

Car crashes are the #1 preventable cause of death of children and young adults . . .

as well as a major cause of permanent brain damage, epilepsy, and spinal cord injuries. A sudden stop at 30 miles per hour could cause the same crushing force on your child's brain and body as a fall from a 3-story building. Fortunately, by buckling up children, we can prevent most of these deaths and serious injuries.

Safety seats save lives and prevent injuries

I became involved in the field of child passenger safety in 1970 because it was extremely hard to find a safe car seat for my daughter, Kerstin. She ended up riding in a forward-facing seat with a shield at just 5 months of age because only a few seats were crash-tested then. Fortunately, protection for babies and older children is much better today. Kaja and Tavi, my daughter's twins, rode in rear-facing seats until they were nearly two years old (see cover photo). At age five, they still rode in a safety seat with a 5-point harness in the back seat.

Stephanie M. Tombrello, LCSW

Executive Director, SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.

Boosters reduce injuries by 60% for kids ages 4-8.

"I want to share a brief story about what happened to my son Alex and me, with the hope someone can benefit from our experience. For some reason my son had moved his booster seat into the third row in our van. We were in a hurry, so I sat him without a booster and thought 'Oh, what will it matter this time.' As I was about to close the door, I noticed the safety belt was hitting him too high. I stopped and had him crawl into the booster and I reached back to buckle him in. No more than 10 minutes later, we were going through a green light at 45 mph when someone tried to make a left turn in front of us. Our van was totaled in the crash, but I was OK because of my safety belt and air bag and Alex was OK because he was in his booster seat."

(Adapted from a letter by Catherine Musicant.

A picture of Alex in his booster is on the cover.)

SHOPPING GUIDE

INFANT SAFETY SEATS Rear-facing only

Certified up to 22 lbs except as noted. (¹up to 30 lbs.)

Baby Trend Flex-Loc, Latch-Loc; **Britax** Companion; **Chicco** KeyFit, KeyFit 30¹; **Combi** Connection, Shuttle; **Compass** Infant; **Dorel** Arriva, Comfort Infant, Designer/Deluxe Infant, Maxi-Cosi Mico, SureFit/onBoard; **Evenflo** Discovery 5, Embrace 5, First Choice 5; **Graco** Assura, Infant SafeSeat¹, SnugRide; **Mia Moda** Viva; **Orbit** Infant; **Peg Pérego** Primo Viaggio SIP 30/30¹; **TeamTex** BabyRide

SELECTED CONVERTIBLE SAFETY SEATS 5-point harness

Certified rear facing to 30-35 lbs. Forward facing to 40 lbs. except as noted. (²Certified up to 50-80 lbs. with harness, ³Converts to booster)

Britax Boulevard², Decathlon², Diplomat, Marathon², Roundabout; **Dorel** 3-Phase³, All-in-One Deluxe³, Alpha Omega/All-In-One³, Alpha Omega Elite/Alpha Luxe/Echelon/Deluxe 3-In-1³, Enspira/Deluxe Convertible³, Intera³, Maxi-Cosi Priori, Scenera, Touriva/Regal Ride, Uptown; **Evenflo** Titan Elite², Tribute 5, Triumph Advance²; **Graco** Comfort Sport; **Recaro** Como², Signo²; **Sunshine Kids** Radian65², Radian80²; **Triple Play** Sit'n'Stroll (converts to stroller)

SELECTED FORWARD-FACING ONLY SAFETY SEATS 5-point harness

(³Converts to booster, ⁴Certified up to 60-80 lbs. with harness)

Britax Regent⁴; **Dorel** Apex 65^{3,4}, Commuter/Ventura/High Back Booster³, Prospect/Adjustable High Back Booster³; Summit/Deluxe Highback Booster³, Vantage/Surveyor/Comfort High Back Booster³; **Evenflo** Generations/Bolero³, Vision/Chase/Traditions³; **Graco** CarGo³, Cherished/Platinum/Ultra CarGo³, Nautilus^{3,4}, Toddler SafeSeat; **SafeGuard** Child Seat⁴, Go^{3,4}; **Recaro** Young Sport³

HARNESSES FOR LARGER CHILDREN

E-Z-ON vests/harnesses; **Safe Traffic System** Ride Safer Travel Vests

BELT-POSITIONING BOOSTER SEATS Use with lap-shoulder belt

Baby Trend Booster; **Britax** Monarch, Parkway; **Combi** Dakota, Kobuk; **Compass** Folding Boosters; **Dorel** Ambassador/Highrise, Auto Booster, Complete Voyager/Select Ride, enRoute, Maxi-Cosi Rodi, Pronto, Protek, Traveler; **Evenflo** Big Kid Booster, Confidence; **Graco** AirBooster, TurboBooster; **Jané** Team, Team Plus; **LaRoche** Grizzly Bear, Polar Bear, Teddy Bear; **Magna** Clek Olli; **ProRider** CNS Booster; **Recaro** Start, Vivo, Vivo Lite; **Safety Angel** Ride Rytte (may be used with E-Z-ON harnesses); **Team-Tex America** Dreamway SP, HighRide; **Volvo** Booster Cushion

Call *SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.* for information about child restraints sold by vehicle dealers, car beds for babies who must lie flat, products for children with special needs, air travel.

SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A., Box 553, Altadena, CA 91003
(800) 745-SAFE (310) 222-6860 www.carseat.org

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THE PERFECT GIFT Your Child's Safety



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT CAR SAFETY SEATS

How can I tell if my child's seat is a "safe" one?

All safety seats must pass crash tests and be certified that they meet federal safety standards. When you buy a new seat, mail in the registration card for notification of possible defects. Keep the instruction booklet with the seat and make an extra file copy with a notation of the manufacture date, found on a sticker glued to the seat.

Are used car seats safe?

Avoid buying a used car seat at a thrift shop or garage sale, since it could be on recall or have invisible crash damage. If you already have a car seat, be sure it has complete identification stickers, including date made; is less than 10 years old, preferably less than five; has all of its parts, including the instruction booklet; then check the most recent recall list.

Which car seat is the "best?"

The "best" seat is the one that... **Fits your child**

A small, rear-facing-only seat may be convenient for newborns, but most babies need a larger "convertible" seat at about six months. To prevent serious spinal injuries, babies should continue facing the rear as long as possible (preferably until age two). When children reach the rear-facing limits of a convertible seat (30-35 pounds or head near the top edge), it is time to ride in a forward-facing safety seat with a harness. Most children need a booster from about age 4 until they are at least 8-10 years old.*

Fits your car(s)

Try before you buy! Read and follow both sets of instructions—the booklet included with the safety seat and the "child restraint" section in your vehicle owner's manual. Make sure the safety seat you have chosen fits in the back seat of the car, matches the shape of the vehicle seat cushion, and can be firmly attached with the vehicle belt or LATCH.**

Fits the needs of your family

Choose a seat that is easy to use correctly, including installing it in your car(s) and adjusting the harness. The "best" safety seat for your family is the one you and your child will be comfortable using on every ride.

***Lower Anchors and Tethers for CHildren. All new cars and many made since 2000 have special hardware to attach child safety seats.*

Why should children ride in the back seat?

The back seat is almost twice as safe as the front, whether or not the vehicle has air bags. Research indicates that children should ride in the back seat until they reach age 15.

How do I install my child's car seat?

Press the safety seat into the vehicle seat while tightening the lap portion of the vehicle belt or the LATCH** strap. Check the vehicle owner's manual for instructions to prevent the belt from loosening. To test for a tight installation, hold the safety seat at the belt path, then push and pull toward the front and sides of the vehicle. It should not move more than one inch. If the safety seat has a top tether strap, attach it to the tether anchor in the car.

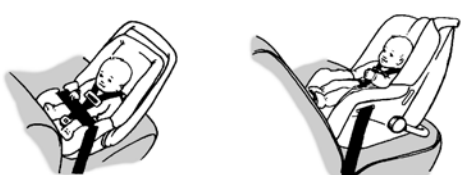
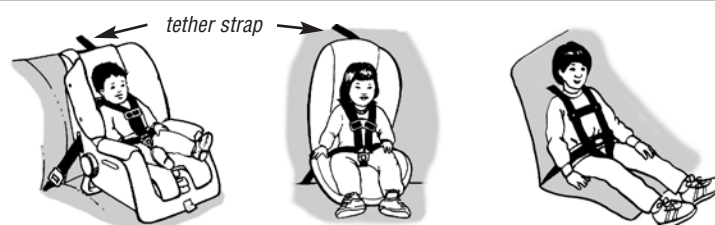

How can I keep my child in the car seat?

- Start a lifelong habit with baby's first ride.
- Strengthen the habit by never making an exception.
- Encourage good passengers with praise, singing, games.
- Keep a bag of special soft toys and books in the car.
- Make regular stops to stretch.
- Introduce your child to a new safety seat with a short trip for fun.
- Always wear your own safety belt!

Four Rules for Auto Safety

1. Choose a safety seat that fits your child.
2. Check that it fits tightly in the car.
3. Follow instructions exactly.
4. Buckle up children in the back seat.

HOW TO CHOOSE AND USE CAR SAFETY SEATS

	Newborns and Older Babies Face rear as long as possible (2 yrs. recommended)	Young Children Use seat with harness as long as possible (minimum 3-4 yrs.)	Older Children Use belt-positioning booster until child can pass 5-Step Test (see below).
Type of Safety Seat	<p><i>Passenger air bags can cause fatal injuries to infants!</i></p>  <p>Rear-facing infant seat (most fit up to 22-30 lbs.) Rear-facing convertible (most fit up to 30-35 lbs.)</p>	 <p>Forward-facing convertible (most fit up to 40-80 lbs.) Forward-facing only (most fit up to 40-80 lbs.) Harness or built-in (weight limits vary)</p>	 <p>Belt-positioning booster with lap and shoulder belt (from about age 4 to at least age 8-10*) Lap and shoulder belt</p>
How to Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby must face back of car • Safety seat is tilted about halfway back • Baby's head does not flop forward • Straps are in slots at or below shoulder level • Harness is adjusted snugly before adding blankets • Baby's head is at least 1" below top edge of seat • Safety seat is firmly installed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child sits upright or slightly reclined • Harness is very snug (cannot pinch strap between fingers) • Chest clip is at armpit level • Straps are in slots at or above shoulder level • Top strap slots must be used for some convertible seats • Top tether strap is attached to vehicle • Safety seat cannot be pulled to sides or front more than 1" 	<p>*Try the 5-Step Test to find out if the child is ready for belt only.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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? <p>If you cannot answer every question "yes," the child needs a booster.</p>
Errors to Avoid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never face baby forward • Never place baby in front of air bag • Never use household carrier in car 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never let the straps slip down on the arms • Never leave any slack in the harness (pinch test) • Never let the child out of the seat "just this once" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never put two people in one belt • Never put shoulder belt under arm or behind back • Never use only lap belt with a booster