



## Seat Belts

Children whose vehicle lap and shoulder belts fit correctly and who are over 8 years of age or 57 inches in height must be properly secured with vehicle lap and shoulder belts, according to vehicle manufacturer instructions. Adult passengers in all seating positions shall be properly secured with vehicle seat belts according to the vehicle manufacturer instructions.

- All children should ride in the back seat until at least 13 years of age
- Ensure children fit properly in the seat belt by conducting the **Seat Belt Fit Test**
  - Child's back should be against back of the vehicle seat
  - Knees must bend naturally over the seat edge
  - Child's feet are flat on the floor of vehicle
  - Lap belt low and snug across the upper thighs
  - Shoulder belt snug across the chest and on shoulder
  - This position is maintained for the entire ride

### CORRECT USE CHECKLIST

- ✓ Always follow the car seat manufacturer's instructions- labels on the car seat and the instructions manual.
- ✓ Child is the right weight and height for the seat
- ✓ Ensure harness height is appropriate for the seating direction
- ✓ Harness should be snug and flat against the child (not able to pinch any excess harness above the chest/retainer clip)
- ✓ Chest/retainer clip should be positioned on the child's chest at armpit level
- ✓ Seat belt or **LATCH** is tightly securing the car seat in place and it should not move more than one inch from side to side or towards the front (Note: always check the belt path the car seat is installed at)
- ✓ Booster seats must be used with vehicle lap and shoulder belts
- ✓ Children should not be dressed in bulky clothing when secured in a child restraint

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NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF  
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

## CAR SEAT SAFETY



### FACT:

Correctly used child restraints can reduce the risk of injury or death.



## Rear-facing

Infants and toddlers under the age of 2 and weighing less than 30 pounds must be secured in a rear-facing child restraint, equipped with a five-point harness. A child under 4 years and 40 pounds shall be secured in a rear-facing child restraint until they have outgrown the rear facing height or weight limit allowed by the car seat manufacturer.

- Ensure the child is the correct weight and height for the child restraint
- Harness height is **AT OR BELOW** child's shoulder
- The top of the child's head must be at least 1 inch below the top of the child restraint
- Chest clip/retainer clip should be located on the child's chest at armpit level
- Child restraint should be tight and move no more than one inch at the installed belt path. (The belt path on a car seat is the space where the vehicle seat belt passes through the car seat frame)
- All child restraints should be installed in the back seat

## Forward-facing

Once children have outgrown the rear-facing weight or height limit allowed by the car seat manufacturer, they shall ride in a forward-facing child restraint with a five-point harness up to the highest weight or height allowed by the child restraint manufacturer.

- Ensure the child is the correct weight and height for the child restraint
- Harness height should be **AT OR ABOVE** the child's shoulder
- The top of the child's ear should not come above the top of the child restraint
- Chest clip/retainer clip should be located on the child's chest at armpit level
- Top tether must be attached to the appropriate anchor in the vehicle
- Child restraint should be tight and move no more than one inch at the installed belt path
- All child restraints should be installed in the back seat

## Booster Seats

Children under the age of 8 and a height of 57 inches whose weight or height exceeds the limits of a forward-facing child restraint, shall ride in a belt-positioning booster seat in the back seat. Children should remain in a booster seat until the seat belt fits correctly.

- Lap and shoulder belt must be used
- Both lap and shoulder belts must be under the arm rest on the side where they buckle in
- Lap belt low and snug across the upper thighs
- Shoulder belt snug across the chest and **ON** the shoulder
- If using a high back booster, the head restraint must be at least as high as the child's ears
- If using a backless booster, the vehicle's head restraint must be adjusted to support the child's head to the top of child's ears.

### WARNINGS!

**NEVER** put a child in a rear-facing restraint in a front seat with an air bag. Car seats are for travel and should **NOT** be used for sleeping except in the vehicle.