



The leading cause of death and injury for children is automobile crashes. We need to make sure children are properly secured in appropriate child safety seats, including booster

seats, as studies show the vast majority are improperly installed. Your child deserves the very best protection while riding in your vehicle. The best car seat is one that fits the child and the vehicle, and is used correctly every time.

Remember that children and airbags do not mix — the safest place for young passengers is in the back seat. This brochure provides guidelines for safely securing your child in your vehicle.

My office provides car seat inspections at several Driver Services facilities throughout the state. I encourage you to visit one of these fitting stations to ensure that your child's car seat is properly installed and meets federal guidelines for your child's height and weight. Making sure our children are properly secured will give parents and caregivers the peace of mind that their little ones are well-protected. Also, as adults, let's set a good example by securing ourselves with a safety belt.

Jesse White

Jesse White
Secretary of State

CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY TIPS

Parents who buckle up usually buckle up their children.

- Keep children in rear-facing safety seats as long as possible.
- Keep children in the back seat at least through age 12.
- Never place a rear-facing safety seat in front of an active airbag.
- A used safety seat may not be safe unless you know the history of the seat and all labels, parts and instructions are present.
- Always register your safety seat with the manufacturer so you can be notified of recalls.
- Do not use a safety seat that is more than six years old or past the expiration date stamped on the seat.
- Non-regulated products such as toys attached to the safety seat, mirrors, window shades and belt tightening tools are not recommended unless the safety seat manufacturer allows their use.
- All objects in the vehicle should be stowed in the trunk or tied down, as they can become projectiles if a crash or sudden stop occurs.

ILLINOIS LAW REQUIRES *all* passengers to be buckled up, regardless of where they sit in a vehicle.

For more information and to schedule a car seat inspection, please call:

866-247-0213

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Please
have my
**Seat
Checked**



**Guidelines for
Child Passenger Safety**

JESSE WHITE
SECRETARY OF STATE

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Keep Me in a Safe Seat

Always read and follow the child safety seat and vehicle manufacturer's instructions for installation and height/weight guidelines.

Child Safety Seat Guidelines

Newborn-12 months



Children under age 1 and weighing less than 20 pounds should always ride in a rear-facing infant seat or a convertible seat used rear-facing.

- Never install a rear-facing safety seat in front of an active airbag.
- Rear-facing safety seats should recline 30-45 degrees.
- The child's head must be at least 1 inch below the top of the safety seat when rear-facing.
- Use the harness straps/slots at or below shoulder level when rear-facing.
- Harness straps must be snug on the child; the harness clip should be at armpit level.

Ages 1-4



It is recommended that children remain in a rear-facing safety seat until age 2, or until they are at the upper height or weight limit of the seat. When a child outgrows a rear-facing safety seat, he or she may transition to a forward-facing seat with a harness system.

- Use the internal harness system until the upper height or weight limit is reached.
- Use harness straps/slots at or above shoulder level when forward-facing.
- Harness straps must be snug on the child; the harness clip should be at armpit level.
- The top of the child's ears should not be above the top of the car seat when forward-facing.

Ages 4-8



Children should be secured in a forward-facing safety seat with an internal harness system until they reach the upper height or weight limit allowed by the car seat manufacturer. When a child outgrows the forward-facing seat, he or she may transition to a belt-positioning booster seat.

- Booster seats must be used with the vehicle's lap and shoulder belt, never just a lap belt.
- The lap belt should lie low across the upper thighs, not the stomach. The shoulder belt should rest snugly across the shoulder and chest, not across the neck or face.
- The top of the child's ears should not be above the top of the back of a booster seat with a back.
- If using a backless booster seat, the vehicle's head restraint must be positioned properly.
- Secure the booster seat with the vehicle's seat belt when not in use.

Ages 8-12



Children should stay in a belt-positioning booster seat until they are tall enough to properly fit in an adult lap/shoulder belt.

- The vehicle lap belt must lie low across the upper thighs, not the stomach. The shoulder belt should rest snugly across the shoulder and chest, not across the neck or face.
- The child's back and hips should be against the back of the vehicle seat, without slouching.
- Knees should bend easily over the front edge of the vehicle seat with the feet flat on the floor.

UNDER ILLINOIS LAW, all children under age 8 must be secured in an appropriate child safety seat.

For more information or to schedule an appointment for a child safety seat inspection, please call:

866-247-0213