

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY





Child Passenger Safety

Install and use car seats and booster seats according to the car seat/booster seat manual.

Buckle all children ages 12 and younger in the back seat.

- **Buckle children in the middle of the back seat** whenever possible because it is typically the safest position in the vehicle.
- **Airbags can kill** young children riding in the front seat. Never place a rear-facing car seat in front of an air bag.
- Buckle children in car seats, booster seats or seat belts on **every trip** - no matter how short the trip.
- **Set a good example** by always using a seat belt.

Source: [cdc.gov/injury/features/child-passenger-safety/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/injury/features/child-passenger-safety/index.html)

BUCKLE UP, KNOW THE STAGES!

REAR FACING

From birth to
ages 2-4 years



Infants & toddlers should be buckled in a rear-facing car seat with a harness, in the back seat, until they reach the maximum weight or height limit of their car seat. This offers the best possible protection.

- Check the car seat manual and labels on the car seat for weight and height limits.
- Never place a rear-facing car seat in the front seat. Front passenger air bags can injure or kill young children in a crash.

FORWARD FACING

Outgrown rear facing
to at least 5 years



When children outgrow their rear-facing car seat, they should be buckled in a forward-facing car seat with a harness and a top tether, in the back seat.

- Children should stay in their forward-facing car seat until they reach the maximum weight or height limit of this seat.
- Check the car seat manual and labels on the car seat for weight and height limits.

BOOSTER SEAT

Outgrown forward facing
until seat belt fits properly



When children outgrow their forward-facing car seat, they should be buckled in a belt-positioning booster seat with a seat belt, in the back seat, until the seat belt fits properly without a booster seat.

SEAT BELT

When seat belt fits
properly, always wear



Children no longer need to use a booster seat when the seat belt fits them properly. A seat belt fits properly when the lap belt is across the upper thighs (not the stomach) and the shoulder belt is across the center of the shoulder and chest (not across the neck or face, and not off the shoulder).
Tip: Seat belt fit can vary by vehicle, so check seat belt fit in all vehicles where the child will ride to make sure the child no longer needs to use a booster seat. Sometimes a child might need a booster seat in one vehicle but not in a different vehicle.

- Proper seat belt fit usually occurs when children are between 9 and 12 years old
- Seat belt fit can vary by vehicle, so check seat belt fit in all vehicles where the child will ride to make sure the child no longer needs to use a booster seat. Sometimes a child might need a booster seat in one vehicle but

- Keep children properly buckled in the back seat through age 12 for the best possible protection.

REGISTER YOUR CAR SEAT

Make sure to register your car seat with the manufacturer to receive recalls and safety notices so your child can remain safe. Registration information can be found on the child restraint system or visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's website to look up registration:

<https://www.nhtsa.gov>

CHILD PASSENGER STATISTICS

- AI/AN people use car seats, booster seats and seat belts at a much lower rate than the national rate.
- Crashes are the leading cause of death for AI/AN ages 1-44.
- On average, two AI/AN people die every day in motor vehicle crashes.



In 2020, 607 child passengers ages 12 and younger were killed in motor vehicle crashes in the United States, and more than 63,000 were injured.

Of the children who were killed in a crash, 38% were not buckled up.

Parents and caregivers can make a lifesaving difference by ensuring that their children are properly buckled on every trip.

Source: [cdc.gov/transportationsafety/child_passenger_safety/cps-factsheet.html](https://www.cdc.gov/transportationsafety/child_passenger_safety/cps-factsheet.html)

IHS INJURY PREVENTION

Our Mission

Raise the health status of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest possible level by decreasing the incidence of severe injuries and death to the lowest possible level and increasing the ability of tribes to address their injury problems.

About IHS Injury Prevention

We are the lead IHS program to address the injury disparities in AI/AN communities. Our widely-recognized program works with tribes and partners to reduce the disproportionate impact of injuries on Indian people.



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For more information about child passenger safety, visit our website at www.ihs.gov/injuryprevention/ or scan the QR code.

