

Safe kids Healthy kids Happy kids

Infant Car Seats Help Keep Babies Safe

Car crashes injure more than 90,000 children under age 8 every year. Over 1000 children die. Use of infant and child safety seats reduces the risk of injury and death from a car crash.

All infants should ride in a rear-facing seat for as long as possible.

Keep your baby in the rear-facing seat until she reaches the highest weight or height allowed.

Read the manufacturer's guidelines. The

12-month to 20 lb. rule is actually a *minimum* rule. Babies' heads are big, and their necks are weak. Rear facing seats help prevent spinal injuries caused by a babies head jerking forward. While riding in a car, a crying baby in a safety seat is safer than a sleeping baby in a mother's arms.

Know how to use the car safety seat correctly. Read and follow the instructions. Be sure the seat fits your child and car. A common mistake is not buckling the car seat tightly enough. Car safety seats should not tip forward or slide from side to side more than 1 inch.

Install the car safety seat in the middle of the back seat. Never put a baby in the front seat. Front and passenger side air bags help keep adults safe in a car crash. However, they can cause serious neck and head injuries to babies.



Know your car seat's history. Used seats might lack needed parts or be damaged from use or an accident. As car seats age, plastic becomes brittle and could easily break. Usually, they come without the booklet on how to install them. Also, because the previous owner registered

the seat, you do not receive recall information.

Be sure to mail in the card that comes with your new safety seat. They will send you recall notices if a problem occurs. You can also call to check for recalls. Contact NHTSA at 1-888-327-4236. You need the date of manufacture and model number.

If someone else drives your baby, make sure:

- Your baby's seat fits into the vehicle properly,
- Your baby's seat is the correct size, and
- The driver knows how to install the seat and buckle the straps.

Child care programs should have written guidelines for transporting children. Ask to see those guidelines.

Brought to you by Parent Help Line and St. John's Children's Hospital



Call the Parent Help Line. Help is just a phone call away.
1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
www.parenthelpline.org

