Always Remember...

- Put your child in a safety seat every time you travel, even on short trips.
- Safety experts recommend that all children under 13 ride in the back seat.
- Never hold a child on your lap while riding in either the front or back seat.
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for correct safety seat installation.
- The center rear seat is the safest place in the car.
- Use the car's seat belt or the LATCH system (detailed in vehicle owner's manual) to anchor the child safety seat to the car.
- Make sure the safety seat's harness fits snugly.
- Tether straps greatly reduce head injury. If your seat is equipped with a tether, refer to your vehicle owner's manual for the location of the anchor hook-up for the tether strap.
- Set a good example by wearing your seat belt every time you travel. All drivers and passengers must wear a seat belt in New Jersey. It's the law.

- A lap and shoulder belt system restrains the upper body and head from forward movement better than a lap belt only.
- Studies show that when children are buckled up correctly, they are less likely to be injured during a crash.
- Never use a child safety seat that has been in a crash. Obtain a new child safety seat.
- Use only federally approved child safety seats that follow the manufacturer's recommendation regarding the useful life of the restraint.

Get Help!

Resources on the Web

www.njsaferoads.com
Click on the child safety seat icon for information on New Jersey Child Passenger Safety laws, frequently asked questions and how to find a Child Safety Seat Technician in your area. The Seat Check Schedule page lists places in New Jersey where you can get help learning how to select the right seat for your child, as well as information on the proper use and/or installation of child safety seats, booster seats and seat belts.

www.nhtsa.gov
Maintained by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), this site contains information on child safety seat recalls, car seat installation tips and much more. Click on the child safety box under the "Key Issues" heading for information to help you make more informed decisions when choosing and using a car seat.

www.safercar.gov/parents
Parents Central is a one stop shop with tools and resources for keeping kids safe in and around cars. Available information includes links for child safety seat recall notices, buying a safer car for child passengers, car seat ease of use ratings and more.

www.facebook.com/childpassengersafety
http://twitter.com/childseatsafety

Telephone Contact

For more information on child safety seats, booster seats, seat belts or child safety seat inspection and education sites near you, call the Division of Highway Traffic Safety's number below, or the:

USDOT Vehicle Safety Hotline (888) 327-4236

CLICK ON THE ICON FROM OUR HOME PAGE

DIVISION OF HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
140 East Front Street • 7th Floor
P.O. Box 048 • Trenton, NJ • 08625-0048
Tel: 609.633.9300 • Fax: 609.633.9020
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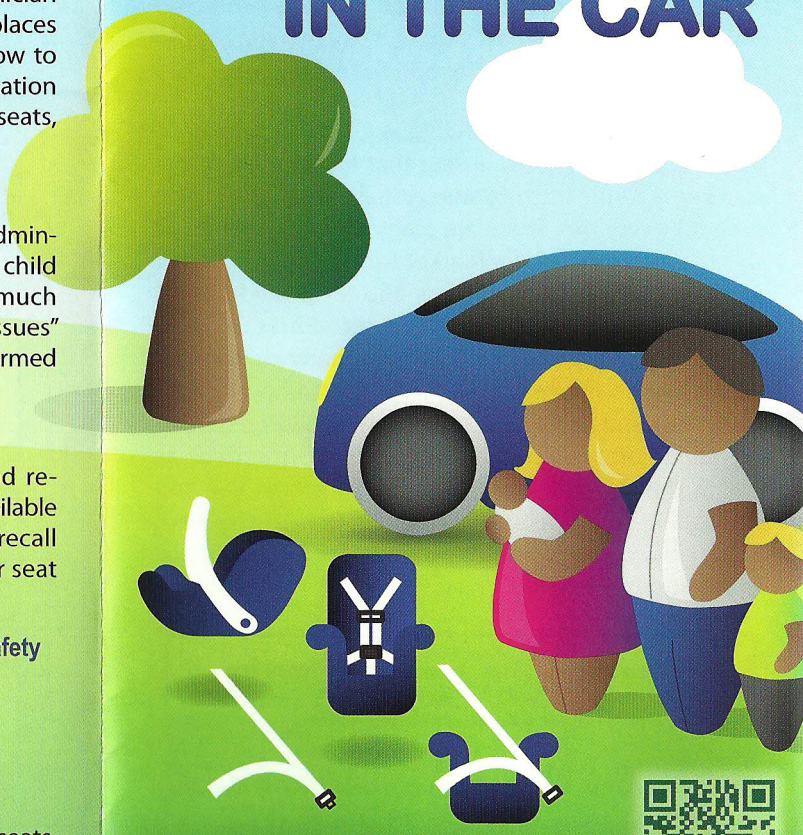
MP082014

New Jersey's Guide to:

STAYING SAFE IN THE CAR



Car Seat Recommendations for Children

SAFE PASSAGE
moving toward zero fatalities
WWW.NJSAFEROADS.COM

Motor vehicle crashes are the number one cause of death for children over the age of six months in the United States. The proper use of child safety seats is one of the simplest and most effective methods available for protecting the lives of our young children in the event of a motor vehicle crash. It is also effective in preventing injury and reducing the need for hospitalization.

Please make sure that children are properly protected while traveling in a motor vehicle. Only the correct use of child safety seats will offer optimal protection.

The **"right"** seat for your child is largely a matter of personal choice. Choose a seat that fits your child and your car, read the instructions carefully, and use the seat correctly every trip. There are many different models of child safety seats on the market today. Each one must meet federal safety standards and all provide good protection for your child when used correctly. Both state and national studies show that many child safety seats are used or installed improperly. It's important for all parents and persons who transport children to read the child safety seat manufacturer's instructions, as well as the vehicle owner's manual for proper use and installation. This brochure is designed to help you learn about child passenger safety and how to get additional information if needed.

PURCHASE AND INSTALL
3 WEEKS
BEFORE YOUR DUE DATE

Remember, adults should wear seat belts, too. Set an example for the children in your car. When you're an expectant mother, it's important to always wear your seat belt to protect you and your unborn child. Wear the lap belt across your hips and below your belly with the shoulder belt across your chest (between your breasts). Plan on having your child safety seat (infant seat) installed in your vehicle at least three weeks before your baby's due date. Adhere to the following recommendations to ensure your child is restrained safely and properly.

Car Seat Recommendations for Children

- Select a car seat based on your child's age and size, and choose a seat that fits in your vehicle and use it every time.
- Always refer to your specific car seat manufacturer's instructions; read the vehicle owner's manual on how to install the car seat using the seat belt or LATCH system; and check height and weight limits.
- To maximize safety, keep your child in the car seat for as long as possible, as long as the child fits within the manufacturer's height and weight requirements.
- Keep your child in the back seat at least through age 12.

AGE

Birth – 12 months Your child under age 1 should always ride in a rear-facing car seat. There are different types of rear-facing car seats: Infant-only seats can only be used rear-facing. Convertible and 3-in-1 car seats typically have higher height and weight limits for the rear-facing position, allowing you to keep your child rear-facing for a longer period of time.

1 – 3 years Keep your child rear-facing as long as possible. It's the best way to keep him or her safe. Your child should remain in a rear-facing car seat until he or she reaches the top height or weight limit allowed by your car seat's manufacturer. Once your child outgrows the rear-facing car seat, your child is ready to travel in a forward-facing car seat with a harness.

4 – 7 years Keep your child in a forward-facing car seat with a harness until he or she reaches the top height or weight limit allowed by your car seat's manufacturer. Once your child outgrows the forward-facing car seat with a harness, it's time to travel in a booster seat, but still in the back seat.

8 – 12 years Keep your child in a booster seat until he or she is big enough to fit in a seat belt properly. For a seat belt to fit properly the lap belt must lie snugly across the upper thighs, not the stomach. The shoulder belt should lie snug across the shoulder and chest and not cross the neck or face. Remember: your child should still ride in the back seat because it's safer there.

New Jersey Law Requires:

- Children under age 8 who weigh less than 80 pounds must ride in a child safety or booster seat in the rear seat of the vehicle. If there is no back seat, the child must sit in the front seat secured by a child safety or booster seat. ***NOTE*** Never install a child safety seat in the front seat with a passenger side airbag without knowing all the warnings. For important information about airbags and child safety seats, go to **www.njsaferoads.com**, click on the child safety seat icon, and then click on the Safety Seat Law link.
- Once a child reaches either of these milestones, age 8 or 80 lbs., s/he must wear a properly adjusted and fastened seat belt anywhere in the vehicle.
- Motorists in violation of the law (Title 39:3-76.2a) can be stopped by police and issued a summons.