

Keep Young Children Safe in the Car

Car accidents are the leading cause of death for young children in the United States. Always use child safety seats positioned in safe spots in the car. Remember these key rules to keep children safe:

Use the right seat for your child's weight and height

Use a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) rated car seat. Select a car seat based on your child's weight, height, and positioning needs. Children under age 2 must be properly secured in a rear-facing car seat. Children under age 8, weighing less than 40 pounds, must be secured in an approved child safety seat. Children taller or heavier than the recommended limits for forward-facing car seats need booster seats placed in the rear seat secured with seat belts.

Put children in a safe spot

The safest place for children of any age to ride is the rear seat of a vehicle. Each child and each safety seat require a separate seat belt. Truck beds are not a safe place for children to ride.

You are required to use a child safety seat

The parent or legal guardian of a child under age 8 must provide a child safety seat to anyone who transports his or her child. Children with physical disabilities that prevent the use of standard child safety seats are exempt from the law if the disability has been certified by a physician.



Make sure seats are installed correctly

Consult with a car seat technician if you have questions about installation or rules about your child safety seat. To find a technician in your area, go to <http://cert.safekids.org/get-car-seat-checked>

Never leave children alone in a vehicle

In just a few minutes left alone in a car, children can be in danger from heat and dehydration, even if the windows are partly open. A child can wriggle out of a seat, hit the controls, and cause the car to move.

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this tip sheet are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois State Board of Education.



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