

# Protect Yourself

## Child Safety Seat Usage Tips from the Ohio State Highway Patrol

The safest way to transport young children in a motor vehicle is in a child safety seat in the rear seat of your car. In Ohio, child safety seats are mandatory for children under four-years of age or who weigh under 40 pounds. Even a belted adult cannot protect a child during a collision. A crash impact can pull an infant from an adult's arms with a force of 300 pounds or more. Infants and young children should ride in child safety seats on every trip they take.

### Suggestions that can help keep children safe.

- A properly installed child safety seat will provide effective crash protection for your child. Incorrect use of a child safety seat can drastically reduce its effectiveness.
- Carefully read and follow child seat installation instructions. Also, read the car owner's manual for installation instructions and make special note of safety belts that may not work with a child safety seat.
- Select a child safety seat that fits both your child and vehicle. Use it every time your child rides in a motor vehicle.
- Infant seats are designed to be installed facing the rear of the vehicle to provide the most protection for young passengers.
- Never place a rear-facing safety seat in the front seat of a vehicle that has an air bag on the passenger side. The air bag could strike the back of the safety seat with enough force to seriously injure your child.
- Never let children ride in the bed of a truck, or sleep and play in the rear of any vehicle without the proper restraint.
- Place children in the back seat. This is the safest place for any child.
- Fasten the child seat harness snugly over the child's shoulders.

### Child Safety Seat Problems to Avoid

- All child safety seats are not compatible with all cars. Make certain your child safety seat will fit the car and seating position in which it will be used.
- At least 80 percent of the child safety seat base should be on the car's seat. Be careful of a child safety seat that is too large to put in the back seat of the car, or has a base which extends too far over the edges of the car's seat.
- Be aware of a child safety seat that is too large for the vehicle's safety belt system, and of a safety belt buckle that is impossible to latch or tighten through the child safety seat.
- If children must ride in the front seat of a car equipped with air bags, they should be protected with a child safety seat, booster seat, or by the car's safety belt. Again, rear-facing child safety seats should never be placed in front of a car equipped with a passenger-side air bag. Place the child seat in the rear of the car.
- When shopping for a new car, take your child safety seat along to make sure it will fit the car you select. When shopping for a child safety seat, test each model for fit and convenience in your car and let your child try it.



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