



Hanover Park Fire Department

CAR SEAT SAFETY

Car crashes are a leading cause of death for children ages 1-13, according to the NHTSA. It is important to choose the right seat and use it correctly every time your child is in the car.



FIND THE RIGHT CAR SEAT

There are many car seats on the market to choose from. The NHTSA provides information to help select a car seat that best meets your child's needs:

- Choose a car seat based on your child's age and size, then choose a seat that fits in your vehicle, and use it every time.
- Always refer to your specific car seat manufacturer's instructions (check height and weight limits) and read the vehicle's owners manual on how to install the car seat using the seat belt or lower anchors and a tether, if available.
- To maximize safety, keep your child in the car seat for as long as possible, as long as the child fits within the manufacturer's height and weight requirements.
- Keep your child in the back seat at least through age 12.





Car Seat Types and Recommendations

Rear-Facing Car Seats

A rear-facing car seat is the best seat for your child to use from birth to 3 years. It has a harness and, in a crash, cradles and moves with your child to reduce the stress to the child's fragile neck and spinal cord.



Birth - 12 Months

Children under age 1 should always ride in a rear-facing car seat. There are different types of rear-facing car seats:

- Infant-only seats
- Convertible and all-in-one seats which typically have higher weight and height limits for the rear-facing position, allowing you to keep your child rear-facing for a longer period of time.

1-3 Years

Keep your child rear-facing as long as possible. Your child should remain in a rear-facing car seat until he or she reaches the top height or weight limit allowed by your car seat manufacturer.



Car Seat Types and Recommendations

Forward-Facing Car Seats

Forward-Facing car seats have a harness and tether that limit your child's forward movement during a crash.



1 - 3 Years

Keep your child rear-facing as long as possible. It's the best way to keep them safe. Your child should remain in a rear-facing car seat until they reach the top height or weight limit allowed by your car seat's manufacturer. Once your child outgrows the rear-facing car seat, your child is ready to travel in a forward-facing car seat with a harness and a tether.

4-7 Years

Keep your child in a forward-facing car seat with a harness and tether until they reach the top height or weight limit allowed by your car seat's manufacturer. Once your child outgrows the forward-facing car seat with a harness, it's time to travel in a booster seat, but still in the back seat.



Car Seat Types and Recommendations

Booster Seats

Booster seats raise and position a child so the vehicle's lap-and-shoulder belt fits properly over the stronger points of a child's body, the hips and across the chest.



4-7 Years

Keep your child in a forward-facing car seat with a harness and tether until they reach the top height or weight limit allowed by your car seat's manufacturer. Once your child outgrows the forward-facing car seat with a harness, it is time to travel in a booster seat, but still in the back seat.

8-12 Years

Keep your child in a booster seat until they are big enough to fit in a seat belt properly. For a seat belt to fit properly the lap belt must lie snugly across the upper thighs, not the stomach. The shoulder belt should lie snugly across the shoulder and chest and not cross the neck or face. Remember: your child should still ride in the back seat because it is safer there.



ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR CAR SEAT SAFETY

Safety Facts

325

**CHILDREN UNDER 5 SAVED
BY CAR SEATS IN ONE YEAR**

-NHTSA Traffic Safety Facts



- Keep children in a rear-facing car seat for as long as possible.
- NEVER place a rear-facing car seat in front of an active airbag.
- A used car seat may not be safe unless you know the history of the seat and all labels, parts and instructions are present.
- Always register your car seat with the manufacturer so you can be notified of recalls. You can also sign up with NHTSA to receive email alerts about car seat and booster seat recalls.
- Do not use a car seat that is more than six years old or past the expiration date stamped on the seat.
- Non-regulated products such as toys attached to the car seat mirrors, window shades and belt tightening tools are not recommended unless the car seat manufacturer allows their use.
- All objects in the vehicle should be stowed in the trunk or tied down, as they can become projectiles if a crash or sudden stop occurs.
- Replace car seats after moderate or severe crashes.
- Illinois law requires ALL passengers to be buckled up, regardless of where they sit in a vehicle.



CAR SEAT INSTALLATION CHECKLIST

For Rear-Facing and Forward-Facing Car Seats

- Get the right car seat for your child's age, weight and height.
- Register your seat right away so you can be notified if there is a safety recall. www.safercar.gov/parents/Car-Seat-Recalls-Registration.htm
- Read the instructions for both your vehicle and your car seat.
- Install your car seat correctly in the back seat, facing the correct direction, reclined at the correct angle, and securely installed using the seat belt or lower anchors. If you use a seat belt for installation, follow your vehicle's owner's manual instructions for locking the seat belt. For forward-facing car seats, connect the seat's tether strap to the tether anchor and tighten.
- Buckle your child in the car seat every time. Be sure to check:

- The position of the harness straps.

Rear-Facing - Straps should be routed through the harness slots at or just below your child's shoulders.

Forward-Facing - Straps should be routed through the harness slots at or just above your child's shoulders.

- The fit of the harness. The harness straps should be snug and free of twists. You shouldn't be able to pinch excess webbing at your child's shoulders.
- The harness buckle. Make sure both metal pieces are fully inserted and secure.
- The chest clip. It is essential to buckle the chest clip at your child's armpit level.



CAR SEAT INSTALLATION CHECKLIST

Booster Seats

- Get the right car seat** for your child's age, weight and height.
- Register your seat right away** so you can be notified if there is a safety recall.
www.safercar.gov/parents/Car-Seat-Recalls-Registration.htm
- Read the instructions** for both your vehicle and your booster seat.
- Install your car seat correctly** in the back seat, facing forward, with a **lap and shoulder belt** for your child - never with just a lap belt only.
- Secure your child correctly in the booster seat every time.**

High-back boosters - Make sure:

- Your child's back is flat against the back of the booster seat.
- The lap belt portion of the seat belt is under the booster seat's arm.
- You use the shoulder belt positioners that are provided with the booster seat - to keep the shoulder belt in place.

Backless boosters - Make sure:

- You use it in a vehicle seat that has a head restraint (head rest).
- Your child's back is flat against your vehicle's back seat.
- The lap belt portion of the seat belt is under the booster seat's arm.
- The shoulder belt portion of the seat belt is positioned according to your booster seat's instructions.

Double-check the fit.

- The lap belt must lie snugly across the upper thighs, not the stomach.
- You may need to pull up on the shoulder belt to tighten the lap belt.
- The shoulder belt should lie snug across the shoulder and chest and not cross the neck or face.





CAR SEAT INSPECTIONS

Whether you've just installed a car seat or need help installing one, get help at a car seat inspection station near you. Certified technicians will inspect your car seat free of charge, in most cases, and show you how to correctly install and use it.

Go to www.nhtsa.gov for search for Car Seat Inspection locations.

In addition, many local police and fire departments offer child safety seat installations and inspections to their residents. Please call the individual departments for an appointment or for more information.

Hanover Park Fire Department
6850 Barrington Road
630-823-5800

Bartlett Police Department
228 S. Main Street
630-837-0843

Hanover Park Police Department
2011 W. Lake Street
630-823-5481

Hoffman Estates Police Department
411 W. Higgins Road
847-781-2933

Bloomington Police Department
201 S. Bloomington Road
630-529-9868

Carol Stream Police Department
500 N. Gary Avenue
630-668-2167

Streamwood Police Department
401 E. Irving Park Road
Streamwood Fire Department
1204 S. Park Avenue
630-736-3661

Roselle Police Department
103 S. Prospect Street
630-980-2025

Schaumburg Police Department
1000 W. Schaumburg Road
847-348-7221



HOW TO PREPARE FOR A CAR SAFETY SEAT INSPECTION

According to Safe Kids Worldwide and the Manufacturers Alliance for Child Passenger Safety, there are a few things you should know before you meet with a Child Passenger Safety Technician. It isn't like getting the oil changed on your car, where you leave the car and go do something else. Working with a CPS technician will be a one-on-one learning experience. When you leave, you should be confident that your child's seat is installed correctly and feel comfortable reinstalling it on your own. This may be the most important thing you learn.

Here are some tips to help you prepare for your meeting with the CPS technician:

- For expectant caregivers, schedule an appointment 4-6 weeks prior to the baby's due date.
- Know your child's current weight and height.
- Using the car seat instruction manual and the vehicle owner's manual, try to install the car seat into your vehicle prior to your appointment.
- Be sure to bring the car seat instruction manual AND the vehicle owner's manual with you to your appointment.
- If possible, bring your child with you as well as another caregiver to help while you are learning.
- Be prepared to learn. The CPS technician is trained to educate you to install and use your car seat properly in your vehicle.





WHAT TO EXPECT AT A CAR SAFETY SEAT INSPECTION

During the car seat check, the CPS Technician should:

- Fill out a car seat check form to document the process (including car seat type, location in vehicle, misuse observations, etc.). The form may be electronic or on paper.
- Review car seat selection appropriate for your child's age, weight and height as well as review factors affecting proper use.
- Review the car seat instruction manual and the vehicle owner's manual to ensure that both are being followed correctly.
- Ensure that appropriate seating position in the vehicle is being used.
- Check the car seat for recalls, visible damage and an expiration date.
- Guide your installation of the car seat. You are encouraged to ask to learn how to install the car seat in different seating positions with different installation techniques.
- Discuss the next steps for your child such as when to move to the next type of car seat.
- Discuss your state laws and best practice recommendations for occupant safety.
- Discuss the benefits of everyone riding properly restrained, including all adults.
- Discuss safety in and around the vehicle.
- Answer any questions you may have, so ask away!

After the Car Seat Inspection

A car seat inspection is considered a success if you can answer yes to the following questions:

- Did you perform the installation?
- Do you feel confident about installing and using the car seat correctly?
- Were your questions answered? If not, were you give direction as to who you should contact or will the CPS technician follow up with you?



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS, VISIT:

AAA - Safe Seats 4 Kids

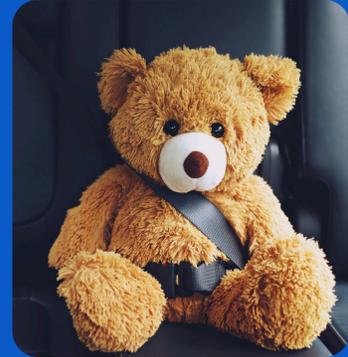
American Academy of Pediatrics - Healthy Children

Illinois Department of Transportation - Buckle Up Program

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

Safe Kids Worldwide

Center for Disease Control - Child Passenger Safety





GET IN TOUCH

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have.

Hanover Park Fire Department

630.823.5800

www.hpil.org

6850 Barrington Road - Station 15

2355 Schick Road - Station 16

