



FACT SHEET - February 2002 Position Children for Safe Travel

The Child Safety Seat Resource Center (CSSRC) is Oregon's central source of information and assistance for child-passenger safety education and training. Working with over 200 certified child passenger safety technicians and advocates throughout Oregon, parents are able to receive help insuring the correct installation of their child safety and booster seats. From October 2000 through September of this year, 110 events were held and 3,860 seats were checked. Of the seats checked 3,104 needed correction – 80%. Additionally, 1,188 new seats were demonstrated for families to ensure correct installation from the beginning.¹

Change in the Law!

Drivers are required to use approved booster seats that elevate children between 4 – 6 years of age and children weighing between 40 – 60 pounds to make standard seat belts fit a child properly.

- Violation of this law is a Class D Traffic infraction carrying a \$77 penalty.
- A child too small for the seat belt can be ejected and /or receive serious neck, spinal cord and internal abdominal injuries for an incorrectly position belt.
- Booster seats keep seat belts where they provide the most protection.
- Shoulder belts are critical to use with booster seats because they provide the child with upper body protection. Never use a booster seat without a shoulder belt.

Seat Belts and Child Safety Seats Save Lives!

Fatalities in Oregon since 1996:²

- 72 children under 8 years of age died in motor vehicle traffic crashes.
- Only 20 of these children were riding in child safety seats and there is no way to determine if the seat was being used correctly.
- Of the children over 4 years age, none were riding in a child safety seat or booster seat.

Since 1996, 7,058 children 8 years and younger were injured in motor vehicle crashes in Oregon! 87% of these children were improperly restrained.

When placed in a poorly fitting adult lap and shoulder belt without a booster, the lap portion of the belt can rise over the child's abdomen and the shoulder portion of the belt can cut across the neck and face causing serious internal injuries in a crash.

Use Child Safety and Booster Seats Correctly

- The back seat is the safest place for children ages 12 and under to ride.³
- Infants should ride in the back seat in a rear facing safety seat as long as possible but at least until they are one year old **and** at least 20 pounds.
- Children over 1 year old and 20 to 40 pounds should ride in the back seat in a forward facing safety seat.
- Children between 40 to 60 pounds should ride in the back seat in a belt-positioning booster seat and lap/shoulder belt.
- Boosters are recommended for children until they fit properly in the lap/shoulder belt.

Use Safety Belts Correctly

Assure that passengers never ride on someone else's lap, never secure more than one person in a safety belt system, or place the shoulder belt under the arm or behind the back. All of these practices are extremely dangerous and are not acceptable under any circumstance.

Wear the lap portion of the safety belt below the waist, snug across the hips and pelvic bones. The shoulder portion should rest smoothly over the collarbone and across the chest and shoulders.

This Information was compiled by the Child Safety Seat Resource Center, 12/01

¹ Child Safety Seat Resource Center, October, 2001

² ODOT/Fatality Analysis Reporting System, December 2001

³ Standardized Child Passenger Safety Training Program, Spring 2001