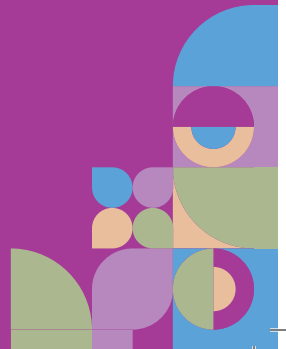




Children's Mercy
KANSAS CITY

Car Seat Safety



Car Seat Recommendations*

**Rear-Facing Car Seat • Forward-Facing Car Seat
Belt-Positioning Booster Seat
Lap and Shoulder Seat Belt**

Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death for children. Most of these deaths can be prevented! The best way to keep your child safe is to use an appropriate car seat or booster seat. Every trip! Every time!

More than half of all car seats and booster seats are not used right. A car seat, when used right, can reduce the risk of death by as much as 71% for infants under 1 year old, by 54% for toddlers one to four years old, and by 45% for children 4 and older.

If your child has special needs, they may still be able to use a regular car seat. Those are typically cheaper, easier to find and easier to use. Ask a special needs trained car seat technician which type of car seat is best for your child.

The Center for Childhood Safety was created to help you keep your child safe in your home, in your community and on the go. Here are some car seat, booster seat and seat belt safety tips to keep your most precious cargo safe!

* Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 2021 and American Academy of Pediatrics, 2023.



Car Seat Recommendations*

Rear-Facing Car Seat

Your infant or toddler should ride in a rear-facing car seat as long as possible. They should reach the highest weight or height allowed by the car seat manufacturer before moving to another car seat. When your infant outgrows their rear-facing-only car seat, they need a convertible or 3-in-1 car seat.

- Follow your car seat instructions for proper angle and handle placement.
- Harness straps should be at or below shoulders.
- Harness straps should be snug. You should not be able to pinch a fold in the harness at the shoulders.
- Make sure the chest clip is at armpit level.

Forward-Facing Car Seat

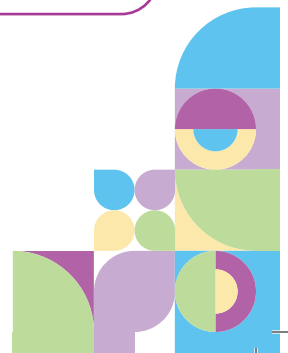
All children who have outgrown their rear-facing convertible car seat weight or height limit should use a forward-facing car seat with a harness for as long as possible (up to the highest weight or height allowed by the car seat manufacturer). Children should stay in a car seat with a harness until at least 4 years old but may stay in a car seat longer. Be sure to check your car seat manual for weight and height limits.

- Harness straps should be at or above shoulders.
- Harness straps should be snug. You should not be able to pinch a fold in the harness at the shoulders.
- Make sure the chest clip is at armpit level.
- Use a top tether, if available. Follow the manufacturer instructions.

Tips for both rear- and forward-facing car seats

- Children under 13 years of age are safest in the back seat.
- Your installed car seat should not move more than one inch from side to side at the belt path.
- Check your vehicle owner's manual and the car seat manual to properly install the car seat.
- Most car seats need to be replaced after a crash.
 - » Read your manual or contact your car seat manufacturer for safe use of a car seat after a crash.
- Car seats made in the United States will have a FMVSS213 label.
 - » This shows the car seat was made to meet all related federal motor vehicle safety standards for the United States.
- Car seats expire!
 - » Check with the car seat manufacturer for more information.
- Winter coats and snow suits should not be worn in a car seat.
 - » Harness your child into their car seat.
 - » Put your child's coat or a blanket over the child and the harness to keep them warm.
- **Never** put a rear-facing car seat in front of an active air bag!
- **Never** leave children unattended in your vehicle.
 - » **Look before you lock!**

* Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 2021 and American Academy of Pediatrics, 2023.



Car Seat Recommendations*

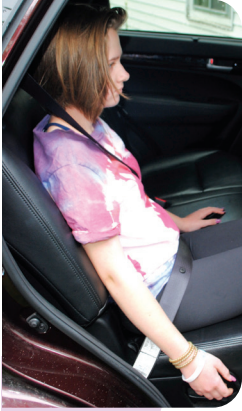


Belt-Positioning Booster Seat

Your child should ride in a forward-facing car seat with a harness until they are at least 4 years old. Once your child is at least 4 years old and has reached the highest weight or height limit for their forward-facing car seat:

- Your child can use a belt-positioning booster seat.
- Your child should use a booster seat until the vehicle seat belt fits properly, usually when they are 4 feet 9 inches in height and are between 8 and 12 years of age.
- The top of the booster seat or vehicle seat or head rest should be no lower than the tops of your child's ears.
- Use a booster seat only with a lap and shoulder seat belt.

Children seated in a booster seat in the back seat of a car are 45% less likely to be injured in a crash than children using a seat belt alone.



Lap and Shoulder Seat Belt

Keep your child in a booster seat until they are at least 8 to 12 years old. They should be big enough to fit in a seat belt properly.

Tips for using a seat belt:

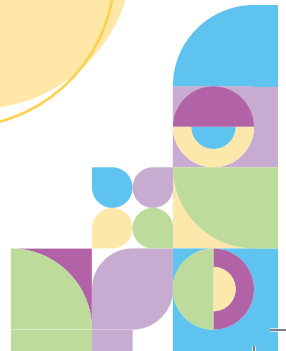
- Sit without slouching.
- Child's back is flush against vehicle seat back.
- Knees can bend over the edge of the seat.
- Be able to sit this way for the entire ride.

Proper seat belt fit:

- The lap belt must fit snugly across the upper thighs. It should not be across the stomach.
- The shoulder belt should fit snugly across the shoulder and chest. It should not be across the neck or face.
- **Never** let your child put the shoulder belt under their arm or behind their back.

When adults wear seat belts,
kids wear their seat belts.
Be a good example and
buckle up every trip! Every time!

* Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 2021 and American Academy of Pediatrics, 2023.



Additional Information

Special Needs Car Safety Restraints
Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children
Buckle Up Clinic • Phone Numbers

Special Needs Car Safety Restraints

Some children require more support when riding in a vehicle and may require a special needs car seat.

We have a loaner program for patients needing a car seat for a short period of time due to:

- **Prematurity:** Infants too small for car seats or who are required to lie down may need a car bed.
- **Spica casts, Risser casts or long leg casts:** Infants or toddlers with spica casts, Risser casts or long leg casts may require a special car safety restraint.

We may have other child restraint systems available on an individual basis for patients with:

- **Autism, ADHD and behavioral concerns:** Children who will not stay in their car seat or seat belt may need a more restrictive car seat or car safety restraint to travel safely in their family's vehicle.
- **Medical diagnoses** that cause a child to need more support than a regular car seat or seat belt can offer.
 - » For example: Down's syndrome, hypotonia, cerebral palsy, scoliosis.

You can schedule an appointment for an individualized car seat evaluation if your child needs a specialized car seat.



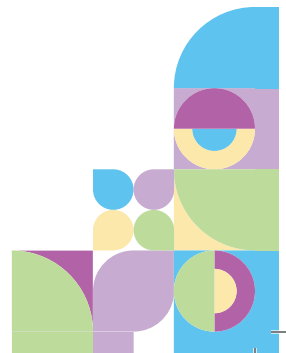
LATCH: Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children

LATCH is a system to install a car seat without using the seatbelt.

- When installing a car seat:
 - » You should use the lower anchors OR the seat belt - not both.
 - » Check both the car seat and vehicle manufacturers manual.

LATCH installation rear-facing requires securing the car seat with the lower anchors ONLY.

- **LATCH** installation forward-facing requires securing the car seat using BOTH the lower anchors AND top tether up to 65 pounds.*
- The lower anchors of the LATCH system should not be used if the weight of the child AND the car seat is 65 pounds or more, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Check your car seat manual or contact the manufacturer for specifics about when you can no longer use the lower anchors and tether to install your child's car seat.



Additional Information

Safe Kids Greater Kansas City Buckle Up Clinic

You can schedule an appointment at one of our monthly Buckle Up Clinics if you:

- Are expecting a baby.
- Need to have your child's car seat inspected.
- Need help getting a car seat or learning how to use one.

The Buckle Up Clinics are held:

- On the 2nd Tuesday of the month at the Don Chisholm Building located at 610 East 22nd Street, Kansas City, MO 64108. The entrance is located on Holmes Street. It is held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 to 6 p.m.
- On the 4th Tuesday of the month in Jackson, Clay, Platte, or Wyandotte County.
- Appointments are required. Each appointment is 30 minutes for each car seat. (For example, if you have 2 children who use car seats, you will need to schedule 2 appointments. Plan to be there for 1 hour.)
- You can schedule your appointment by scanning the QR code below.
- Please bring your child (unless you are an expectant parent), your vehicle, the car seat instruction manual and your vehicle owner's manual to the appointment.



Additional Community Resources

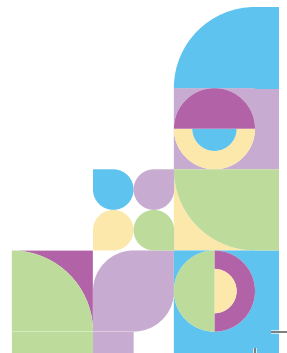
Safe Kids Johnson County
(913) 477-8312

WYCO Health Department
(913) 573-8887

**Western Missouri and Kansas
Safety and Health Council**
(816) 842-5223

For more information, contact:

Center for Childhood Safety
2401 Gillham Road
Kansas City, MO 64108
Email: centerforchildhoodsafety@cmh.edu
Phone: (816) 234-1607, option 1



**Never leave children unattended in a car.
Look before you lock!**

DISCLAIMER: The content contained herein is meant to promote the general understanding of car seats and is for informational purposes only. Such information is not meant or intended to serve as a substitute for a healthcare professional's clinical training, experience, or judgment. For individuals and their families, such information is not to be a substitute for professional medical, therapeutic, or healthcare advice or counseling. THE CHILDREN'S MERCY HOSPITAL MAKES NO WARRANTY WHATSOEVER WITH RESPECT TO THE CONTENT, INCLUDING ANY (A) WARRANTY OF MERCHANTABILITY; (B) WARRANTY OF FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE; (C) WARRANTY OF TITLE; OR (D) WARRANTY AGAINST INFRINGEMENT OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS OF A THIRD PARTY; WHETHER EXPRESS OR IMPLIED BY LAW, COURSE OF DEALING, COURSE OF PERFORMANCE, USAGE OF TRADE OR OTHERWISE.



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