

## Wellness Articles

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An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

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## Choosing the correct car seat for your child

In Alberta, all children under six years of age or weighing less than 18 kilograms (40 pounds) must be secured in an appropriate child safety seat that is properly installed in the vehicle.

Proper use of a child safety seat has been shown to reduce the likelihood of a child being injured or killed in a motor vehicle accident by as much as 75 per cent.

Choosing the correct type of child safety seat is an important step in ensuring your child is safe.

### Rear-facing car seats

A child is safest in a rear-facing car seat until they are at least two years old, or when they reach the maximum weight or height limit for a rear-facing seat (as stated by the manufacturer).

Rear-facing car seats with higher weight and height limits are preferred. They keep a child in the safer, rear-facing position beyond age two.

Don't rush to put your child in a forward-facing seat. The rear-facing position is the safest.

### Forward-facing car seats

A child who is at least two years old or has reached the maximum weight or height limit of the rear-facing seat (as stated by the manufacturer) may ride in a forward-facing car seat.

A child must use a forward-facing car seat until they reach the seat's maximum weight or height limit (as stated by the manufacturer).

Some forward-facing seats may be used with the five-point harness for children up to 30 kg (65 lb).

### **Booster seats**

An adult seat belt alone does not properly fit a child's body because it sits too high on a child's belly and neck. This can cause serious injuries in a crash. A booster seat helps the seat belt safely fit a child's body.

Once a child has reached the maximum forward-facing weight or height limit of their car seat (as stated by the manufacturer), they can move into a booster seat.

A child is safest in a booster seat until they reach the seat's maximum weight or height limit (as stated by the manufacturer).

### **Make every ride a safe ride**

Read the instructions that come with the car seat and the instructions in your vehicle owner's manual before driving with a child.

Find a free child car seat clinic near you or take a Child Car Seat YES Test. It is a self-check tool for choosing, installing, and using a car seat or booster seat.

For more information on child safety seats and the Child Car Seat YES Tests, go to:  
<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/Pages/alberta-child-safety-seat-guidelines.aspx>