

AAP Updates Recommendations on Car Seats

New advice from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) will change the way many parents buckle up their children for a drive. In a new policy published in the April 2011 issue of Pediatrics, the AAP advises parents to keep their toddlers in rear-facing car seats until age 2, or until they reach the maximum height and weight for their car seat. It also advises that most children will need to ride in a belt-positioning booster seat until they have reached 4 feet 9 inches tall and are between 8 and 12 years of age.

Policy Statement Child Passenger Safety

PEDIATRICS 2011; 127:788-793

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) strongly supports optimal safety for children and adolescents of all ages during all forms of travel. This policy statement provides 4 evidence-based recommendations for best practices in the choice of child restraint system to optimize safety in passenger vehicles for children from birth through adolescence:

- (1) Rear-facing car safety seats for most infants up to 2 years of age;
 - (2) Forward-facing car safety seats for most children through 4 years of age;
 - (3) Belt-positioning booster seats for most children through 8 years of age; and
 - (4) Lap-and-shoulder seat belts for all who have outgrown booster seats.
- In addition, a fifth evidence-based recommendation is for all children younger than 13 years to ride in the rear seats of vehicles. Current estimates of child restraint effectiveness indicate that child safety seats reduce the risk of injury by 71% to 82% and reduce the risk of death by 28% when compared with those for children of similar ages in seat belts. Booster seats reduce the risk of nonfatal injury among 4-8 year olds by 45% compared with seat belts.

Excerpted from the AAP Policy Statement found at <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/reprint/peds.2011-0213v1>.

Need to Learn More? TIPP can help...

Teen driver trainings and community events are currently available at your request. If you would like more information or would like to request a training, please contact the Pennsylvania Traffic Injury Prevention Project at **1-800-CAR-BELT** or visit the website at www.pakidstravelsafe.org.

Summary of Best Practice Recommendations

<p>1. Best -practice recommendation</p> <p>Infant-only or convertible CSS used rear-facing</p>	<p>All infants and toddlers should ride in a rear-facing car safety seat (CSS) until they are 2 years of age or until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer of their CSS.</p>
<p>2. Best-practice recommendation</p> <p>Convertible or combination CSS used forward-facing</p>	<p>All children 2 years or older, or those younger than 2 years who have outgrown their rear-facing weight or height limit for the CSS, should use a forward-facing CSS with a harness for as long as possible, up to the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer of their CSS.</p>
<p>3. Best-practice recommendation</p> <p>Belt-positioning booster seat</p>	<p>All children whose weight or height is above the forward-facing limit for their CSS should use a belt-positioning booster seat until the vehicle lap-and-shoulder seat belt fits properly, typically when they have reached 4 feet 9 inches in height and are between 8 and 12 years of age.</p>
<p>4. Best-practice recommendation</p> <p>Lap-and-shoulder vehicle seat belt</p>	<p>When children are old enough and large enough to use the vehicle seat belt alone, they should always use lap-and-shoulder seat belts for optimal protection.</p>
<p>5. Best-practice recommendation</p>	<p>All children younger than 13 years should be restrained in the rear seats of vehicles for optimal protection</p>

