

SAVING LIVES ONE CAR SEAT AT A TIME

The law in Tennessee

In 1978, Tennessee became the first state in the nation to enact a child passenger safety law. The fine for violations is \$50.

- Children who are less than 1 year old or weigh less than 20 pounds must ride in rear-facing car seats in the back seat.
- Children who are 1 through 3 years old and weigh more than 20 pounds must also ride in car seats in the rear seat, but may face forward.
- Children who are 4 through 8 years old and are not yet 4 feet, 9 inches tall must ride in a booster seat in the rear seat.
- Children 9 through 12 that are 4 feet 9 inches or more must use safety belts in the rear seat.

NOTE: The latest research shows that toddlers are more than five times safer riding rear-facing in a car seat up to their second birthday. The American Academy of Pediatrics may upgrade its recommendations accordingly.

Helpful resources

tntrafficsafety.org	aap.org
NHTSA.org	carseat.org
safekids.org	888-327-4236 (NHTSA)
safekids.org/certification	

All facts and figures in this publication are from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The Tennessee Child Passenger Safety Center is a joint project of the Tennessee Governor's Highway Safety Office and Meharry Medical College.

1005 Dr. D. B. Todd Jr Blvd ■ Nashville, TN 37208



The Tennessee Child Passenger Safety Center at Meharry



Are car seats that important?

Yes. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of pediatric mortality in the U.S. Child safety seats reduce fatal injury in passenger cars by 71 percent for infants less than 1 year old and by 54 percent for toddlers 1 to 4 years of age. For children 4 to 7 years of age, booster seats have been shown to reduce injury risk by 59 percent compared to safety belts alone.

But I have a car seat!

Three out of four children are in misused car seats. The most common misuses are a loose seat belt securing the car seat and a loose harness securing the child.

How do I know my seat is installed correctly?

See a certified child passenger safety technician or come to the Tennessee Child Passenger Safety Center (TNCPS) at Meharry Medical College. Call us toll free at 855-425-1137 or go to www.tntrafficsafety.org to locate a technician near you.

Certification? To install car seats?

That's right. There are hundreds of car seats on the market and numerous makes and models of vehicles. There are height and weight requirements for four stages of child development. There are seat recalls and state laws. Technicians undergo a 32-hour training to know the correct combinations of vehicle, car seat, and child. You can rely upon your CPS technician.

The Tennessee CPS Center offers...

- 32-hour certification courses.
- 8-hour courses for lapsed certifications.
- 6-hour Continuing Education Units for certification renewal.

Contact the center if you are interested in certification or if your workplace would like to know more about becoming a fitting station for families in your area.

TN Child Passenger Safety Center at Meharry

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emergency room doctors call these injuries to the neck and midsection “seat belt syndrome.”

Why use a booster seat?

Tennessee law requires children to be in booster seats if they are less than 4'9" tall. If they leave their booster seats too soon they are exposed to particular injuries from their seat belts. In fact,

A child is ready for a seat belt when...

- The child sits all the way back against the car's seat.
- The child's knees bend comfortably at the seat's edge.
- The belt crosses the shoulder and rests on the collar bone—not the neck.
- The lap belt is as low as possible, touching the thigh, bracing the hips.
- The child can stay seated this way for the whole trip.

The BEST seat for your child?

Any and all! Despite what you may have heard, there are no bad/better/best seats on the market today. All of them meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards set forth by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and any of them may be the best fit for your child and vehicle. The best seat is the one that 1) fits your child, 2) fits your vehicle, and 3) is easy to install—we want you to use it every time!

Who we are and what we do

The Tennessee CPS Center is the state-wide child passenger safety program funded by the Tennessee Governor's Highway Safety Office.

We establish fitting stations. Bring your child in the family vehicle to a fitting station and confirm that your car seat is installed correctly. If not, you'll be shown the right way at no charge.

We certify technicians. The center provides nationally recognized training and administers certification through the approving body, Safe Kids USA, at no charge.

We conduct seat checks. The center and its affiliated fitting stations regularly host free seat checks in communities throughout Tennessee.

We spread the child passenger safety message. The center works with safety groups, churches, schools, and law enforcement agencies to protect children in our communities. We provide educational presentations, literature, and videos to promote our safety endeavors throughout Tennessee.

CPS STATE CONTACT

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Call the TNCPS, 855-425-1137

Or go to www.tntrafficsafety.org for more info.