

Moving Up Safely: Forward Facing Seats

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Girl Scout Gold Award Project

Alaska State Law

- All passengers regardless of age need to use a seatbelt or appropriate restraint (car seat or booster seat) device.
- The driver of the car is responsible for all passengers under the age of 16 to be properly restrained in the vehicle.
- All children one year to four years old who weigh over 20 pounds to be properly secured in an appropriate child restraint.

****** American Academy of Pediatrics recommends keeping children rear facing until at least 2 years old.**

****** Keep your child in a 5-point harness forward facing car seat until the top height and weight limit allowed by the car seat.**



1. Top tether attached.

2. Retainer clip at armpit level.

3. Harness comes through the seat at or above the child's shoulders.

4. Harness snug and flat.

Selecting the Right Seat

Making sure that you select the right type of child restraint and that it is properly installed and used is one way to give the best protection possible to the young children that you are transporting.

- Two types of car seats that can be installed forward facing: convertible car seat and combination seat. Both use a 5 point harness system.
 - Convertible seats can convert from a rear facing to a forward facing position.
 - Combination seats can also be used as a high back belt positioning booster seat after removing the harness system. **Do not install rear facing.**
- Select your child safety seat based on the size and weight of your child.
- Each seat has a maximum height and weight limit for use, listed on the seat's label and in the manufacturer's instructions.
- Remember to send in the registration card if you purchased a new seat. This is helpful in contacting you if there is a recall on your seat.

Know the History of Your Car Seat

This is especially true if the car seat is second hand.

- Car seats do expire. The expiration date maybe located on the car seat usually on the bottom or the side of the seat.
- Manufacturer expiration is different for each company. Check with the manufacturer or attend a car seat safety check for more information.
- Has the car seat been in a crash? If so, cut the harness straps and discard in a dark trash bag so it cannot be reused.

Additional Resources

Mat-Su Services for Children and Adults (MSSCA):
Safe Kids Mat-Su
1225 W. Spruce Ave.
Wasilla, AK 99654
907-352-1229



Safe Kids Alaska
3200 Providence Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508
907-212-3194



You can also register your car seat at the following websites if you haven't done so already!

www.safercar.gov/parents/index.htm

www.nhtsa.gov



For help learning how to correctly install and use your child's safety seat, speak with a certified technician at Mat-Su Services for Children & Adults, Safe Kids Mat-Su 352-1229

You can also visit Alaska's seat check website www.carseatsak.org



Your local Child Passenger Safety Technician

LATCH System

LATCH stands for **L**ower **A**nchors and **T**ethers for **C**hildren.

- Alternative and more simplified way of installing your child's seat in the vehicle.
- Uses straps connected to anchors in the vehicle instead of the vehicle's seat belts.
- Be sure to follow both the car seat and the manufacturer's instructions for your vehicle for using LATCH system. If the vehicle and the car seat are not designed for the LATCH system, the vehicle seatbelt will be used to secure the seat in the vehicle.
- **Do not use both the LATCH system and the vehicle seat belt together!**
- Once the seat has been installed and has a correct angle, give it a tug. A properly installed car seat will not move an inch at the belt path.

Basic Safety Tips

No bulky clothing

- In an accident, the extra padding can compress allowing for excessive movement of the child and possible ejection.

Ride in a back seat

- Children should always ride in the back seat even though they can look forward and **NEVER** in front of an air bag.

Avoid hard toys and aftermarket items

- These items can become projectiles during a crash or hard breaking situation and potentially injure the child or other occupants.

Food and drinks

- These items are choking hazards when traveling. It is best to pull over, enjoy the snack and then resume the trip.

This handout is designed to help you understand the two types of forward facing child restraints as well as how to install and use them properly so that your precious cargo arrives safely at your destination. With all information intact, reprint permission granted.