

## Child Safety Seats



Child safety seats, properly installed and used, save children's lives. Proper use of a child safety seat can reduce fatal injury by 71 percent for infants and 54 percent for toddlers.

The Lake Oswego Fire Department and the Lake Oswego Police Department hold free quarterly safety seat clinics open to all citizens.

Location: 300 B Avenue, Lake Oswego, OR

The complete schedule for 2015 is:

- February 7, 2015 (Saturday) 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
- May 2, 2015 (Saturday) 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
- August 1, 2015 (Saturday) 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
- November 7, 2015 (Saturday) 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Please check the [Child Safety Seat Resource Center Clinic Calendar](#) for more clinic dates throughout the State.

All events are held at the Main Fire Station at 300 B Avenue, at the corner of Third and B. Call 503-635-0275 during regular business hours for more information on the clinics.

Click to visit: [Oregon Impact](#) for more child seat safety information.

To get more safety information locally, call or write:

Oregon Impact  
PO Box 220010  
Milwaukie, OR 97269  
(503) 643-5620

Here are a few safety seat rules to follow, as suggested by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:

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### **Does the child ride facing the right way?**

Keep your child rear-facing as long as possible. It's the best way to keep him or her safe. Your child should remain in a rear-facing car seat until he or she reaches the top height or weight limit allowed by your car seat's manufacturer. Once your child outgrows the rear-facing car seat, your child is ready to travel in a forward-facing car seat with a harness.

### **Does a child over 40 pounds have the best protection possible?**

Keep the child in a safety seat with a full harness as long as possible, at least until he or she weighs 40 pounds. At that point, change to a belt-positioning booster seat, which helps the adult lap and shoulder belt fit better or check for a child seat with harness for higher weight limits.

### **How should a safety belt fit an older child?**

The child must be tall enough to sit without slouching, with knees bent at the edge of the seat and feet on the floor. The lap belt must fit low and tight across the upper thighs. The shoulder belt should rest over the shoulder and across the chest. Never put the shoulder belt under the arm or behind the child's back. The adult lap and shoulder belt system alone will not fit most children until they are at least 4' 9" tall and weigh about 80 pounds.

### **Remember: One Person, One Belt**

A child should never be held on an adult's lap because the grownup could crush him or her in a collision. Even if the adult wears a safety belt, the child would be torn from his or arms in a crash. A parent should also never wrap a shoulder harness or seat belt around a child on the adult's lap. Two people with one belt around them could injure each other.

The cargo area of a station wagon, van, or pickup is a very dangerous place for anyone to ride. Anyone riding in the bed of a pickup truck, even under a canopy, could be thrown out.

### **Does the car have an air bag for the front passenger seat?**

An infant or child could be seriously injured or killed by an inflating air bag. A passenger air bag can seriously harm a child riding in the front seat of the car. Many new cars have air bags for the right front seat. Air bags work with lap/shoulder belts to protect teens and adults. To check whether the vehicle has air bags, look for a warning label on the sun visor or the letters "SRS" or "SIR" embossed on the dashboard. The owner's manual will also verify this. An inflating passenger air bag can kill a baby in a rear-facing safety seat. An air bag also can be hazardous for children age 12 and under who ride facing forward. This is especially true if the child is not properly buckled up in a safety seat, booster seat, or lap and shoulder belt. In a crash, the air bag inflates very quickly. It would hit a rear-facing safety seat hard enough to kill a baby. Infants must ride in the back seat, facing the rear. If there is no room in the back and no other alternative, a child over age one may have to ride in front and facing forward. Make sure the child is correctly buckled up for his or her age and size and that the vehicle seat is moved as far back as possible. Fasten the harness snugly, and make sure a child using a lap and shoulder belt does not lean toward the dashboard. Read the vehicle owner's guide about the air bags in the car.

## **Booster Seats**

### Position Children Correctly for Safe Travel

Children up to 40 pounds are safest traveling in child safety seats with a harness system. When they move into the vehicle seat belt system, they may not fit. According to the Standardized Child Passenger Safety Training Program a "lap belt is the least desirable type of seat belt because it does not provide upper body restraint." Lap/shoulder belts provide more protection but they must be worn correctly. In the new Child Passenger Safety Law effective January 1, 2002, "proper fit" means the lap belt of the safety belt or safety harness is positioned low across the thighs and the shoulder belt is positioned over the collarbone and away from the neck. For children over 40 pounds, a booster seat helps position the child for safe travel.

### What is a booster seat?

A booster seat is made for older children when they are too big for a car seat but still not big enough to safely use the adult seat belt. It sits on the seat of the vehicle and raises a child up so the car's seat belt will fit properly.

### Why does my child need to ride in a booster seat?

In a crash, a child who is too small for the seat belt can be ejected from the belt. Booster seats keep seat belts where they do the most good. The lap belt should sit at the top of the thighs, not on the stomach. The shoulder belt

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needs to go across the shoulder and chest, not the face or neck. If it's tucked under the child's arm or behind the back, the child's body will fly forward in a crash.

### When does my child need to use a booster seat?

Start to use a booster seat when your child outgrows the forward facing car seat with a harness. This happens when the shoulders are above the top set of strap slots and/or when the child outweighs the seat harness limit. Keep using a child safety seat until your child is at least 8 years old and 80 pounds. After that they can be moved to a seat belt.

### To see if the seat belt will fit your child, try the following test.\*

- Does the child sit all the way back against the auto seat? Do the child's knees bend comfortably at the edge of the auto seat? Does the lap belt fit snugly across the top of the thighs? Does the shoulder belt come across the center of the shoulder and chest?
- Can the child sit like this for the whole trip?

If you answer "no" to any of these questions, your child needs to ride in a booster seat.

\*Used with permission from Safety Belt Safe USA. Booster Seat Flyers

You can download booster seat flyers [here](#) for your use.

More information on booster seats is available in the links provided below.

## Child Safety Seat law

### Oregon Law

1. The child must ride in a rear facing child restraint until the child reaches both 1 year of age AND 20 pounds.
2. The child must ride in a child restraint with an internal harness system until the child reaches 40 pounds.
3. The child must use a booster seat when the child reaches 40 pounds. The child must use the booster seat until the child is EITHER 8 years of age OR 4'09" tall.
4. Current booster seat exemption does not require booster seat use in vehicles that only have lap belts in the back seat.
- 4a. An additional booster seat exemption was added January 2012. It will allow the use of a child restraint system with an internal harness rated above 40 pounds to be used in the place of a booster seat.

You can check current Oregon law [here](#).

## Web Links

[Booster Seat Flyers](#)[SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.– Safe Ride Helpline Online](#)[National SAFE KIDS Campaign](#)[Washington State Booster Seat Coalition](#)[Ford Boost America! Program](#)

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