



Child Passenger Safety

TRAVELING SAFELY WITH CHILDREN

- Everybody needs a child safety seat, booster seat, or safety belt.
- There must be one safety belt for each person.
- People who are not buckled up can be thrown from the car or around inside the car.
- Never hold a child on your lap! You could crush him/her in a crash, or the child may be torn from your arms.
- Never ride in the cargo area of a station wagon, van, or pickup!
- No one seat is 'best', The 'best' child safety seat is the one that fits your child and can be installed correctly.
- **WARNING:** The back seat is the safest place in a crash. Children age 12 and under should ride properly restrained in back. Infants riding rear-facing must NEVER be placed in front of an airbag.

WHEN IS A CHILD READY FOR THE ADULT SAFETY BELT?

- Until age 8, most children have not developed strong hipbones, and their legs and body are too short to allow for proper fit of a safety belt. Safety belts are designed for adults.
- To be able to fit in a safety belt, a child must:
 - Be tall enough to sit without slouching,
 - Keep his/her back against the vehicle seat back,
 - Keep his/her knees completely bent over edge of seat,
 - Keep his/her feet flat on the floor, and
 - Be able to stay comfortably seated this way.
- The lap belt must fit low and tight across the upper thighs. The shoulder belt should rest over the center of the shoulder and across the chest (G).
- Never put the shoulder belt under the child's arm or be-

hind the child's back. This can cause severe internal injuries in a crash. If the safety belt does not fit properly the child should use a belt-positioning booster seat.

CHILD PASSENGERS AND AIR BAGS

AN INFANT OR CHILD RIDING IN THE FRONT SEAT CAN BE SERIOUSLY INJURED OR KILLED BY THE INFLATING AIR BAG .

To do its important job, an air bag comes out of the dashboard very fast. Many people's lives have been saved by air bags. However, the force of an air bag can hurt people who are too close to it. Infants in the front seat have been killed when the rear-facing child safety seat is hit with great force causing a fatal brain injury. Older children are killed from impact by the air bag because they are "out of position" - either unbuckled, or not wearing the shoulder portion of the safety belt. During pre-crash braking, the child's upper body can be thrown forward toward the air bag at the time it is triggered causing severe head or neck injuries.

PREVENT INJURIES FROM AIR BAGS BY FOLLOWING THESE SAFETY STEPS:

Infants in rear-facing child safety seats must NEVER ride in the front seat of a vehicle that has a activated passenger air bag. Children 12 and under should ride properly restrained in the back seat.

Everyone should be buckled up with both lap AND shoulder belts on every trip. Driver and front passenger seats should be moved as far back from the dashboard as practical. Make sure the shoulder belt stays in place and do not lean toward the air bag compartment.

If you must put a child riding in a forward-facing child safety seat or booster in the front, make sure the safety seat is correctly installed, the child is correctly buckled up with the harness very snug and the vehicle seat is moved as far back as possible.

	REAR FACING SEATS in the back seat from birth to at least 1 year old and at least 20 pounds.
	FORWARD-FACING TODDLER SEATS in the back seat from age 1 and 20 pounds to about age 4 and 40 pounds.
	BOOSTER SEATS in the back seat from about age 4 to at least age 8, unless 4'9" tall.
	SAFETY BELTS at age 8 and older or taller than 4'9". All children age 12 and under should ride in the back seat.

Source: NHTSA

