

# 4 STEPS 4 KIDS

## THE RIGHT SEAT MATTERS

### Passenger Safety Tip Card

A crash can happen any time—even if you are a good driver. It is important to use the right type of restraint based upon your child's age and size. As your child grows, follow these four steps—one step at a time—to keep your child safe in the car.



#### Rear-Facing Car Seats

Use a rear-facing car seat until your child is at least two years old and up to the highest weight or height limit of the car seat. A convertible or all-in-one car seat should be used in the rear-facing position for babies who outgrow infant-only car seats.



#### Forward-Facing Car Seats

Use a forward-facing car seat when your child outgrows the rear-facing weight or height limit. Keep your child in a forward-facing car seat with a harness and tether, up to the highest weight or height limit of the car seat.



#### Booster Seats

Use a belt positioning booster seat when your child's weight or height is above the forward-facing limit for the car seat. Keep your child in a booster seat until the lap and shoulder belts fit properly, typically between 8 and 12 years old.



#### Seat Belts

Use a lap and shoulder belt when the seat belts fit your child properly. The lap belt should be low and snug across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt should lie across the middle of the chest and shoulder. Children should be tall enough to comfortably bend their knees over the edge of the backseat with their back against the vehicle seat.

**All children under age 13 should ride in the backseat.**

## IMPORTANT!

Always read and follow your car owner's manual and the manufacturer's instructions for your car seat when using and installing your car seat.

### Other Safety Tips

1. Restrain your child on every trip. Most crashes occur at low speeds and close to home.
2. The best car seat fits your child's size, is correctly installed and is used properly every time.
3. Weigh and measure your child often to make sure the right type of restraint is being used.
4. Set a good example for your child. Buckle up!

### Need help?

A certified child passenger safety (CPS) technician can check your car seat and answer questions about child passenger safety. To find an inspection station in your area, go to:

[trafficsafety.ny.gov/child-safety-seat-inspection-stations](https://trafficsafety.ny.gov/child-safety-seat-inspection-stations)

*For more information about child passenger safety, go to:*

New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee  
[trafficsafety.ny.gov](https://trafficsafety.ny.gov)

New York State Department of Health  
[health.ny.gov/prevention/injury\\_prevention/cars](https://health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention/cars)

American Academy of Pediatrics  
[aap.org](https://aap.org)

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
[nhtsa.gov](https://nhtsa.gov)

*Funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) with a grant from the New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee*

Follow us on:

[health.ny.gov](https://health.ny.gov)

[facebook.com/NYSDOH](https://facebook.com/NYSDOH)

[twitter.com/HealthNYGov](https://twitter.com/HealthNYGov)



**Department  
of Health**