

# Child Passenger Safety

Kids can live with it!



Car crashes remain the number one killer of children ages 3-14 in the United States. Safe Kids Buckle Up, the largest program of Safe Kids Worldwide, teaches parents and caregivers to use the right safety gear for their kids in their vehicles on every ride.

Children of all ages need special care when they ride in motor vehicles. Many adults are surprised to learn that it can take up to 12 years for a child to be big enough for safety belts — close to 5 feet tall and between 80 and 100 pounds. Until children reach that size and weight, they need to use car seats or booster seats for both protection in case of a crash and comfort. Your child will take three car seat steps before reaching step four, the safety belt.

**Safe Kids Buckle Up**, a program operated in partnership with Chevrolet and General Motors for 10 years, provides free inspections of car seats, shows you how to install and adjust car seats properly and evaluates older kids for safety belt fit at:

- Car seat checkup events, often held in partnership with Chevrolet or other General Motors dealerships
- Child Safety Seat Inspection Stations, in permanent locations throughout the country
- Community events, some served by our Mobile Car Seat Check Up Vans

To find your local Safe Kids coalition and make an appointment:

Safe Kids USA  
202-662-0600

[www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)

Safe Kids USA  
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Suite 1000  
Washington, DC 20004

Proud Program Sponsors



# Four Big Steps

## STEP 1

### INFANTS

Use a rear-facing car seat to at least age 1 and 20 lbs.

Use your rear-facing car seat longer if the seat has higher weight and height limits. Take the next step to a forward-facing car seat when your child is at least one year old and you answer “yes” to either question:

- Does your child exceed the car seat’s rear-facing height and weight limits?
- Is your child’s head within one inch of the car seat top?



Rear-facing Convertible

## STEP 2

### TODDLERS

Use a forward-facing car seat (convertible or combo seat) until the harness no longer fits

Take the next step to a booster seat when you answer “yes” to any of these questions:

- Does your child exceed the car seat’s height and weight limits?
- Are your child’s shoulders above the car seat’s top harness slots?
- Are the tops of your child’s ears above the car seat?



Forward-facing Seat

# STEP 3

## BOOSTERS

Use a booster seat with the vehicle lap and shoulder safety belts until your child passes the **Safety Belt Fit Test**.

Take the next step to the safety belt when you answer “yes” to these questions:

- Does your child exceed the booster seat’s height and weight limits?
- Does your child pass the **Safety Belt Fit Test** in all vehicles used:
  1. Have your child sit all the way back on the vehicle seat. Do his or her knees bend at the front edge of the seat? If they bend naturally, go to #2. If they don’t, return to the booster seat.
  2. Buckle the lap and shoulder belt. Be sure the lap belt rests on the upper legs or hips. If it does, go to #3. If it rests on the stomach, return to the booster seat.
  3. Be sure the shoulder belt rests on the shoulder or collarbone. If it does, go to #4. If it’s on the face or neck, return to the booster seat. Never put the shoulder belt under the child’s arm or behind the child’s back.
  4. Check whether your child maintains the correct seating position for as long as you are in the car. If your child slouches or shifts positions so the safety belt touches the face, neck or stomach, return your child to the booster seat.



Boosters: high-back and backless

# STEP 4

## SAFETY BELTS

Once your child passes the **Safety Belt Fit Test**, require him or her to use safety belts in a back seat in every vehicle on every ride, whether or not you are there. A lap and shoulder belt provides the best protection to your child and helps him or her to maintain the correct seating position.



Safety Belt