



TENNESSEE CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY LAW

(TCA 55-9-602) Effective July 2005 - Present

All children should be transported according to the child safety seat or vehicle manufacturer's instructions.



Rear-Facing Car Seat

Children under one (1) year of age, or any child weighing twenty (20) pounds or less, must be secured in a child passenger restraint system in a rear-facing position, in the rear seat, if available.



Forward-Facing Car Seat

Children age one (1) through three (3), and weighing more than twenty (20) pounds, must be secured in a harnessed child safety seat in a rear or forward-facing child safety seat in the rear seat of the vehicle, if available.



Booster Seat

Children age four (4) through eight (8), and measuring less than four feet nine inches (4'9") in height, must be secured in a belt-positioning booster seat system in the rear seat, if available.



Seat Belt

Children age nine (9) through twelve (12), measuring four feet nine inches (4'9") or more in height, must be secured in a seat belt system. It is recommended that any such child be placed in the rear seat, if available.

- To maximize safety, keep your child in the car seat for as long as possible, as long as the child fits within the manufacturer's height and weight requirements.
- Seats must meet the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (§ 571.213) and be used according to the child safety restraint system and vehicle manufacturer's instructions.
- NEVER place an infant in front of an airbag!
- All car seats must be installed on a forward-facing vehicle seat unless the car seat and vehicle manufacturer allow.

Why Booster Seats?

Young children who have outgrown their forward-facing car seats are still too small for an adult lap and shoulder belt. When these young children wear adult seat belts, they can suffer serious injuries to the head, neck, spinal cord, and abdomen. All it takes is a BOOST to put them in the proper position for the adult lap and shoulder belt to protect them!

Q: Why would I use a high-back booster seat instead of a low-back booster seat?

A: High-back booster seats must be used when vehicle seat backs are low or do not have head restraints. This type of seat provides head, neck, and back support for the child.

Q: How do I use my Combination or All-In-One car seat as a booster?

A: When your child outgrows the height or weight limits of the harness, remove the harness and use the seat as a booster. Be sure to carefully follow the instructions on how to convert your seat to a booster.

Q: How does a booster seat help if it isn't latched to the car?

A: Booster seats are not as tightly installed in the vehicle as other child restraints are. Booster seats are held in place by the child's weight and the vehicle's lap and shoulder belts. The booster seat is designed to help the lap and shoulder belt fit properly, by raising and positioning your child. The lap and shoulder belt together function as the restraint.

Q: How should the seat belt fit my child when they are in a booster seat?

A: The lap belt must lie snugly across the upper thighs, not the stomach. The shoulder belt should lie snug across the shoulder and chest, and not across the neck or face.

Find a CPST

Find a child passenger safety fitting station or a certified technician in your area by visiting [TNTrafficSafety.org/cps](https://www.tntrafficafety.org/cps)



For additional resources or to order more, visit [TNTrafficSafety.org](https://www.tntrafficafety.org) and select Order Resources.