



# Building Blocks to Brighter Futures

Resources to Help Make Sure All Our Kids are "AOK"

## 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.



### 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.

Information adapted from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration child seat guidelines available at <http://www.nhtsa.gov/Safety/CPS>

For more information on Infant and Children Health and Safety, please visit the Kane County Health Department's website at [www.kanehealth.com/aok.htm](http://www.kanehealth.com/aok.htm) or call (630) 208-3801.

## DESCRIPTION (RESTRAINT TYPE)

 <p>A <b>REAR-FACING CAR SEAT</b> is the best seat for your young child to use. It has a harness and in a crash, cradles and moves with your child to reduce the stress to the child's fragile neck and spinal</p>	 <p>A <b>FORWARD-FACING CAR SEAT</b> has a harness and tether that limits your child's forward movement during a crash.</p>	 <p>A <b>BOOSTER SEAT</b> positions the seat belt so that it fits properly over the stronger parts of your child's body.</p>	 <p>A <b>SEAT BELT</b> should lie across the upper thighs and be snug across the shoulder and chest to restrain the child safely in a crash. It should not rest on the stomach area or across the neck.</p>
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### Care Seat Recommendations for Children

Using a child restraint seat correctly makes a big difference. Even the "safest" seat may not protect your child in a crash unless it is used correctly. So take a minute to check to be sure...

#### Does your car have a passenger air bag?

- An infant in a rear-facing restraint seat should NEVER be placed in the front seat of a vehicle that has a passenger air bag.
- The safest place for all children to ride is in the back seat.

#### Is the harness or straps snug; does it stay on your child's shoulders?

- Harnesses or straps should fit snugly against your child's body. Check the child restraint seat instructions on how to adjust the straps.
- The chest clip should be placed at the level of the armpit to keep the harness straps snug on shoulders.

#### Has your child grown too tall or reached the top weight limit for the forward-facing seat?

- Children are best protected in a child restraint seat with a full harness until they reach the top weight or height limit of the car safety seat.
- Once your child is too big for his child restraint seat, use a belt-positioning booster seat to help protect him until he is big enough for the seat belt to fit 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.

#### Does the car safety seat fit correctly in your vehicle?

- Not all car safety seats fit in all vehicles. Check your owner's manual for instructions.
- When the car safety seat is installed, be sure it does not move side-to-side or toward the front of the car.
- Read the section on child restraint seats in the owner's manual for your car.

#### Is the car safety seat installed correctly?

- Have a Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician inspect the installation of your child restraint seat to make sure you have installed it correctly. It is best to find out BEFORE you child's injured in an accident.
- **Child restraint seats must be replaced after they have been involved in moderate to serious accidents.**

#### Questions?

To find a Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician (CPS) call in our area call Safe Kids Kane County representative, Ron Smith, at 630-815-7718 or [kcskron@aol.com](mailto:kcskron@aol.com). To find a car seat safety check event in our region go to [www.Seatcheck.net](http://www.Seatcheck.net) More Illinois information is available at [www.buckleupillinois.org](http://www.buckleupillinois.org) Contact the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration call (888) 327-4236 or visit the website at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/> to find a certified technician or center near you when you enter your zip code.

This information was obtained from The American Academy of Pediatrics at [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org) and the National Highway traffic Safety Administration at <http://www.nhtsa.gov/Safety/CPS> .

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