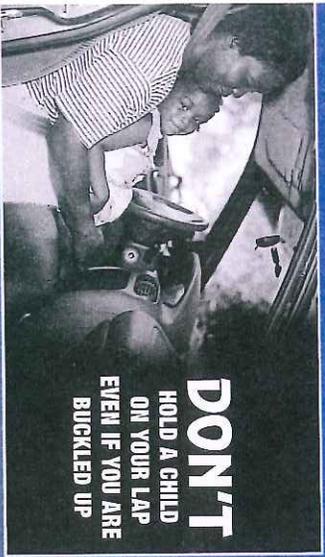


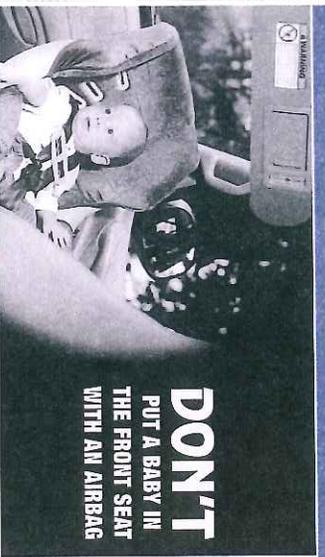
DON'T RISK YOUR CHILD'S LIFE



DON'T
LET CHILDREN
RIDE IN THE
BACK OF A
PICK-UP TRUCK



DON'T
HOLD A CHILD
ON YOUR LAP
EVEN IF YOU ARE
BUCKLED UP



DON'T
PUT A BABY IN
THE FRONT SEAT
WITH AN AIRBAG

AIRBAGS ARE DEADLY FOR INFANTS

An airbag inflates with explosive force in a split second. It will do so even in a low-speed collision.

A rear-facing child restraint is so close to the airbag compartment that it gets in the way of the inflating bag. The bag hits the back of the child restraint with tremendous force. This violent blow is transmitted to the infant's head and will cause fatal or catastrophic injury.

OLDER CHILDREN ARE ALSO AT RISK

If it is necessary for an older child to sit in a front seat that has an airbag, take these precautions:

1. Move the vehicle seat as far back as it will go;
2. Make sure that the child is correctly restrained;
3. Do not allow him/her to reach for radio controls or to bend down to retrieve something from the floor.

The U.S. government safety agency recommends that children ride in the back seat to age 13.

Read your vehicle owner's manual for more information on children and airbags.

Published by:

Shelness Productions

P.O. Box 30456

Winston-Salem, NC 27130-0456

Funded by the

Florida Department of Transportation

WARNING

AIRBAGS: Never place a rear-facing infant restraint in a front seat equipped with an airbag. Older children are also at risk. For more information see back panel.

CHILD RESTRAINTS: It is critically important to use child restraints **correctly** (see Panel 5 for information). Always follow your vehicle owner's manual and the child restraint manufacturer's instructions carefully. If you still have a problem you can't fix, help is available:

1. Call the automaker's and/or the child restraint manufacturer's Hotline phone number;
2. Contact the agency or organization distributing this brochure or write to the publisher (see back panel).

Children at Risk

Motor vehicle crashes cause more deaths and injuries than all childhood diseases combined.

Every year, some 600 children under age five are killed while riding in automobiles. Tens of thousands are injured. Many injuries leave children physically and/or mentally disabled for life.

Motor vehicle crashes are also the leading cause of death and injury among older children, teenagers, and young adults.

Buckle Them Up – It's the Law

All 50 states and every province in Canada have laws requiring children to ride in motor vehicles secured in safety seats. Laws requiring older children to ride on booster seats buckled into the vehicle lap/shoulder belt are already in effect in a number of states; in many other states, legislation is pending.

Buckling Up Saves Lives

In a crash, anyone riding unrestrained could be slammed into the windshield, the instrument panel or out into the roadway. Using seat belts and child restraints helps prevent serious injuries or death by keeping occupants securely in place. Some crashes are so severe that serious or fatal injuries can occur even when restraints are used.

Protecting Infants and Small Children

Regular vehicle safety belts are not suitable for infants and small children. Special safety restraints are needed, designed to spread crash forces over a large area of a young child's body.

Use of child restraints can also help prevent accidents. Children who ride buckled up:

1. Are less likely to distract the driver;
2. Allow the driver to swerve or brake in an emergency, without worrying about youngsters being sent flying.

Crash Forces Pose Special Dangers

Few people are aware of the extreme forces at work in highway crashes. A child sitting on someone's lap could be crushed against the dashboard or windshield as the person holding the child slams forward.

Even when that person is wearing a safety belt, the violent forces generated in a collision could rip the child from even the strongest arms.

If an adult is holding a child on the lap and the belt is buckled over the child, the weight of the person holding the child, greatly increased by collision forces, would press the belt deep into the child's body. This could lead to serious or even fatal internal injuries.

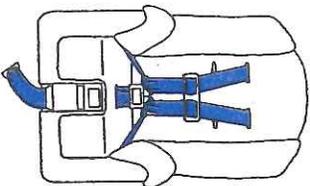


DON'T use seat belt alone until it fits properly.

Choosing a Car Safety Seat

A five-point harness, which has two shoulder straps, a lap belt and a crotch strap, provides the most effective crash protection.

Shield-type restraints may make it easier to buckle the child into the seat, but shields could lower crash protection and are therefore not recommended. Shields should be avoided especially for the first few weeks of life; harness straps may not adjust for a snug fit.



Safety seat with, five-point harness

- When shopping for a child restraint, look for:
- A buckle that is accessible so it can be locked and released easily;
 - Harness straps that can be adjusted for a snug fit without having to take the child out of the seat;
 - A recline feature that is convenient to operate;
 - A quick and simple way to switch shoulder straps to higher or lower slots;
 - Functional design, without cumbersome, purely “cosmetic” features.
 - Well-organized, easy-to-read instructions.



DANGER!



DANGER!

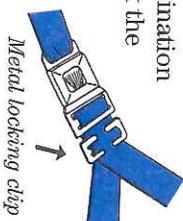
Which Is the Safest Restraint?

This is the question that parents ask most often. The answer is simple: All safety seats must meet a strict government safety standard. The safest is one that will be used correctly every time.

Studies show that used correctly, child restraints help prevent deaths and reduce injuries. But any misuse lowers protection, and extreme misuse can lead to your child being completely unprotected.

If the lap portion of a combination lap/shoulder belt does not lock the seat firmly in place, a special metal locking clip may be needed to clamp the two parts of the belt together.

Some vehicles have retractors that can be “switched” from loose to locked. Look for a label on the belt and for details in the vehicle owner’s manual.



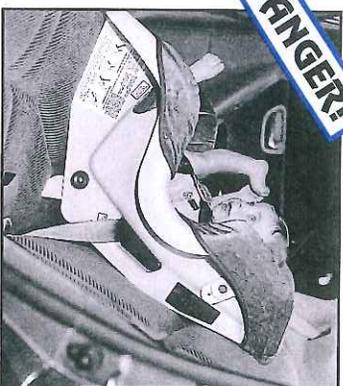
Top Tether Straps

A tether strap secures the top of a child restraint for added protection. A government regulation, effective September 1999, requires child restraints to have tether straps and new vehicles to be equipped with tether anchors.

Tether anchors can be installed in most older vehicles, and tether straps are available for some older child restraints.



Top tether strap adds stability.



DANGER!

DON'T place a child forward-facing until age one and

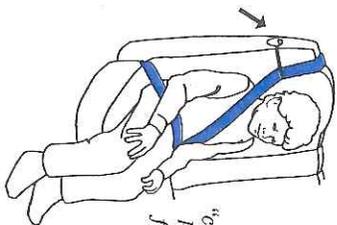
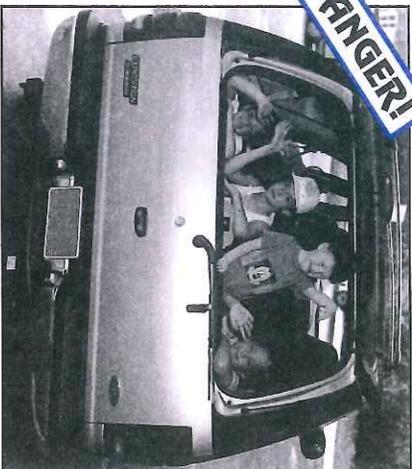
Correct Use is Critical!

- Is the child restraint facing in the right direction? Infants must ride rear-facing until they are at least 12 months old and weigh 20 pounds, preferably 30 pounds. Most convertible seats are now rated to 30 or even 35 pounds.
- Is the restraint correctly reclined? Rear-facing, the infant should be semi-upright at an angle of 45 degrees (see Panel 7). A forward-facing older child should ride sitting upright.
- Is the seat belt routed correctly? Using the wrong belt path could cause the restraint to fail.
- Is the safety seat firmly installed? Belt webbing must not loosen when the safety seat is pulled forward and rocked from side to side. Some adaptations may be necessary (see Panel 4).
- Are shoulder straps at the correct height? For a rear-facing infant, straps should be in the slots at or below shoulder level. For the older child who rides forward-facing, straps should be at or above shoulder level.
- Are harness straps snug? Straps should be adjusted every time there is a change in the thickness of the child's clothing.
- Do harness straps stay on the shoulders? A plastic harness retainer clip at armpit level will keep the straps in place.



Harness
retainer clip

DANGER!



Some cars have
"comfort guides" to help
keep the shoulder belt
from rubbing against
the child's neck.

More Tips on Safe Travel

- Everyone must buckle up. In a crash, anyone riding loose could be thrown against occupants who are restrained, injuring them.
- The back seat is safer than the front seat.
- Do not tuck a shoulder belt under the arm. Doing so could lead to serious or fatal injuries. This applies also to adults.
- Do not put a shoulder belt behind a child's back. Using only the lap belt could lead to serious internal injury in a crash.
- Do not let anyone, child or adult, ride with the seat back reclined.
- Do not strap two children into one belt. In a crash, neither would be protected.
- Never leave children alone in a vehicle.
- Belts should be worn in pregnancy to protect the woman and her unborn child.
- Secure all cargo. In a crash, heavy, hard or sharp objects could injure vehicle occupants. Unrestrained dogs pose a serious safety hazard.
- A child safety seat that has been in a crash should be replaced, even if no damage is visible.
- Safety defects can occur. Be alert to announcements about recalls of child restraints. If you have filled out and returned the registration card that came with the seat, you will be notified by the manufacturer when a seat has been recalled.

Infant Car Safety Seats

7

An infant-only restraint is small and light in weight. It's easy to carry to and from the vehicle with the baby left undisturbed inside. The seat must be installed rear-facing and semi-upright. There are important reasons for this:

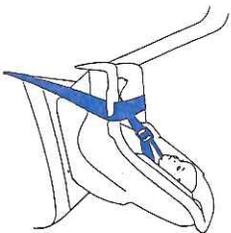
A young infant's bones have not yet hardened; the spine is especially fragile. Should a crash occur with the infant facing the front of the vehicle, the head would be pulled forward violently. This would stretch the spine and could cause rupture of the spinal cord, leading to paralysis or death.

Rear-facing, the infant's head, neck and back are firmly supported by the shell of the restraint, providing protection.

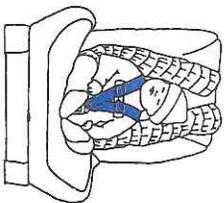
Rolled up receiving blankets tucked in on each side of the head and shoulders fill empty spaces and provide support. Don't place a cover over the child until all straps are securely fastened.

When the top of the infant's head reaches one inch below the top of the safety seat, it's time to change to a larger, "convertible" restraint.

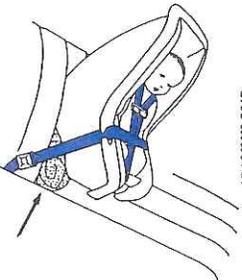
Some vehicles have sharply sloping seat cushions. This makes the safety seat stand too upright for a newborn, letting the head drop forward. To allow the head to lie back comfortably, wedge a tightly folded towel under the front end of the safety restraint to tip it back just a little.



Rear-facing infant-only seat



Rolled up blankets help support the head and shoulders.



A towel wedged under the front will tip the seat back a little.

Infant Car Safety Beds

8

Car beds are intended for low birthweight babies or babies who must lie flat for medical reasons.

The bed is secured with the vehicle seat belt as shown in the picture. A strap coming from the corner of the car bed attaches to the vehicle lap belt.



The infant's head must be in the center of the vehicle.

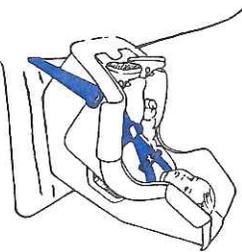
Some parents prefer a larger "convertible" restraint from the start. This must also be used rear-facing until the child reaches at least age one.

Today's convertible seats are designed for use rear-facing to 30 or even 35 pounds. Check the label for maximum rear-facing weight allowed. Older, "hand-me-down" seats may be certified to just 20 or 25 pounds. Remember: Facing the rear of the vehicle is the safest way for a child to travel.

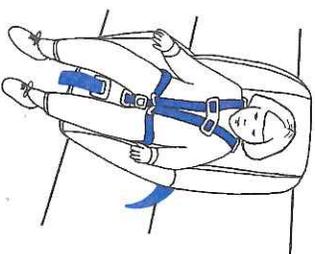
After the first few weeks, the semi-reclined position may no longer be necessary. The child should now travel more upright.

When the maximum rear-facing weight has been reached, the seat should be turned around to face forward.

Forward-facing, use the fully upright position, unless manufacturer's instructions allow a slight recline.



Convertible seat used rear-facing



Convertible seat used forward-facing

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Contact the National Center for Safe Transportation of Children with Special Health Care Needs at Riley Hospital, Indianapolis: 1-800-755-0912, or go to: www.preventinjury.org

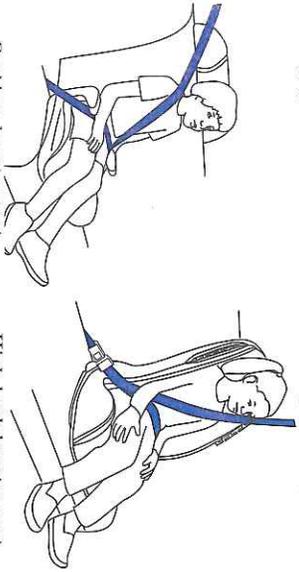
Belt-Positioning Booster Seats

When a child has outgrown a child safety restraint (see Panel 8), a "belt-positioning" booster seat is needed to improve the fit of the vehicle lap/shoulder belt. Children have lost their lives in crashes or been seriously injured because they were ejected from the adult seat belts or were hurt by the poorly fitting belts themselves.

To prevent such tragedies, states are enacting laws requiring youngsters to ride in booster seats, usually to age 8 or 80 pounds – whichever comes first. Many states already have such laws in place.

A booster improves the fit of the vehicle lap/shoulder belt by raising the child up above the level of the vehicle seat. This routes the lap belt over the upper thighs instead of the stomach. It also positions the shoulder belt correctly over the shoulder, preventing it from rubbing against the neck.*

An inexpensive backless booster does a fine job, but if your vehicle has low seat backs and no head restraints, a high-back booster is necessary to help protect the child from whiplash injury.



Backless booster seat

High-back booster seat

Make sure the child sits upright against the seat back. A child who slouches could slide under the belt and be ejected from it.

Shield boosters do not provide adequate protection, and are no longer being manufactured. If you have one, detach the shield and use the base alone with the vehicle lap/shoulder belt.

*Shoulder belt adjusters, designed to hold the shoulder belt away from the neck, should not be used for children. The adjuster could interfere with correct functioning of the belt.

Combination Child Restraint/Booster

Some safety seats combine the features of a harness-type child restraint with those of a booster seat. Harness straps can be helpful until

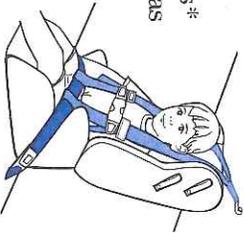
1. The vehicle lap/shoulder belt fits the child correctly
2. The child can be trusted to sit upright, even on a long trip.

If No Shoulder Belt is Available

Most older vehicles (pre-1989 models) do not have shoulder belts in back seats, and even more recent models may have only a lap belt in the center back.

A booster seat with a "Y" harness* provides protection for a child who has outgrown a convertible safety seat. The function of the harness is similar to that of a shoulder belt: It prevents the upper body from slamming forward in a crash or sudden stop.

The Y-harness must be tethered. Use no other booster with this harness. The two are supplied as a single unit and must be used together.



High-back booster seat with "Y" harness

*Currently, this unit is not obtainable in stores. For information, call: 1-888-743-3798, or go to: www.safeforyou.com

'LATCH' – A New Safety Feature

A government safety standard that went into effect in 2001 requires special anchor rods on vehicle seats and corresponding attachments on child restraints.

Named LATCH (Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children), this system may make secure installation of child restraints easier.

It is especially valuable where seat belts and seat configurations make tight installation of child restraints difficult or even impossible. A tether is an important part of the system (see Panel 4).

