bucket seat portion **120** may be a substantially seamless transition. In one embodiment, the center of upper torso support portion **130** and center of bucket seat portion **120** may be formed from a unitary center panel **123** (of one or more layers) attached to side panels that form the laterally outer portions of upper torso support portion **130** and thigh support areas **140**. Inner layers may be selected for comfort against a child's skin and outer layers selected for breathability, fashion, stain resistance, etc. In some embodiments, the center portion may be selected for comfort and lateral portions selected for breathability, security, etc.

It can be noted that carrier **100** may support a number of carrying positions. FIG. **1**, for example, is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of an adult wearer carrying a child in an inward facing front carry position. FIG. **8** is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of an adult wearer carrying a child in carrier **100** in an inward facing back wearing configuration. FIG. **9** is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of an adult wearer carrying a child in carrier **100** in a side (hip) wearing configuration.

As used herein, the terms "comprises," "comprising," "includes," "including," "has," "having" or any other variation thereof, are intended to cover a non-exclusive inclusion. For example, a process, article, or apparatus that comprises a list of elements is not necessarily limited to only those elements but may include other elements not expressly listed or inherent to such process, article, or apparatus. Further, unless expressly stated to the contrary, "or" refers to an inclusive or and not to an exclusive or. For example, a condition A or B is satisfied by any one of the following: A is true (or present) and B is false (or not present), A is false (or not present) and B is true (or present), and both A and B are true (or present). As used herein, a term preceded by "a" or "an" (and "the" when antecedent basis is "a" or "an") includes both singular and plural of such term, unless clearly indicated otherwise (i.e., that the reference "a" or "an" clearly indicates only the singular or only the plural). Also, as used in the description herein and throughout the meaning of "in" includes "in" and "on" unless the context clearly dictates otherwise.

Additionally, any examples or illustrations given herein are not to be regarded in any way as restrictions on, limits to, or express definitions of, any term or terms with which they are utilized. Instead, these examples or illustrations are to be regarded as being described with respect to one particular embodiment and as illustrative only. Those of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that any term or terms with which these examples or illustrations are utilized will encompass other embodiments which may or may not be given therewith or elsewhere in the specification and all such embodiments are intended to be included within the scope of that term or terms. Language designating such nonlimiting examples and illustrations include, but is not limited to: "for example," "for instance," "e.g.," "in one embodiment."

Reference throughout this specification to "one embodiment", "an embodiment", or "a specific embodiment" or similar terminology means that a particular feature, structure, or characteristic described in connection with the embodiment is included in at least one embodiment and may not necessarily be present in all embodiments. Thus, respective appearances of the phrases "in one embodiment", "in an embodiment", or "in a specific embodiment" or similar terminology in various places throughout this specification are not necessarily referring to the same embodiment. Furthermore, the particular features, structures, or characteristics of any particular embodiment may be combined in any suitable manner with one or more other embodiments. It is to be understood that other variations and modifications of the embodiments described and illustrated herein are possible in light of the teachings herein and are to be considered as part of the spirit and scope of the invention.

In the description herein, numerous specific details are provided, such as examples of components and/or methods, to provide a thorough understanding of embodiments of the invention. One skilled in the relevant art will recognize, however, that an embodiment may be able to be practiced without one or more of the specific details, or with other apparatus, systems, assemblies, methods, components, materials, parts, and/or the like. In other instances, well-known structures, components, systems, materials, or operations are not specifically shown or described in detail to avoid obscuring aspects of embodiments of the invention. While the invention may be illustrated by using a particular embodiment, this is not and does not limit the invention to any particular embodiment and a person of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that additional embodiments are readily understandable and are a part of this invention.

It will also be appreciated that one or more of the elements depicted in the drawings/figures can also be implemented in a more separated or integrated manner, or even removed or rendered as inoperable in certain cases, as is useful in accordance with a particular application. Additionally, any signal arrows in the drawings/Figures should be considered only as exemplary, and not limiting, unless otherwise specifically noted.

The representative embodiments, which have been described in detail herein, have been presented by way of example and not by way of limitation. It will be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes may be made

in the form and details of the described embodiments resulting in equivalent embodiments that remain within the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A child carrier comprising:

a waist belt adapted for securing about a wearer's hips;

a main body coupled to the waist belt, the main body adapted to form a child carrying area in cooperation with a wearer's torso, the main body comprising:

a torso support portion configured for supporting at least of the torso of a child; and

an adjustable bucket seat configurable in a plurality of bucket seat configurations, each of the plurality of bucket seat configurations having a different a) bucket seat depth and b) bucket seat width and adapted to support a child in a corresponding size range in a spread squat position, the adjustable bucket seat comprising:

a seat center portion coupled to the waist belt and torso support portion;

thigh supports disposed on either side of the seat center portion the thigh supports adapted to pass under and support a child's thighs and cooperate with the seat center portion to form the bucket seat; and

a base width adjuster coupled to each thigh support, wherein the base width adjusters are configured for selective coupling to the waist belt at multiple locations to adjust a width of the main body at the waist belt.

2. The child carrier of claim **1**, wherein the plurality of bucket seat configurations comprises:

a first configuration adapted to support a child in a first size range in a first spread squat position; and

a second configuration adapted to support a child in a second size range in a second spread squat position,

the first configuration having a first bucket seat width and first bucket seat depth and the second configuration having a second bucket seat width and a second bucket seat depth, wherein the first bucket seat width is less than the second bucket seat width and the first bucket seat depth is greater than the second bucket seat depth.

3. The child carrier of claim **1**, further comprising one or more adjustment areas adapted to adjust the bucket seat depth and the bucket seat width.

4. The child carrier of claim **1**, wherein the child carrier comprises a set of thigh width adjusters, wherein the base width adjusters are adapted to provide gross bucket seat width control and the set of thigh width adjusters are adapted to provide more granular bucket seat width control.

5. The child carrier of claim **1**, wherein the child carrier has a minimum wearable height that is dependent on the bucket seat depth.

6. The child carrier of claim **1**, wherein the base width adjusters are configured for selective coupling to the waist belt in multiple locations to adjust the bucket seat depth.

7. The child carrier of claim **6**, further comprising one or more fabric shaping members adapted to control a bulge of the bucket seat.

8. The child carrier of claim **7**, wherein the fabric shaping members comprise darts disposed between the thigh supports and the seat center portion, the darts adapted to open or close responsive to adjustment of the base width adjusters.

9. The child carrier of claim **8**, wherein the base width adjusters are configurable in a first setting corresponding to a maximum bucket seat depth and a second setting corresponding to a minimum bucket seat depth, wherein the darts have a first shape corresponding to the first setting and a second shape corresponding to the second setting.

10. The child carrier of claim **8**, wherein the seat center portion comprises laterally outer edges and the thigh supports comprise laterally inner edges, wherein the darts are disposed between the laterally outer edges and the laterally inner edges.

11. The child carrier of claim **10**, wherein the base width adjusters are adjustable through rotation to rotate the laterally inner edges relative to the laterally outer edges to open or close the darts.

12. The child carrier of claim **6**, wherein adjustment of the bucket seat depth adjusts a minimum wearable height of the child carrier.

13. The child carrier of claim **6**, further comprising thigh width adapters coupled to the thigh supports, the thigh width adapters configured to adjust the width of the bucket seat.

14. The child carrier of claim **1**, further comprising a neck support configurable in an inside folded down position in which the neck support is positioned in the child carrying area to support a child's neck.

15. The child carrier of claim **14**, wherein the neck support is further configurable in an extended folded up position and an outside folded down position.

16. The child carrier of claim **1**, wherein the plurality of bucket seat configurations comprises a configuration adapted to support an infant in a spread squat position without an infant insert.

17. The child carrier of claim **16**, wherein the plurality of bucket seat configurations comprises a configuration adapted to support a toddler in a spread squat position.

18. A child carrier comprising:

a waist belt adapted for securing about a wearers hips;

a main body coupled to the waist belt, the main body adapted to form a child carrying area in cooperation with a wearer's torso, the main body comprising:

a torso support portion configured for supporting at least of the torso of a child;

an adjustable bucket seat configurable in a plurality of bucket seat configurations, each of the plurality of bucket seat configurations having a different a) bucket seat depth and b) bucket seat width and adapted to support a child in a corresponding size range in a spread squat position; and

a set of base width adjusters and a set of thigh width adjusters, wherein the set of base width adjusters are adapted to provide gross bucket seat width control and the set of thigh width adjusters are adapted to provide more granular bucket seat width control.

19. The child carrier of claim **18**, further comprising thigh supports disposed on either side of a seat center portion, the thigh supports adapted to pass under and support a child's thighs and cooperate with the seat center portion to form the bucket seat; and

wherein each thigh width adjuster in the set of thigh width adjusters comprises a thigh width adjuster strap having first end coupled to a respective thigh support and a second end adapted to selectively couple to the main body at multiple positions to adjust width of the bucket seat at the child's thighs.

20. The child carrier of claim **19**, wherein the set of base width adjusters comprises a base width adjuster coupled to each thigh support, the set of base width adjusters adapted to selectively couple to the waist belt to adjust a width of the main body at the waist belt.

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