

# Quick Checklist for Safety Seat Misuse

## Check for these common and dangerous mistakes:

- 1. Child not using the safety seat or sitting in the seat without using the harness.
- 2. Baby facing the front of the car. Children should face the rear until at least age 1, preferably 2.
- 3. Rear-facing child riding in front seat of car with passenger air bag. Air bags are fatal for infants!
- 4. Toddler or older child riding in front. If car has passenger air bag and back seat is full, slide front seat back as far as possible, adjust shoulder straps snugly, make sure child does not lean forward.
- 5. Too many people in the car. There must be one safety belt per person.

## Car seat problems:

- 6. Unsafe used seat (rusty, cracked, broken, bent, over 5-10 years old, involved in crash or not known).
- 7. Child too big for seat (weight above maximum per instructions or head not supported).
- 8. Child too small or too young for seat (shield in front of infant's face or neck; 2-year-old in booster).
- 9. Harness straps threaded incorrectly (check instructions) or too loose (should not be able to pinch a fold in the strap between the thumb and finger).
- 10. Harness straps on the arms or under the arms (straps must go over the shoulders).
- 11. Buckle, crotch strap or overhead shield (if there is one) not attached. Listen for the "click."

## Installation problems:

- 12. Safety seat attached to car incorrectly. Check manuals for car seat and vehicle.
- 13. Loose installation (should not move more than 1" when pushed toward front of car or sideways).
- 14. Older child using safety belt incorrectly. Use a booster for safe belt fit and child's comfort.
- 15. Booster used with only a lap belt (lap-shoulder belt must be used).

**Important: This is a partial list designed to help parents, drivers, and law enforcement officers recognize obvious misuse. It is not to be used as the basis of a detailed inspection.**

### How to find out more about keeping your child safe in the car

Nine out of ten of the car seats inspected at checkups have something wrong, and some of the problems could cause serious injuries to the child. Read the manufacturer's instruction booklet carefully to make sure you are using your seat correctly. To order the instruction booklet or to find out if your seat is covered by a recall, call the company that made the seat. Most recalled seats can be fixed by ordering free replacement parts from the manufacturer. When you call, have the seat in front of you so you can describe it. Look for the label stuck to the side or back of the seat and write down the following information:

Manufacturer \_\_\_\_\_ Model name and # \_\_\_\_\_ Date made \_\_\_\_\_

### Contact information for some major car seat companies:

<b>Britax</b> 888-427-4829 www.britaxusa.com	<b>Chicco</b> 717-735-6200 www.chiccousa.com	<b>Combi</b> 800-992-6624 www.combi-intl.com	<b>Compass</b> 888-899-2229 www.compassbaby.com
<b>Dorel Juvenile Group</b> 800-544-1108 www.djgusa.com	<b>Evenflo Company</b> 800-233-5921 www.evenflo.com	<b>Graco</b> 800-345-4109 www.gracobaby.co	<b>IMMI</b> 800-586-7839 www.imminet.com
<b>Peg Perego U.S.A.</b> 800-671-1701 www.perego.com	<b>Recaro</b> 248-364-3818 www.recaro-nao.com	<b>Sunshine Kids</b> 888-336-7909 www.skjp.com	<b>Team-TEX America</b> 877-912-1313 www.tta-kids.com

**SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.** P.O. Box 553, Altadena, CA 91003 www.carseat.org  
310/222-6860, 800/745-SAFE (English) 310/222-6862, 800/747-SANO (Spanish)

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