

Tip Sheet: CAR SEAT SAFETY



A 2004 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) study found that motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death of children aged 4-15. The same research also showed that a child in a properly sized and installed car seat, booster seat, or other restraint system can reduce fatal injury by 54%.

New York State has enacted laws to ensure that children have the proper restraint system for their size and age. By using the correct type of child restraint system, and ensuring that it is installed correctly, New Yorkers can reduce the chances of severe injury to children in a motor vehicle crash.

KEY PROVISIONS OF NEW YORK STATE CHILD RESTRAINT LAW

- Children under the age of 16 must wear a seat belt or use an appropriate child safety restraint system.
- Children under the age of 4 must always use a car safety seat.
- Children under the age of 4 but weighing more than 40 lbs. must use a car safety seat or booster seat with a lap belt.
- Children of ages 4, 5, 6 or 7 must use a booster seat with a lap and shoulder belt or a child safety seat. (see exception below)
- Children over the age of 4 and weighing more than 100 lbs. and/or are at least 4' 9" tall are allowed to use a seat belt that has both a lap belt and shoulder harness.
- Never place a child in a rear-facing car safety seat in the front seat of a vehicle.

New York State Consumer Protection Board
5 Empire State Plaza, Suite 2101, Albany, New York 12223

Tel: 518-474-3514 Fax: 518-474-2474

Consumer Hotline: 1-800-697-1220

www.nysconsumer.gov

Advocating for and Empowering NY Consumers

Tip Sheet: CAR SEAT SAFETY



NEW YORK STATE CONSUMER PROTECTION BOARD

CAR SEAT SAFETY TIPS

- Each car seat is different. Read and retain the manufacturer's instructions on how to install your safety seat and its warranty.
- A 2004 NHTSA study reported that up to 72% of seat restraint systems were not installed properly. Special care needs to be taken to ensure LATCH straps are tight, seat belts are routed properly, and harness retainer clips, if used, are mounted correctly. If you need help installing your child safety restraint system, contact a certified Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Technician, who will inspect the installation of your car seat at no charge. To set up an appointment at a child safety seat inspection station, call toll-free: 1-866-SEATCHECK (866-732-8243) or visit: www.seatcheck.org.
- Car seats have expiration dates. Older car seats may not meet the most current NHTSA standards and should not be used. You can find the expiration date molded into the plastic of the seat, or on a sticker attached to the seat.
- Always register car seats, booster seats, and child restraint systems with the manufacturer using the registration card that accompanies a newly purchased restraint system. This ensures that the manufacturer can contact you in the case of a product recall or product update.
- Be sure your car seat or restraint system has not been recalled by checking posted recall lists at www.nysconsumer.gov and at www.recalls.gov. This is especially important if your car seat has not been used for a while and you want to begin using it.
- Car seats with broken or missing parts should not be used.
- Be a good role model. Always wear your seat belt. It's the LAW!

For more information and for the latest consumer product recalls, check the New York State Consumer Protection Board web site at www.nysconsumer.gov.

The CPB acknowledges the NHTSA for their assistance in developing this resource. Further information regarding vehicle safety can be found at www.nhtsa.dot.gov.

New York State Consumer Protection Board
5 Empire State Plaza, Suite 2101, Albany, New York 12223

Tel: 518-474-3514 Fax: 518-474-2474

Consumer Hotline: 1-800-697-1220

www.nysconsumer.gov

Advocating for and Empowering NY Consumers

Tip Sheet: CAR SAFETY FOR CHILDREN



NEW YORK STATE CONSUMER PROTECTION BOARD

GENERAL CAR SAFETY TIPS

Never leave a child alone inside a locked car or outside a car whether or not they are in a car safety seat.

The following can happen when a child is left alone

- Within minutes, the temperature in a vehicle can reach a deadly level. A child left in a car can die of heat stroke.
- A child can be strangled by power windows, sun-roofs, or accessories of an automobile.
- A child can knock the vehicle into gear, setting it in motion.
- He or she may be taken from the vehicle.
- The child can be run over when the vehicle is in motion or by another car.

When your child falls asleep in the car safety seat and you arrive at your destination, take him or her out of the car. Your child should sleep in a safe area away from the vehicle.

For more information and for the latest consumer product recalls, check the New York State Consumer Protection Board web site at www.nysconsumer.gov.

The CPB acknowledges the NHTSA for their assistance in developing this resource. Further information regarding vehicle safety can be found at www.nhtsa.dot.gov.

New York State Consumer Protection Board

5 Empire State Plaza, Suite 2101, Albany, New York 12223

Tel: 518-474-3514 Fax: 518-474-2474

Consumer Hotline: 1-800-697-1220

www.nysconsumer.gov

Advocating for and Empowering NY Consumers