



# Buckle up, kid!

6

cool tips to keep your toddlers and children riding safe!



Using the right safety seat – and using it correctly – could mean the difference between your child's life or death in a car crash.

Children between 40 and 80 pounds and under 4' 9" tall (usually 4 to 8 years old) should always ride in a booster seat. Never buckle small children in adult lap and shoulder belts alone. The child may slip out of the belts or be injured by them in a crash. A booster seat should not be used with a lap belt unless permitted by the manufacturer.

A booster seat makes a vehicle's lap and shoulder belts fit correctly: low over the hips and upper thighs and snug over the shoulder. The type of booster seat you should use depends on the style of your vehicle's seat. If your vehicle's back seat is higher than your child's head, a belt-positioning booster seat can be used (A). If your child's ears are above the back seat — often the case for bench-type seats — a high-back booster is needed (B).

A safety seat tether will reduce the possibility of serious head and neck injuries in a crash. Many safety seats manufactured after September 1999 have tether straps. If your safety seat did not come with a tether, you can purchase a tether strap kit from the seat's manufacturer. Consult your vehicle's owner's manual to locate the tether anchor in your vehicle. If your vehicle is not equipped with one, you can purchase a tether anchor kit from your vehicle dealer (C).

Kids over 80 pounds and 8 years old can use lap and shoulder belts without a safety seat if they are tall enough to sit with knees bent at the edge of the seat without slouching. Fit the belt low over the hips and thighs and snug over the shoulder. Never put a shoulder belt under a child's arm or behind his or her back — this eliminates the protection for the upper part of the body and increases the risk of severe injury in a crash.



Some 2001 and newer model vehicles will have a new safety seat installation system called LATCH: Lower Anchors and Tether for Children. This system eliminates the need to use seat belts to secure the child safety seat. To use, snap the extensions on the safety seat into the anchors buried inside the gap between the vehicle's top and bottom rear seat cushion (D), then attach the top tether strap (E). The LATCH anchor system will be mandatory on all vehicles by September 2002. LATCH extensions and tether straps are currently being phased into the manufacture of all safety seats, as well.

It is extremely important to always read and follow the manufacturer's directions for both your vehicle and your safety seat.

Children should not sit in the front seat if the vehicle has a passenger-side airbag. Remember, a vehicle's back seat is the safest place for kids to ride.

6

# it's the law!

Children under 1 year of age and less than 20 pounds **MUST** be secured in a rear-facing child-restraint system installed according to the manufacturer's directions.

Children from 1 up to 6 years of age **MUST** be secured in a child-restraint system (either a child safety seat or booster seat - NOT an adult seat belt) installed according to the manufacturer's directions.

Children from 6 up to 18 years of age **MUST** be secured in a booster seat installed according to the manufacturer's directions or by a safety belt.

Violation of the Iowa Child Restraint Law is a misdemeanor!

## Exemption

Children **CERTIFIED** by a physician as having a medical, physical or mental disability making restraint use inadvisable

Children on a bus, including a school bus with no seat belts installed

Children riding on motorcycles

Children riding in vehicles manufactured before 1966

Children being transported in authorized emergency vehicles

Children transported by peace officers on official duty

Children riding in motor homes **EXCEPT** if riding in the front passenger seat

