

Car Seat Safety is as easy as 1 2 3 4

Sadly, car accidents are the leading cause of death for children ages 3-14. But the good news is that proper use of a car safety seat dramatically reduces the likelihood of injury to children involved in a collision. You can protect your child by using the correct safety seat AND ensuring it is properly installed. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recommends following these four steps to ensure your child rides safely:

1

Your infant belongs in a rear-facing safety seat in the back seat until at least age 1 and at least 20 lbs. If under age 1, but more than 20 lbs., place your child in a seat approved for heavier babies and keep them rear-facing until they reach their first birthday. Children should ride rear-facing as long as possible, but at least until they reach the upper weight or height limits of their safety seats.

2

When your child outgrows a rear-facing seat (at a minimum age 1 and at least 20 pounds) switch to a forward-facing child safety seat properly secured in the back seat. Keep your child in the forward-facing seat until he or she reaches the upper weight or height limit of the particular seat, usually around age 4 and 40 pounds.

3

A booster seat will replace the forward-facing seat, and should be used until the vehicle seat belts fit properly.

4

When your child outgrows the booster seat, (usually at age 8 or when 4'9" tall) it is safe to use the adult seat belt in the back seat if it fits properly. Seat belts fit properly when the lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest. Children under 13 should always ride in the back seat.



For additional information, go to: www.nhtsa.dot.gov and www.dhs.ca.gov/epic/cps

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