



# Keeping Your Baby Safe: A Child Safety Seat Information Booklet



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## CHILD SAFETY SEAT INFORMATION for PARENT(S)/LEGAL GUARDIAN(S)/CAREGIVER(S)

Advent Health for Children wants your child to ride safely while in a moving car.

Florida Law requires that all children under five years of age must be seated in a federally approved child car-seat. Failure to follow this law could result in a \$60 fine and 3 points on the driver's license.

### **Florida laws child restraint requirements and child safety seats:**

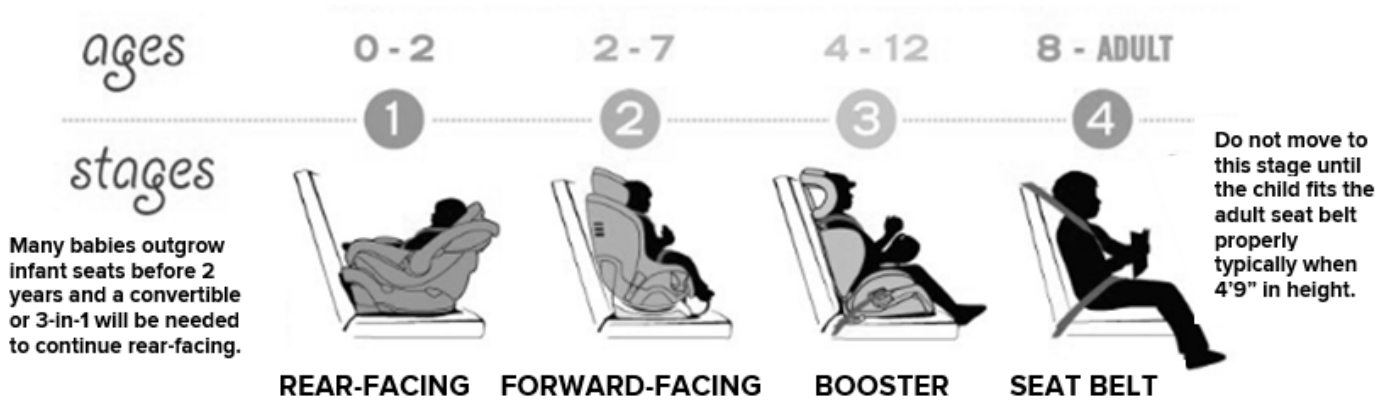
- 1. Children 0 to 3 years old must ride in a federally approved child safety seat either in a separate car seat or a vehicle's built-in child seat.**
2. Children 4 to 5 years old must be in a separate car seat or a vehicle's built-in child seat or booster seat may be used.
3. Children 6 and up can use a booster seat or a regular seat belt. Children should use a booster seat until they are about 4 foot 9 inches tall and 8-12 years old.
4. All passengers under 18 must wear a seat belt.
5. Florida law recommends:
  - children remain rear facing for as long as possible until they reach the highest weight or height for their car seat's manufacturer allows.
  - children up to age 12 ride in the rear seats, since front seat air bags when deployed can cause serious injury to children.

Choose a car seat that is appropriate based on your child's age and size, make sure that will fit in your vehicle and use it every time.

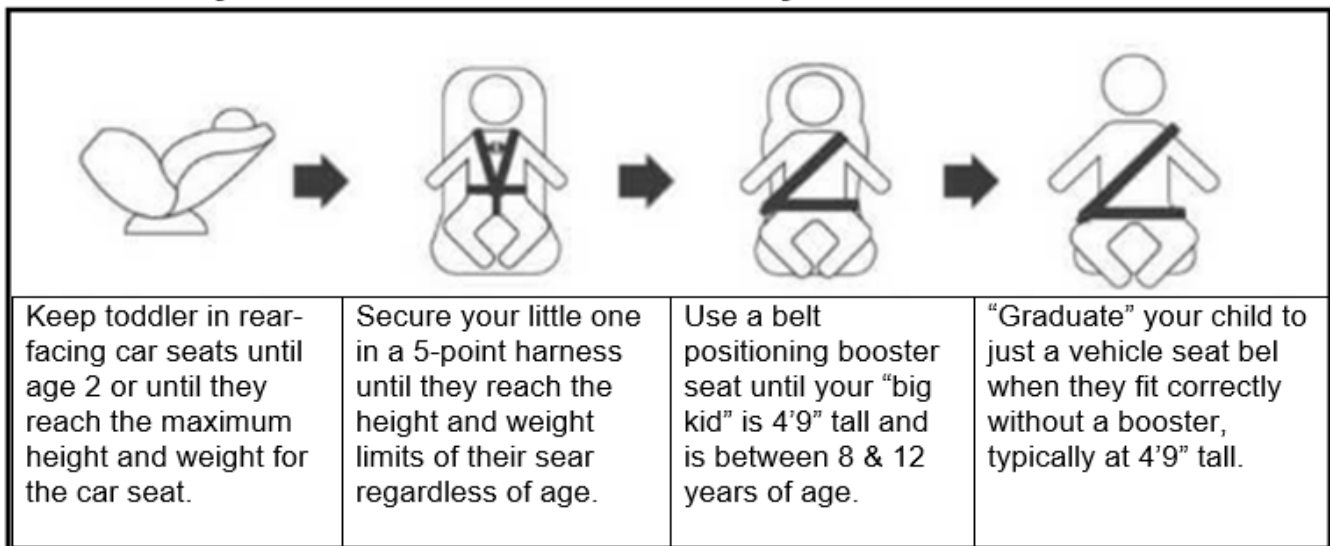
Always use your specific car seat manufacturer's instructions on how to assemble and install your car seat. Read the vehicle owner's manual on how to install the car seat using the seat belt or LATCH system. If you have lost the instructions, contact the manufacturer and ask for a new set of instructions.

Using a car safety seat correctly makes a big difference. Even the safest seat may not protect your child in a crash if it is used or installed incorrectly.

## Know the ages and stages for Car Safety Protection for your child.



### Make sure your child is secured correctly:



## What kind of Child Safety Seat is Best for your newborn or premature baby?

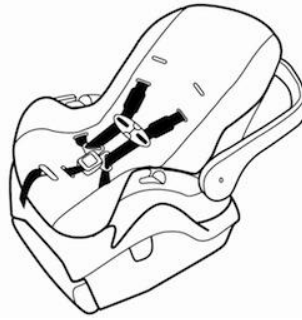
The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all infants should ride rear facing starting with their first ride home from the hospital. Infants and toddlers should continue to ride in a Rear-Facing Car Seat until they are 2 years of age or until they reach the highest weight and height allowed by their car seat manufacturer.

Correct positioning of newborns in child safety seats is important to decrease the risk of breathing problems while keeping them safe in the event of a crash or sudden stop.

There are 3 types of rear-facing cars seats:

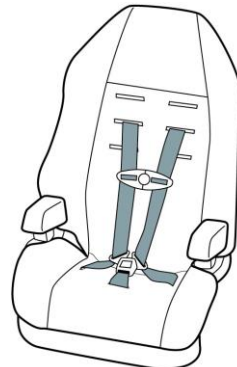
- Rear-facing only
- Convertible seat
- 3 - in -1 seat.

## 1. Rear-Facing Infant Seat with a Base



- Are used for infants up to 22 to 40 lbs, depending on the model.
- Are small and have carrying handles (sometimes come as part of a stroller system).
- Usually come with a base that can be left in the car. The seat clicks in and out of the base, so you don't have to install the seat each time you use it.
- Are used only for travel and not intended for sleeping, feeding and other uses outside the vehicle.

## 2. Convertible seats (used rear-facing)



- Can be used rear-facing, and later switched to forward facing for older children when they outgrow the weight limit or length limit or both for rear facing. This type of seat can be used longer by your child.
- They are bigger and heavier than infant seats and usually do not come with carrying handles or separate bases. They are designed to stay in the car.
- Most have higher rear-facing weight (40-50 pounds) and height limits than the rear-facing only seats. This makes them more suitable for bigger babies and toddlers.
- Have a 5-point harness system that attaches at the shoulders, at the hips and between the legs.
- Are used only for travel and not intended for sleeping, feeding and other uses outside the vehicle.

### 3. The 3 in 1 car seat

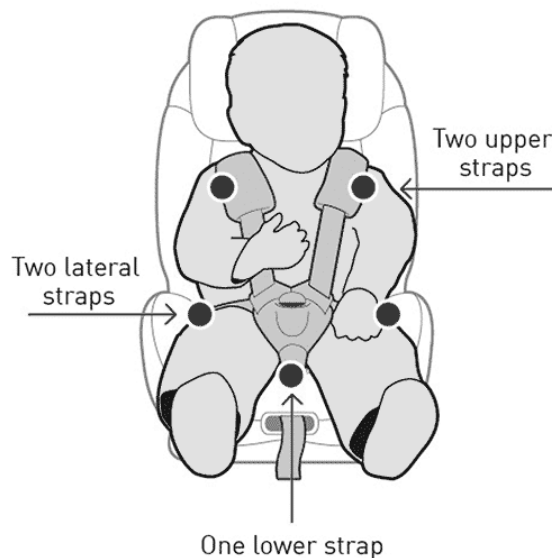


#### 3-in-1 Car Seats

- Can be used rear facing (infants and toddlers),
- Can be use forward facing for and as a belt positioning booster (older children).
- Are often bigger in size, so make sure they will fit rear-facing.
- Do not have carrying handles or separate bases.
- May have higher rear-facing weight and height limits than rear facing only.
- Transition to forward facing once the child reaches 2 years.
- Then booster seats as they grow. Follow manufacturer's recommendations.

#### The 5-Point Harness Infant Car Seat:

- Provides the most protection for your infant.
- Has 2 upper straps, 2 lateral straps, one lower strap and a lock in the middle.



## Positioning your child in the child safety seat:

### Place your baby in the seat:

- Your baby's back and bottom flat against the back of the child safety seat.
- Do not place any padding under or behind the baby such as a blanket or pillow unless it was part of the car seat when purchased.
- Blanket rolls may be placed on both sides of the baby to help support the head and neck. A small blanket or cloth diaper can be placed between crotch strap and the baby's legs to prevent slouching (picture #4).



Picture #4



### Check the harness straps:

- The shoulder straps should be placed in the slots that are at or just below your baby's shoulders.
- Make sure the harness is snug without slack and the shoulder straps should lay flat. Do the Pinch Test to make sure you cannot pinch the strap together with your fingers. There should be no more than ½ inch of padding (clothing or blanket) between the infant and the harness.
- Bulky clothes can compress and leave the straps too loose to hold your child safely in a crash. It is best to dress the infant in lighter weight clothing, place them in the car safety, then place their coat or blanket over them.

### Position the chest clip

- The car safety seat's harness retainer clip should be placed armpit level, in the middle of the infant's chest, not on the abdomen, or in the neck area.



## Additional Safety Suggestions:

- **Never leave your child alone in a car.**
- When possible, an adult should sit next to the child in the rear seat to help take care of the child if needed.
- If your child has breathing problems, try to travel as little as possible.
- If your child has been discharged on a home monitor, it should be used when the child is in the child safety seat as well. Make sure the battery has been charged and will last longer than the travel time.
- Place all heavy objects like monitors and oxygen tanks on the car floor or under the seat to keep them secure and to prevent them from being thrown if the car stops suddenly or crashes.
- Do **not** place a rear-facing child safety seat for infants in the front passenger seat of any car that has a passenger-side front or side air bag because there is a risk of death or serious injury from the impact of the air bag against the child safety seat.
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for assembly and installation.
- It is recommended that you go to a car safety seat inspection station to make sure your car safety seat is properly installed in your vehicle.
- Check the Auto Safety Hotline or the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) Web site for a list of recalled safety seats.  
Call :1-888-327-4236 or  
Visit: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats>
- NHTSA states that car safety seats be replaced if they have been involved in a collision.
- Child Safety seats are negatively affected by extreme temperatures causing the plastic to breakdown and harness system to weaken. They recommend replacing them after 5-6 years.

### REFERENCES:

- The American Academy of Pediatrics(2022) – Policy Statement: Child Passenger Safety. [Child Passenger Safety](#)
- National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (2024) Car Seats and Booster Seats; [Car Seat & Booster Seat Safety, Ratings, Guidelines | NHTSA](#)
- Car Seats: Information for Families 2024 . Retrieved from Healthy Children.Org. and the American Academy of Pediatrics Last updates 2/26/2024 [Car Seats: Information for Families - HealthyChildren.org](#)
- Florida Highways Safety and Motor Vehicles (2024) Safety Belts and child restraints. [Safety Belts and Child Restraints - Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles](#)