

Child Safety Seats: Choosing And Using Them Right

Ⓣ

(NAPSA)—For most parents, a child safety seat tops their “to-buy-for-baby” list. And with good reason: All 50 states have laws that require the use of child safety restraints. And the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) says that child safety seats reduce the risk of being killed in a car crash by 71 percent for an infant and by 54 percent for a toddler.

However, the wide range of child safety seats on the market today has left more than a few parents confused. A recent NHTSA study reveals that 72 percent of parents (close to three out of four!) don’t know how to use child safety restraints properly.

Choose It Right— 4 Steps For Kids

To help parents and caregivers choose the right safety restraints for children of every age, NHTSA developed “4 Steps For Kids.” Visit www.nhtsa.gov and click on “4 Steps For Kids” to download your copy today.

Or check out the “4 Steps For Kids” safety guidelines below:

1. 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 at least age 1 and at least 20 pounds.

2. When children outgrow their rear-facing seats (at least 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. 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. When children outgrow their booster seats (usually at age 8 or when they are 4’ 9” tall), they can use the adult seat belts in the back seat, if they fit properly (lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest).

Use It Right—National Seat Check Saturday

On Saturday, September 20, 2008, communities nationwide will offer free child safety seat checks. Stop by a local event to have a certified child passenger safety technician check your child’s safety seat to ensure it’s properly installed and provide tips for how to secure your child in the seat for optimal protection.

Learn More—Child Passenger Safety Week

Child Passenger Safety Week (September 21-27, 2008) is an annual event that focuses on keeping America’s child passengers safer on the road. For more information, visit www.nhtsa.gov and click on the “Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Week” link.