

Moving Up Safely: Belt Positioning Booster Seat and Seat Belts

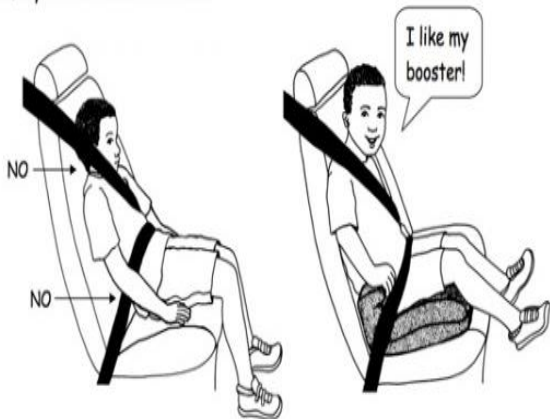
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Girl Scout Gold Award Project

Alaska State Law

- All passengers regardless of age need to use a seatbelt or appropriate restraint (car seat or booster seat) device.
- The driver of the car is responsible for all passengers under the age of 16 to be properly restrained in the vehicle.
- Children should be a minimum of four years old and 40 pounds before moving into a booster seat.

If your child isn't using a booster, try the simple test below the next time you ride together in the car. You may find that your child is not yet ready to use a safety belt without a booster.



The 5-Step 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 belt cross the shoulder between the neck and arm?
4. Is the lap belt as low as possible, touching the thighs?
5. Can the child stay seated like this for the whole trip?

**** Riding in a booster seat is almost twice as safe as wearing just a seatbelt.

Selecting the Right Seat

Making sure that you select the right type of child restraint and that it is properly installed and used is one way to give the best protection possible to the children that you are transporting.

- Two types of car seats can be installed as booster seats: high back and backless booster seat.
 - High-back booster seat - may have removable back; may have adjustable headrests.
 - Backless booster seat - the child needs to be able to sit upright with their head supported by the vehicle headrest.
- Booster seats must be used with the vehicle's lap and shoulder belts.
- Select your child safety seat based on the size and weight of your child.
- Each seat has a maximum height and weight limit for use, listed on the seat's label and in the manufacturer's instructions.
- Remember to send in the registration card if you purchased a new seat. This is helpful in contacting you if there is a recall on your seat.

Seatbelt Systems

As your child outgrows the booster seat (more than 57 inches tall and around 8-12 years old), make sure the seatbelt fits by using the 5-Step booster test. They need to sit all the way back against the vehicle seat, knees bent at the edge of the seat and the lap belt low and snug across upper thighs. Shoulder belt is snug across chest, and child stays in position during the trip. **Never** place shoulder belt behind the back or under the arm.

Additional Resources

Mat-Su Services for Children and Adults (MSSCA):
Safe Kids Mat-Su
1225 W. Spruce Ave.
Wasilla, AK 99654
907-352-1229



Safe Kids Alaska
3200 Providence Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508
907-212-3194



You can also register your car seat at the following websites if you haven't done so already!

www.safercar.gov/parents/index.htm

www.nhtsa.gov



For help learning how to correctly install and use your child's safety seat, speak with a certified technician at Mat-Su Services for Children & Adults, Safe Kids Mat-Su 352-1229

You can also visit Alaska's seat check website www.carseatsak.org

Know the History of Your Seat

This is especially true if the car seat is second hand.

- Car seats do expire. The expiration date maybe located on the car seat usually on the bottom or the side of the seat. If you don't see it, call the manufacturer for details.
- Has the car seat been in a crash? If so, discard in a dark trash bag so it cannot be reused.

Basic Safety Tips

No bulky clothing

- In an accident, the extra padding can compress allowing for excessive movement of the child and possible ejection.

Ride in a back seat

- Children should always ride in the back seat even though they can look forward and only in a seating position with an airbag as a last resort.
- For children, the back seat is almost twice as safe as the front.

Avoid hard toys and aftermarket items

- These items can become projectiles during a crash or hard breaking situation and potentially injure the child or other occupants.

Food and drinks

- These items are choking hazards when traveling. It is best to pull over, enjoy the snack and then resume the trip.



**Your local
Child Passenger Safety Technician**

This handout is designed to help you understand the two types of booster seats as well as how to install and use them properly and the vehicle seatbelt system so that your precious cargo arrives safely at your destination.

This fact sheet may be reprinted, with all information intact.