

# NEWSFLASH

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## NEW LAW:

**As of June 30, 2008, every child under 8 years old must ride in a booster seat or other appropriate safety seat. Unless the child is 4 feet, 9 inches or taller or weighs more than 65 pounds.**

Every child from 8 to 16 years old who is not secured in a car seat must be secured in the vehicle's seat belt. Children under 13 years old should ride in the back seat.

### **The Safest Car Seat for your child is the one that:**

- 1. Fits your child.** Car seats are designed for an average size child. Your child's needs and size may vary. Choose a car seat so that your child is within the recommended weight and height guidelines.
- 2. Fits in your car.** Not every car seat can be installed correctly in every car. Check with your car manufacturer regarding the best type of car seat for that car.
- 3. Is easy for you to use correctly every time.** The easier it is for use, the more likely you will use it correctly every time you travel.

When buying a child safety seat, it is very important to try the seat out in your car and see how the belt fits your child. The seat belt is meant to be routed across a child's lower hips and mid-shoulders instead of the abdomen because the liver and spleen are more vulnerable to injuries.

The center of the back seat is the safest area to put the seat because it is the farthest away from any impact of the crash.

However, a child in a booster **MUST ALWAYS** sit where there is a shoulder belt.



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### **Is your child big enough to use a safety belt without a booster seat? Do this simple test:**

1. Does the child sit all the way back against the auto seat?
2. Do the child's knees bend comfortably at the edge of the auto seat?
3. Does the lap belt stay down on the hips, touching the thighs?
4. Is the shoulder belt on the center of the shoulder?
5. Can the child stay seated like this without slouching for the whole trip?

If you answered yes to ALL of these steps, your child is big enough to use a seat belt without a booster.

The National Highway traffic Safety Administration issues ratings for child seats on its web site:

<http://safercar.gov>

**Tips To Follow If You Are Having A Hard Time Keeping Your Child In Their Seat** (found at Safety Belt Safe

USA [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org))

1. **Are the shoulder straps tight enough?** Make sure they are fitting properly and use a chest clip.
2. **Does the car seat fit your child?** Make sure the seat fits your child as well as your car.
3. **Has the child been riding too long without a break?** Children need to run around. Be reasonable about getting them out to run and exercise a bit.
4. **Are you buckled up?** Setting a good example is how children learn. Don't expect your child to use a seat belt restraint if you don't.
4. **Are other children in the front seat?** All children under 13 years old should be riding in the back seat for their own safety.
6. **Is everyone following safety seat laws?** Everyone should buckle up for safety – It's the Law!
7. **Encourage good behavior by providing children with a sticker/reward system when s/he does remain restrained in their seat.**
8. **Keep books and soft toys available to play and read,** sing songs together and/or let your child buckle up his best teddy to keep him safe (in a toy car seat or spare car seat).
9. **Teach New Habits by making a fuss over the child that does stay in his/her seat;** pulling over if the child undoes his buckles and staying until the child is buckled up again; let child do it herself, but check to make sure it is done properly; put the child in charge of making sure everyone is buckled up; cancel any outings or events if your child does not stay buckled up. Stop the car, stay where you are until s/he is buckled and then turn around and go home. **AND FOLLOW THROUGH!!!**



According to The Virginia Based Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute there are several car booster seats that don't do a good job of positioning children to fit in their seats. For more information on this study, please refer to their website [www.iihs.org](http://www.iihs.org).



**The IIHS Best Bets include:**

1. Combi Kobuk
2. Fisher Price Safe Voyage (with safe clip)
3. Graco TurboBooster
4. Britax Monarch
5. Britax Parkway
6. Fisher-Price Safe Voyage (highback)
7. LaRoche Bros. Teddy Bear
8. Recaro Young Style
9. Volvo booster cushion
10. Safeguard Go when its used as a backless booster



**The IIHS Not Good Buys Include:**

1. Compass B505
2. Compass B510
3. Cosco/Dorel Traveler
4. Evenflo Big Kid Confidence
5. Safety Angel Ride Ryte
6. Cosco/Dorel Alpha Omega
7. Cosco/Dorel (Eddie Bauer) Summit
8. Cosco Highback Booster
9. Dorel/ Safety 1<sup>st</sup> (Eddie Bauer) Prospect
10. Evenflo Chase Comfort Touch
11. Evenflo Generations
12. Graco CarGo Zephyr
13. Safety 1<sup>st</sup>/Dorel Intera

For more information on car seat safety, please check out the following sites:

[www.mdkiss.org](http://www.mdkiss.org)

[www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org)

