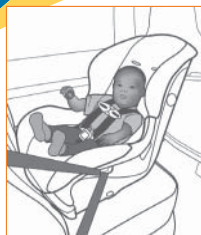


# A Reference for Proper Child Restraint Use



## Rear-Facing Infant or Convertible Seat

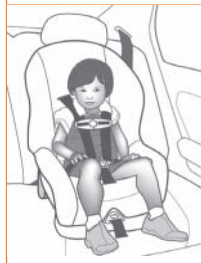
A child must be rear-facing until the child is over one year of age and over 20 pounds, never in front of an active air bag.

The harness

- must be at or below shoulder level
- straps must fit snugly
- must be clipped at armpit level

The seat

- must be tightly installed with vehicle safety belt or lower anchors
- must recline so infant's head does not fall forward



## Forward-Facing Seat

A child in a forward-facing seat must be at least one-year-old and between 20 and 40 pounds. Some models can accommodate heavier children.

The harness

- must be at or above shoulder level
- straps must fit snugly
- must be clipped at armpit level

The seat

- must be tightly installed with vehicle safety belt or lower anchors and with the top tether
- must be placed in upright position



## Belt Positioning Booster Seat

Children from about age four to at least age 8 must be placed in a booster seat unless 4 feet, 9 inches tall.

The booster seat can only be used with the vehicle lap and shoulder belt

The lap belt

- must cross the lower hips and upper thighs
- must never cross over the abdomen

The shoulder belt

- must be adjusted so it crosses the center of the shoulder and chest
- must never be worn behind the back or under the arm



## Safety Belt

A child wearing a safety belt must be at least 8 years of age or 4 feet, 9 inches tall.

Passengers should sit upright with back against the vehicle seat cushion. Lap belt must be snug across the lower hips and upper thighs -- never across the abdomen. If a shoulder belt is available, it must be adjusted so it crosses the center of the shoulder and chest -- never behind the back or under the arm. Note: If possible, children should continue to use a booster seat if their knees do not bend over the front edge of the vehicle seat when the child is sitting properly with back touching seat cushion.

# Pennsylvania Vehicle Code Safety Violations

## Child Passenger Safety Laws

### **Birth – Age 4; Primary Enforcement: Section 4581 (a)(1) Restraint Systems**

All drivers are responsible to secure children from birth to age 4 in an approved child passenger restraint system. Fine: Maximum fine of \$100.00 plus court costs, CAT, EMS, JCP or proof of car seat purchase.

### **Age 4 – Age 8; Secondary Enforcement: Section 4581 (a) (1.1)**

All drivers are responsible to secure children from 4 years of age up to 8 years of age in a seat belt system and an appropriately fitting child booster seat. Fine: Failure to comply with the provisions in 4581 (a)(1.1) shall be guilty of a summary offense with a maximum fine of \$100.00 plus CAT, EMS, JCP or proof of car seat purchase.

### **The following guidelines are allowed under the law for children who:**

- Weigh less than 40 lbs: May remain securely fastened in a child restraint system with a full harness appropriate for their age and weight.
- Weigh more than 80 lbs. or are 4'9" or taller: May be fastened in the safety belt system without using a child booster seat.
- Ride in a vehicle which was not originally equipped with a shoulder safety belt: Shall be fastened in the safety belt system without the use of a child booster seat or may be fastened in a child passenger restraint system with a full harness.

### **Age 8 – Age 18; Secondary Enforcement: Section 4581 (a)(2) Restraint Systems**

Drivers are responsible for themselves and to secure all children from 8 years of age up to 18 years of age in a seat belt system anywhere in the vehicle. Fine: \$10.00 plus CAT, EMS, and JCP when convicted of a primary offense.

### **Best Practice Guidelines**

- The back seat is the safest place for children under the age of 13.
- For the best possible protection, keep infants in rear-facing child safety seats up to the height or weight limit of the seat.
- Regardless of age, children under 4 feet, 9 inches tall should be secured using a booster seat. Booster seats raise children up on the vehicle seat so that the lap/shoulder belts fit correctly.



For more information, contact Safe Kids Pennsylvania at 1-800-683-5100

*Special thanks to Safe Kids York County*

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