

# Child Passenger Safety

## Parent Handbook



DURHAM  
REGION

HEALTH  
DEPARTMENT

Durham Health Connection Line  
1-800-841-2729 or 905-668-2020










**[durham.ca/health](https://durham.ca/health)**

If you require this information  
in an accessible format,  
contact 1-800-841-2729.



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# Introduction

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This booklet is intended as guide. It is important to read your car seat and vehicle manuals before installing your car or booster seat. Depending on the height and weight of your child, use a car seat, booster seat, or seat belt on every ride, even in a taxi or a ride-share vehicle.

**When installed and used correctly, car seats reduce injuries and save lives.**

### **Key points to remember:**

- All drivers, including grandparents, babysitters, and caregivers, are responsible for ensuring passengers under 16 years of age are secured properly in a seat belt, car seat, or booster seat.
- It is safest to keep your child in each stage for as long as possible.
- Always follow the weight and height limits of your car seat as each seat is different.
- Always follow your car seat and vehicle manufacturer's manuals.
- Check for the expiry date on your car seat.
- Never install a car or booster seat in front of an active airbag.

# Choosing a Car Seat

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Choose a car seat that fits your:

- Budget, and
- Vehicle, and
- Child's height and weight

**NOTE:** NOT all car and booster seats can be installed safely in all vehicles. Check the vehicle and car seat manuals before installation.

Check that your car seat ...

- Is NOT expired.
- Has NOT been in a collision.
- Does NOT have ripped or damaged harness straps or materials.
- Is NOT cracked or damaged.
- HAS an instructional manual to refer to.

Choose a seat that meets Canadian safety standards.

Look for this sticker as proof:



**NOTE:** The National Mark is needed to legally use a car seat in Canada.

# General Information

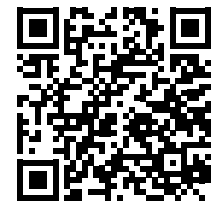
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Be sure to register your car or booster seat with the manufacturer. This will allow the manufacturer to inform you about any recalls. Recall notices can be found at Transport Canada's website: [tc.gc.ca](https://tc.gc.ca)

When putting your child in a car seat, remove bulky clothing such as snowsuits and padded coats as this can prevent the harness from working correctly. For more information visit Parachute Canada's website: [parachute.ca](https://parachute.ca)

Car seat accessories, such as harness covers and toys, can affect how a car seat works during a collision. Check with the manufacturer first before using these products.

Use this QR code to get more information about choosing the right car seat



# Rear-facing Seats

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All infants must be placed in a rear-facing car seat.

It is safest to keep children rear facing until they outgrow the weight and height requirements of the car seat. Do not rush through this stage.

Always follow manufacturer's recommended use.



Use this QR code to get more information about rear-facing seats, including how to install:



# Forward-facing Seats

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Check your car seat manual's height and weight guidelines before moving your child to a forward-facing seat.

Start using a forward-facing seat when your child has outgrown their rear-facing seat according to the car seat manual. This usually happens between ages 2 to 4.



Use this QR code to get more information about forward-facing seats, including how to install:





# Booster Seats

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Your child is ready for a booster seat when they weigh at least 18 kg (40lbs) and can sit upright for the ride and not unbuckle their seat belt. This may happen between ages 4 to 7.

Buckle a booster seat when not in use; otherwise, the seat may become a projectile if there is a sudden stop or collision.

Use this QR code to get more information about booster seats, including how to install:



# Seat Belts

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Your child is ready to use an adult seatbelt when they meet at least one of these minimum requirements:

- 8 years old or older
- Weighs 36kg (80lbs) or more
- Has a height of 145cm (4ft 9in) or more

## AND

- Can sit with their back against the vehicle seat, and their knees bend naturally over the seat.
- The shoulder belt rests over the shoulder, crossing the middle of the chest without touching the face or neck.
- The lap belt sits low across the hips and not the abdomen.

Children under 13 years of age are safest in the back seat.

It is safest to keep your child in a booster seat until they outgrow the height and weight requirements found in your booster seat manual.

**NOTE:** Each vehicle is different. Your child might fit the adult seat belt in one vehicle, but still need a booster seat in another.



# Resources

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For more information, visit the following online websites:

**Durham Region Health Department:** general information and links to car seat installation videos

[durham.ca/carseatsafety](http://durham.ca/carseatsafety)

**Ministry of Transportation:** car seat safety requirements

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/choosing-child-car-seat>

**Parachute Canada:** safety tips about car seats

<https://www.parachutecanada.org/en/injury-topic/fall-prevention-for-children/>

**Transport Canada:** alerts and notices for car seats, such as recall information.

<https://tc.canada.ca/en/road-transportation/child-car-seat-safety>

# Technicians

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Looking for more support?

Use the QR code below to find a certified technician near you!

