

Right Seat + Right Time + Right Use = Reducing Car Crash Injury

BIRTH



HERE'S WHAT TO DO:

- Start your child in a REAR-FACING CAR SEAT IN THE BACK SEAT. Use as long as possible to the top rear-facing weight and height limits on the seat (even up to age 2 or 3).
- If your child outgrows their car seat before age 2, change to a seat with higher rear-facing weight and height limits. Keep rear-facing longer.
- Leg crowding is expected and okay. It does not cause harm as long as child is within weight and height limits for the seat.

HERE'S WHY:

- A rear-facing car seat moves with your child and absorbs crash forces.
- Cradles to reduce harm to neck and spine
- Kids under 2 are more likely to be injured if forward facing.



HERE'S WHAT TO DO:

- Once top rear-facing limits are reached, use a FORWARD-FACING CAR SEAT WITH A HARNESS and tether in the back seat.
- Remember to keep rear-facing as long as possible before turning forward.
- Use a car seat with a harness as long as possible to the top height or weight limit for the harness.

HERE'S WHY:

- Harnesses spread crash forces over strong parts of the body.
- Keeps body positioned in a crash
- The tether limits head injuries by reducing movement in a crash.



HERE'S WHAT TO DO:

- Once a child outgrows the top limits for the harnessed car seat, use a BOOSTER SEAT IN THE BACK SEAT.
- Use a booster seat until the belt fits correctly (see next step).
- A booster seat is often needed until 4 ft 9 in tall. Your child may be 12 years old before ready for a belt.

HERE'S WHY:

- A booster raises a child up so the belt rests over strong body parts.
- Decreases stomach, neck, and spine injuries
- Keeps kids from putting the shoulder belt under their arm or behind their back, which causes harm in a crash



HERE'S WHAT TO DO:

- Kids should ride in a lap and shoulder SEAT BELT IN THE BACK SEAT once they outgrow a booster seat.
- Kids are ready for a seat belt when: 1) The shoulder strap crosses the center of the chest and rests on the shoulder (not the neck). (2) The lap belt fits low on the thighs (not the stomach). (3) Knees can bend when sitting all the way back in the seat.
- Use the back seat for kids under 13.

HERE'S WHY:

- A seat belt keeps the child in the vehicle.
- Spreads crash forces
- Protects head and spine
- Back seat is safer than the front

Unrestrained children are three times more likely to be injured in a crash. Kids under age 13 are nearly two times safer in the back seat because they are farthest from the most common kind of crash and from frontal airbags. Front airbags are meant for teens and adults.