

Child Passenger Safety

Select a car seat based on your child's age and size, choose a seat that fits in your vehicle, and use it every time.

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Updated Recommendations on Car Seats for Children

REAR FACING

Infants & toddlers



All infants and toddlers should ride in a rear-facing seat until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by their car seat manufacturer. Most convertible seats allow children to ride rear facing for 2 years or more.

FORWARD FACING

Pre-K & lower elementary school



It is best for children to ride in a seat with a harness as long as possible. Consider using a seat with a harness approved for higher weights and heights. Many seats can accommodate children up to 65 pounds or more.

Remember to always use the top tether. →



Children 13 and younger should ride in the back seat.

BOOSTER

Upper elementary



All children whose weight or height exceeds the forward-facing limit for their car seat should use a belt-positioning booster seat until the vehicle seat belt fits properly; typically when they have reached 4 feet 9 inches in height and are 8 to 12 years of age.

SEAT BELT

All passengers



Most children will not fit in vehicle seat belts safely without a booster until 10 to 12 years old. The lap belt must lie snugly across the upper thighs, not the stomach. The shoulder belt should lie snug across the shoulder and chest and not cross the neck or face.



Health Department



Macombgov.org/health

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HOW TO AVOID COMMON CARSEAT MISTAKES

SOURCE: OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY PLANNING & CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL

HARNESSTRAPS ARE TOO LOW/NOT TIGHT ENOUGH

Harness straps should fit snug to the child's chest the clip should be at armpit level. Straps should pass the "pinch test," meaning you should not be able to pinch any excess strap material.



MOVING CHILDREN TO THE NEXT STEP TOO SOON

Children should stay in their car seats until they outgrow the height or weight limit of the seat before moving to the next step, such as rear-facing to forward-facing.

A child with longer legs may look uncomfortable or awkward but it is safer than turning them around too soon for their height and weight.



CAR SEAT IS TOO LOOSE

Car seats, whether installed with the seat belt or LATCH system, should not move more than one inch from side to side when tested at the point where the car seat attaches to the vehicle.



PUTTING CHILDREN IN THE FRONT SEAT TOO EARLY

Children should ride in the back seat of the vehicle until they reach at least 13 years old. The force of an air bag may be too intense for children under the age of 13.



BE SURE TO KNOW THE HISTORY OF YOUR SEAT

Car seats should not be used if they are expired, have been in a car crash, if the history of the seat is unknown, or is recalled.



CERTIFIED CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY TECHNICIAN CHECK STATIONS

A nationally certified child passenger safety (CPS) technician provides personalized instruction about how to properly install a car seat in a vehicle, as well as how to properly secure a child in the car seat.

Scan the QR code below to connect to a list of certified car seat check stations local to Macomb County.



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