

# Child Passenger Safety

## A PARENT'S PRIMER

When you're an expectant mother, it's important to always wear your seat belt to protect you and your unborn child. Wear the lap belt across your hips and below your belly with the shoulder belt across your chest (between your breasts). Once your baby is born, follow these important safety steps.

## GROWING UP SAFE: It's a four-step process.

As children grow, how they sit in your car, truck or SUV should change.

Save your child from injury or death by observing all four steps:

- 1 REAR-FACING SEATS**  For the best possible protection keep infants in the back seat, in rear-facing child safety seats, as long as possible up to the height or weight limit of the particular seat. At a minimum, keep infants rear-facing until a minimum of age 1 **and** at least 20 pounds.
- 2 FORWARD-FACING SEATS**  When children outgrow their rear-facing seats (at a minimum age 1 **and** at least 20 pounds) they should ride in forward-facing child safety seats, in the back seat, until they reach the upper weight or height limit of the particular seat (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds).
- 3 BOOSTER SEATS**  Once children outgrow their forward-facing seats (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds), they should ride in booster seats, in the back seat, until the vehicle seat belts fit properly. Seat belts fit properly when the lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest (usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall).
- 4 SEAT BELTS**  When children outgrow their booster seats, (usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall) they can use the adult seat belt in the back seat, if it fits properly (lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest).

## Get Help!

### ON THE WEB

Go to [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov) and choose Child Safety Seat Information from the menu or click on the child passenger safety icon. The site includes child safety seat installation tips, product ratings, recalls, and other useful information.

### BY PHONE

For more information about child safety seats, booster seats, inspection/fitting stations in your area, seat belts, air bags, and

other highway safety issues, call the DOT Vehicle Safety Hotline at: 1-888-327-4236.

### NEAR YOU

A certified child passenger safety technician can check your installation and answer questions. To find a technician or an inspection station near you, go to [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov), click on the child passenger safety icon, and then click on the Fitting/Inspection Station link or go to [www.seatcheck.org](http://www.seatcheck.org).

**REMEMBER: All children under 13 should ride in the back seat.**

Always read the child restraint instructions and the vehicle owner's manual.

