

Child Safety Seat Use Chart

Infant/Toddler

Car safety devices:

- Infant seat.
- Rear-facing convertible seat (converts from a rear-facing to a forward-facing position).
- 3-in-1 seat (use rear-facing position).

Seat position:

- Until 2 years of age or until they reach the height or weight limit of the safety seat, infants or toddlers should be seated in a rear-facing position only.

General guidelines:

- If there is more than 1 harness slot, the harness should be at or below the child's shoulders.
- Angle the safety seat so the infant's head is not flopping forward. The safety seat must not be angled more than a 45 degree angle. Use angle adjusters on the safety seat or tilt the safety seat with a rolled towel under the front of the seat. Older children who are able to maintain head control can be in a more upright position.
- The side of the safety seat can be padded with rolled cloths to prevent small infants from slouching to the side. Nothing should be added under, behind, or between the child and the harness.
- Any carry handle must be in the correct position, either around the top of the seat or under the seat.

Toddler/Preschooler

Car safety devices:

- Forward-facing convertible seat (converts from a rear-facing to a forward-facing and includes 3-in-1 seats).
- Forward-facing seat with a harness.
- Combination forward-facing booster seat with a harness.
- Travel vest.
- Built-in seat.

Seat position:

- A child who is older than 2 years or who's height and weight is over the limit for a rear-facing position can ride in a forward-facing safety seat with a harness.

General guidelines:

- Children should ride in a harnessed safety seat as long as possible, at least to age 4 years or until they have outgrown the weight or height limits of the safety seat.
- If there is more than 1 harness slot on a convertible seat, the harness should be at or above the child's shoulders.
- Some convertible seats require top harness slots for the forward-facing position.
- Convertible seats may also be equipped with a tether cord that secures the back of the child seat to the vehicle for extra security.

School-Age Child

Car safety devices:

- Booster seat (use until outgrown and adult belts fit correctly).

Seat position:

- Once the child's height or weight is over the limit for the forward-facing safety seat, the child can ride in a forward-facing belt-positioning booster seat.

General guidelines:

- Signs that a child has outgrown the forward-facing safety seat:

- Over the weight or height limit for the safety seat.
- Shoulders are above the top of harness slots.
- Ears are at or above the top of the safety seat.
- Always use both shoulder and lap belts to secure the booster seat.
- The shoulder belt should be snug and cross the middle of the child's chest and shoulder.
- The lap belt should fit low and tight across the child's upper thigh.
- If the vehicle only has lap belts:
 - Use a forward-facing safety seat with a harness and higher weight limits.
 - Check to see if shoulder belts can be installed.
 - Use a travel vest.
 - Change to a new vehicle with shoulder belts.

Older Child

Car safety devices:

- Lap and shoulder seat belt.

Seat position:

- A child should be in a forward-facing belt-positioning booster seat until the vehicle seat belt fits properly.

General guidelines:

- Lap and shoulder belts should be used once your child has outgrown the forward-facing booster seat.
- Your child can use lap and shoulder belts if:
 - The belts fit your child. Vehicle seat belts typically fit a child who is 4 ft, 9 inches (145 cm) tall and between 8 years and 12 years old.
 - The shoulder belt is across the middle of the child's chest and shoulder, not the neck or throat.
 - The lap belt is low and snug across the child's upper thighs, not the belly.
 - The child is tall enough to sit against the seat with knees bent.
 - Never let your child tuck the shoulder belt under an arm or behind the back.
 - Never share seat belts.

Warnings and Important Notes

- Air bags can cause serious head and neck injury or death in children, especially in rear-facing safety seats or in children who are not properly restrained. If there are front seat air bags in your vehicle, infants in rear-facing safety seats should ride in the rear seat. All children younger than 13 years of age should ride in the rear seat. The center of the rear seat is the safest position. In vans, the safest position is the middle seat rather than the rear seat. If a vehicle does not have a rear seat and it is absolutely necessary for a child under the age of 13 years to ride in the front seat:
 - Front air bags must be automatically deactivated or manually turned off.
 - Use a forward-facing safety seat with a harness.
 - Move the safety seat back from the dashboard (and the air bag) as far as you can.
 - The child safety seat should be installed and used as directed in the child safety seat instructions and vehicle owner's manual.
 - The safety seat must be installed tightly in the vehicle. After installing the safety seat, you should check for correct installation by pulling the safety seat firmly from side to side and from the back of the vehicle to the front of the vehicle. A correctly installed safety seat should not move more than 1 inch (2.5 cm) forward, backward, or sideways. A forward-facing safety seat without a tether may have a small amount of movement at the top of the safety seat.
 - The safety seat harness should fit the child snugly. The pinch test is 1 method to check the harness for a correct fit. To perform a pinch test:
 - Grab the harness at the shoulder level.
 - Try to pinch the harness together from top to bottom.
 - The harness fits correctly if you cannot pinch a vertical fold on the harness. The harness will need to be readjusted with any change in the thickness of your child's clothing.

- Vehicles made before 1996 may have vehicle seat belts that do not lock unless the vehicle stops suddenly. Locking clips may be needed in these vehicles to secure the safety seat. The locking clip is usually placed around the vehicle seat belt above the buckle. Use the locking clip as directed in your safety seat instructions.
- Vehicles made after 2002 may have a Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children (LATCH) system for securing safety seats. Vehicles with LATCH systems will have anchors, in addition to seat belts, in the rear seat, which can be used to secure safety seats.

This information is based on guidelines created by the American Academy of Pediatrics concerning child vehicle safety. Laws and regulations regarding child vehicle safety vary from state to state. Depending on the model:

- Some infant safety seats can be used by children who weigh up to 35 lb (15.9 kg).
- Some convertible safety seats can be used by children who weigh up to 40 lb (18.1 kg).
- Some 3-in-1 safety seats can be used by children who weigh up to 40 lb (18.1 kg).
- Some forward-facing safety seats with a harness can be used by children who weigh up to 80 lb (36.3 kg).
- Some combination forward-facing booster safety seats can be used by children who weigh up to 80 lb (36.3 kg) with a harness.
- Some combination forward-facing booster seats can be used by children who weigh up to 100 lb (45.4 kg) without the harness (as a booster).
- Travel vests can be worn by children who weigh between 20 lb and 168 lb (9.1 to 76.2 kg).

Safety seat recommendations:

- Replace a safety seat following a moderate or severe crash.
- Never use a safety seat that is damaged.
- Never use a safety seat that is more than 5 to 6 years old.
- Never use a safety seat with an unknown history.
- Review vehicle instructions regarding seat placement if the vehicle is equipped with side curtain air bags.

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Child Safety Seats

Children of certain ages and sizes must be properly secured in a safety seat or other child restraint system while riding in a vehicle. Failing to properly secure your child increases his or her risk of death or serious injury in an accident. There are many different types of child safety seats. The type your child uses depends on his or her age, size, and the type of vehicle the safety seat will be secured into. The laws and regulations regarding child passenger safety vary from state to state. Follow the laws in your area. The following information includes best-practice recommendations for use of child restraint systems. These recommendations may not apply to children with physical or behavioral conditions. Talk to your health care provider if you think your child may need a specialized seat.

REAR-FACING SAFETY SEATS

Recommendation

Keep children in a rear-facing safety seat until the age of 2 years or until they reach the upper weight or height limit of their safety seat.

Types of Rear-facing Safety Seats

- Rear-facing infant-only safety seat.
- Rear-facing convertible safety seat.
- Rear-facing 3-in-1 seats.

Guidelines

- If your child is riding in an infant-only safety seat and reaches the weight or height limit of the seat before 2 years of age, use a convertible safety seat in the rear-facing position until your child is 2 years of age or until the weight or height limit of that safety seat is reached.
- The safety seat's harness should fit the child snugly. The pinch test is one method to check the harness for a correct fit. To perform the pinch test, pinch the harness at your child's shoulders from top to bottom. The harness fits correctly if you cannot make a vertical fold in the harness. You will need to readjust the harness with any change in the thickness of your child's clothing.
- If there is more than one harness slot, use the slot that is at or below the child's shoulders.
- The safety seat can be angled so the infant's head is not flopping forward. Check the safety seat manufacturer guidelines to find out the correct angle for your seat and how to adjust it.
- The sides of the safety seat can be padded with tightly rolled baby blankets to prevent small children from slouching to the side. Nothing should be added under or behind the child or between the child and the harness.
- Make sure the carry handle is in the correct position (either around the top of the seat or under the seat) before driving.
- Make sure your child's safety seat is properly installed (secured tightly with vehicle seat belt or Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children [LATCH] system). Carefully review your vehicle owner's manual and safety seat installation instructions.
- Signs that a child has outgrown his or her rear-facing safety seat include:
 - Your child's shoulders are above the top of the harness slots.
 - Your child's ears are at or above the top of the safety seat.

FORWARD-FACING SEATS

Recommendation

Children 2 years or older, or those younger than 2 years who have reached the rear-facing weight or height limit of their safety seat, should ride in a forward-facing safety seat with a harness. A child should ride in a forward-facing safety seat with a harness until reaching the upper weight or height limit of the safety seat.

Types of Forward-facing Safety Seats

- Convertible safety seat.
- Combination safety seat.
- Forward-facing only toddler seat with a harness.
- Vehicle built-in forward-facing seat.
- Travel vest.

Guidelines

- The safety seat's harness should fit the child snugly. The pinch test is one method to check the harness for a correct fit. To perform the pinch test, pinch the harness at your child's shoulders from top to bottom. The harness fits correctly if you cannot make a vertical fold in the harness. You will need to readjust the harness with any change in the thickness of your child's clothing.
- If there is more than one harness slot, use the slot that is at or below the child's shoulders.
- Make sure your child's safety seat is properly installed (secured tightly with vehicle seat belt or Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children [LATCH] system). Carefully review your vehicle owner's manual and safety seat installation instructions.
- Signs that a child has outgrown his or her forward-facing safety seat include:
 - Your child's shoulders are above the top of the harness slots.
 - Your child's ears are at or above the top of the safety seat.

BOOSTER SEATS

Recommendation

Children who have reached the height or weight limit of their forward-facing safety seat should ride in a belt-positioning booster seat until the vehicle seat belts fit properly. This may not occur until a child reaches 4 ft 9 in tall (145 cm). This often occurs between the ages of 8 and 12 years old.

Guidelines

- The shoulder belt should be snug and cross the middle of the child's chest and shoulder (not the neck or throat).
- The lap belt should fit low and tight across the child's upper thigh (not the abdomen).
- Always secure the seat with both a shoulder seat belt and a lap seat belt. If your child must travel in a vehicle that only has lap belts:
 - Have shoulder belts installed if possible.
 - Use a travel vest or a forward-facing safety seat with a harness and higher weight and height limits.

VEHICLE SEAT BELTS

Recommendation Children who are old enough and large enough should use a lap-and-shoulder seat belt. The vehicle seat belts usually fit properly after a child reaches a height of 4 ft 9 in (145 cm). This is usually between the ages of 8 and 12 years old.

Guidelines

- A seat belt fits if:
 - The shoulder belt crosses the middle of the child's chest and shoulder (not the neck or throat).
 - The lap belt is low and snug across the child's upper thighs (not the abdomen).
 - The child is tall enough to sit against the seat with knees bent.
- Vehicles made before 1996 may have vehicle seat belts that do not lock unless the vehicle stops suddenly. A locking clip may be needed in these vehicles to secure the seat belt. The locking clip is usually placed around the vehicle seat belt above the buckle.
- **Do not** let your child tuck the shoulder belt under an arm or behind his or her back.

- **Do not** let your child share a seat belt with another person.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- All children younger than 13 years should ride in the back seat. If your child must travel in a vehicle without a back seat:
 - Deactivate the front air bags if the vehicle has them. If your vehicle does not have an air bag on and off switch, you will need to deactivate them manually. Air bags can cause serious head and neck injuries or death in children.
 - Move the safety seat back from the dashboard (and the air bags) as far as you can.
- Review vehicle instructions regarding seat placement if the vehicle is equipped with side curtain air bags.
- Replace a safety seat following a moderate or severe crash.
- Get your child's safety seat checked by a trained and certified technician. See cert.safekids.org for more information.
- Check for recalls on your child's safety seat.
- **Do not** use a safety seat that is damaged.
- **Do not** use a safety seat that is more than 5 years old from the date of manufacturing.
- **Do not** use a used safety seat with an unknown history.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.

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Child Safety Seat Test

The child safety seat test is a test that shows whether it is safe for a newborn or infant to ride in a safety seat. A child should have this test if he or she:

- Was born before 37 weeks of pregnancy (*preterm*).
- Weighs less than 5 lb (2.3 kg).
- Has a health problem that makes it hard to breathe or causes a sudden drop in heart rate.
- Will go home with a machine to give him or her oxygen or a machine to monitor his or her heart rate (*apnea monitor*).

The child safety seat test is often done before you take your child home from the hospital for the first time. It can be repeated as necessary.

WHY THE TEST IS DONE

A safety seat can cause problems for some children because the seat is tilted back a little (*semi-reclined*). Putting some children in a semi-reclined position may:

- Cause breathing to become difficult or stop.
- Prevent oxygen from reaching the blood.
- Cause the heart rate to slow down.

The child's brain may be harmed if these problems happen too often.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Before the test:

You will need to bring in your child's safety seat on the day of the test. Make sure that the safety seat is rear-facing. It should also be safe for your child's age and size. If you bought a used safety seat, make sure it is not more than 6 years old and has not been damaged or recalled. Put together the seat before bringing it in.

During the test:

A caregiver will put your child in the safety seat. The test usually takes 90 minutes. During this time, the caregiver will closely observe your child's breathing, heart rate, and oxygen levels.

After the test:

If everything is okay, you can use the safety seat to take your child home. If your child does not pass the test, he or she may need to:

- Be taken home in a car bed.
- Use oxygen during the ride home.
- Stay in the hospital a little longer and be retested.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- If your child did not pass the child safety seat test:
 - **Do not** put your child in other types of seats unless your caregiver says it is okay. These include bouncy chairs and infant carriers.
 - If you are using a car bed, follow the directions that came with it. Before changing from a car bed to a safety seat, have another child safety seat test done.
- If your child passed the child safety seat test:
 - **Do not** drive your child in the car for longer than 90 minutes at a time. After 90 minutes, stop in a safe location, remove your child from the seat, and give him or her at least a 10 minute break before resuming your travels. Ask your caregiver when it will be safe to drive your child for longer than

90 minutes at a time.

- o Always use a safety seat that is approved for your child's size and weight. Follow the directions that came with the seat.
- o Only use a safety seat in the car.
- o Use a safety seat every time your child is in the car.
- o Always fasten your child safely in a safety seat.
- o Contact your caregiver if you have any questions about how to use your child's safety seat or car bed.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

Your child has trouble breathing when in a safety seat or car bed.

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Forward-Facing Child Safety Seat

All children 2 years or older, or those younger than 2 years who have outgrown the weight and height limits of the rear-facing safety seat, should ride in a forward-facing safety seat with a harness. Forward-facing safety seats should be placed in the rear seat. At a minimum, a child will need a forward-facing safety seat until the age of 4 years. Signs that a child has outgrown the forward-facing safety seat include:

- Being over the weight and height limits of the seat.
- Having shoulders above the top harness slots.
- Having ears at or above the top of the seat.

If your child outgrows the forward-facing safety seat you have before reaching age 4, consider placing him or her in a forward-facing seat with a higher weight limit. There are several kinds of safety seats that can be used in a forward-facing position:

- **Convertible seats:** These are safety seats that convert from rear facing to forward facing. Depending on the model, convertible seats can be used with children who weigh up to 40 lb (18.1 kg).
- **Forward-facing only toddler seats used with a harness:** Depending on the model, forward-facing toddler seats used with a harness can be used with children who weigh up to 40 to 80 lb (18.1 to 36.3 kg).
- **Combination forward-facing booster seats:** Depending on the model, combination forward-facing booster seats can be used with a harness for children weighing up to 40 to 90 lb (18.1 to 40.8 kg) or, without a harness, as a booster seat for children weighing up to 80 to 120 lb (36.3 to 54.4 kg).
- **Built-in forward-facing seats:** Built-in forward-facing seats are available in some vehicles. Weight and height limits vary. Check the vehicle owner's manual or contact the manufacturer for information about use of these seats.
- **Travel vests:** Travel vests can be worn by children who weigh between 20 and 168 lb (9.1 to 76.2 kg). Travel vests are useful in a vehicle with lap-only rear seat belts or for children whose weight has exceeded safety seat limits. Travel vests may require the use of a top tether.

PROPER USE OF FORWARD-FACING SAFETY SEATS

- Air bags can cause serious head and neck injury or death in children, especially in rear-facing safety seats or in children who are not properly restrained. All children young enough to ride in forward-facing car seats should ride in the rear seat of a vehicle. The center of the rear seat is the safest position. In vans, the safest position is the middle seat rather than the rear seat. If a vehicle does not have a rear seat and it is absolutely necessary for a child under the age of 13 years to ride in the front seat:
 - If an air bag is present on the passenger side where the child will be seated, it must be deactivated manually or automatically. If this is not an option, consider alternate transportation.
 - Use a forward-facing safety seat with a harness.
 - Move the safety seat back from the dashboard (and the air bag) as far as you can.
- The child safety seat should be installed and used as directed in the child safety seat instructions and vehicle owner's manual.
- A forward-facing safety seat should be flat against the vehicle seat's bottom and back. Use either method to position the safety seat flat against the vehicle seat's bottom and back:
 - The safety seat should be in the upright position rather than the reclined

position whenever possible.

- Locking clips should be used as directed in the child safety seat instructions and vehicle owner's manual.
- The proper vehicle belt path that is required for your forward-facing safety seat must be used. Vehicles made after 2002 may have a Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children (LATCH) system for securing safety seats. Vehicles with a LATCH system will have anchors, in addition to seat belts, in the rear seat, which can be used to secure safety seats.
- The harness must be at or above the child's shoulders in the reinforced slots. Many convertible seats require that the top slots be used when they are in a forward-facing position.
- The safety seat harness should fit the child snugly. The pinch test is one method to check the harness for a correct fit. To perform a pinch test:
 1. Grab the harness at the shoulder level.
 2. Try to pinch the harness together from top to bottom.
 3. The harness fits correctly if you cannot pinch a vertical fold on the harness. The harness will need to be readjusted with any change in the thickness of your child's clothing.
- Nothing should be added under, behind, or between the child and the harness unless it has been specifically designed by the manufacturer to be used in this manner with the car seat.
- Tethers should be used as directed in your safety seat instructions.
- The safety seat must be installed tightly in the vehicle. After installing the safety seat, you should check for correct installation by pulling the safety seat firmly from side to side and from the back of the vehicle to the front of the vehicle. A correctly installed safety seat should not move more than 1 inch (2.5 cm) forward, backward, or sideways. A forward-facing safety seat without a tether may have a small amount of movement at the top of the safety seat.

These guidelines are based on those created by the American Academy of Pediatrics concerning child vehicle safety. Laws and regulations regarding child auto safety vary from state to state.

Safety seat recommendations:

- Replace a safety seat following a moderate or severe crash.
- Never use a safety seat that is damaged.
- Never use a safety seat over 5 years old.
- Never use a safety seat with an unknown history.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.

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Rear-Facing Infant-Only Child Safety Seat

It is best to start placing children in a rear-facing safety seat from their very first ride home from the hospital as a newborn. They should continue to ride in a rear-facing safety seat until the age of 2 years or until reaching the upper weight and height limit of the rear-facing safety seat. Rear-facing safety seats should be placed in the rear seat and should face the rear of the vehicle.

There are several kinds of safety seats that can be used in a rear-facing position:

- Rear-facing only infant seats. Depending on the model, these can be used with children who weigh up to 40 lb (18.2 kg).
- Rear-facing convertible seats. Depending on the model, these can be used with children who weigh up to 50 lb (22.7 kg).
- Rear-facing 3-in-1 seats. Depending on the model, these can be used with children who weigh up to 40 to 45 lb (18.2 to 20.5 kg).

PROPER USE OF REAR-FACING SAFETY SEATS

- Air bags can cause serious head and neck injury or death in children. Air bags are especially dangerous for children seated in rear-facing safety seats or for children who are not properly restrained. If there are front-seat air bags in your vehicle, infants in rear-facing safety seats should ride in the rear seat.
- All children young enough to ride in rear-facing car seats should ride in the rear seat of a vehicle. The center of the rear seat is the safest position. In vans, the safest position is the middle seat rather than the rear seat.
- Vehicles with no back seat or one that is not useable for passengers are not the best choices for traveling with children. If a vehicle with front air bags does not have a rear seat and it is absolutely necessary for a child under the age of 13 years to ride in the front seat:
 - The vehicle must have air bags that automatically or manually can be turned off. The air bags must be off to prevent serious injury or even death to children. If this is not available, alternative transportation is recommended.
 - Use a forward-facing safety seat with a harness.
 - Move the safety seat back from the dashboard (and the air bag) as far as you can.
- The child safety seat should be installed and used as directed in the child safety seat instructions and vehicle owner's manual.
- Some infant-only seats have detachable bases, which can be left in the vehicle. You can purchase more than one base to use in other vehicles.
- The safety seat can be angled so the infant's head is not flopping forward. Check the safety seat manufacturer guidelines to find out the correct angle for your seat, and how to adjust it.
- Tightly rolled baby blankets put next to an infant in the safety seat can keep the infant from slouching to the side. Nothing should be added under, behind, or between the child and the harness unless it comes with the car seat and is specifically designed for that purpose.
- Locking clips should be used as directed by the instructions for the child safety seat and vehicle owner's manual.
- The proper vehicle belt path that is required for your rear-facing safety seat must be used. Vehicles made after 2002 may have a Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children (LATCH) system for securing safety seats. Vehicles with a LATCH system will have anchors, in addition to seat belts, in the rear seat, which can be used to secure safety seats. Installing a car seat using the vehicle's seat belt or the car seat LATCH system is equally safe.
- The harness must be at or below the child's shoulders in the reinforced slots. For newborns for whom the harness slot is above the shoulders, ensure that the harness is in the bottom slots.
- The safety seat harness should fit the child snugly. The harness fits correctly if you cannot

pinch a vertical fold on the harness when it is latched. The harness will need to be readjusted with any change in the thickness of your child's clothing. The pinch test is one method to check the harness for a correct fit. To perform a pinch test:

1. Grab the harness at the shoulder level.
 2. Try to pinch the harness together from top to bottom.
 3. If you cannot pinch the harness, it is snug enough to be safe.
- A harness clip, if available, must be at the mid-chest level to keep the harness positioned on the shoulders.
 - Any carry handle must be in the correct position, usually either around the top of the seat or under the seat.
 - The safety seat must be installed tightly in the vehicle. After installing the safety seat, you should check for correct installation by pulling the safety seat firmly from side to side and from the back of the vehicle to the front of the vehicle. A correctly installed safety seat should not move more than 1 inch (2.5 cm) forward, backward or sideways.
 - Infant car beds can be used instead of safety seats for low-weight infants or infants with medical needs.
 - Infant car seats should be used for travel only, not for sleeping, feeding, or other uses outside the vehicle.

This information is based on guidelines created by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Laws and regulations regarding child auto safety vary from state to state. If you have questions or need help installing your car safety seat, find a certified child passenger safety technician. Lists of technicians and child seat fitting stations are available from the following web sites:

- www.nhtsa.org
- seatcheck.org

Safety seat recommendations:

- Replace a safety seat after a moderate or severe crash.
- Never use a safety seat that is damaged.
- Never use a safety seat that is older than 5 years from the manufacturing date.
- Never use a safety seat with an unknown history.
- If your vehicle is equipped with side curtain air bags, consult the vehicle's manual regarding child safety seat position.
- Keep your child in a rear-facing safety seat until he or she reaches the maximum weight, even if your child's feet touch the back of the vehicle seat.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.

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Seat Belt Safety, Child

Car crash injuries are the leading cause of death in children 5 to 14 years of age. Seat belts greatly reduce the risk of death or crippling injuries from car crashes.

Because seat belts are designed to fit an average size adult, children should remain in a booster seat until they reach 4 feet 9 inches in height (1.4 m) and are between 80 to 100 pounds (36 to 45 kg). Many children will not meet these requirements until they are between 8 and 12 years of age. Children ready to use a seat belt will be able to sit comfortably with their back against the seat, and their legs will bend at the edge of the seat. To fit properly, a seat belt should fit low across the child's hips and high on the thighs. The shoulder harness should sit on the collarbone and not lay across the face or neck. Children should use a booster seat until the seat belt fits properly.

Seat belts and car seats should always be used, even when riding in vehicles equipped with air bags. Air bags are designed to work with seat belts, not by themselves. The back seat is the safest place for all children. Children risk additional injury if they are too close to the dashboard. This is especially true in vehicles with airbags.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

You may contact the National Transportation Safety Board at www.nts.gov if you have questions regarding laws in your state related to the use of seat belts and approved car seats or child restraints.

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