



## PREVENTING INJURIES TO CHILDREN IN MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES

*All children ages 12 and under should be properly restrained in a back seat on every ride. Choose and use correctly the right restraint for your child.*

- Infants should ride in rear-facing car seats as long as possible, until they are at least 12 months old *and* weigh at least 20 pounds. Keep children rear-facing to 30-35 pounds if your car seat allows it.
- Children who are at least 1 year old, weigh 20 to 40 pounds and can no longer ride rear-facing should ride in forward-facing car seats secured with harnesses.
- Children more than 40 pounds should be correctly secured in belt-positioning booster seats or other appropriate child restraints until the adult lap and shoulder belts fit correctly (usually around age 8 and when the child is about 49 tall).

**Any car seat must be installed and used according to the manufacturer's instructions and vehicle owner's manual.**

- Check [www.recalls.gov](http://www.recalls.gov) for car seat recalls.
- Return the product registration forms for all new car seats to the manufacturer to ensure you will be notified of any recalls.
- Only use a seat with all parts, instructions and labels.
- Check [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov) to see if a car seat that has been in a crash passes NHTSA's test for continued use.

**Obey all traffic laws, including those for child restraint use.**

All 50 states and the District of Columbia have child occupant protection laws, which vary widely in their age requirements, exemptions, enforcement procedures and penalties. Many states have improved their laws to require some older children to ride in booster seats, and some require children of certain ages to ride in the rear seat of a motor vehicle. Check [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org) to find out about the laws currently in effect for your state.