



## Cars, SUVs, Mini-Vans and Station Wagons



### GEORGIA LAW:

- Every occupant under the age of 18 must be restrained and children under age 8 and under 4'9" (57 inches) must be in an approved car seat or booster seat.
- The car seat or booster seat must be installed and used according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- All children must be in the back seat\*.

### BEST PRACTICE:

- Before using a lap/shoulder belt, a safer alternative for children ages 8-12 is to use a booster seat until they reach 4'9".
- Children under age 13 should ride in the back seat.
- A properly fitted seat belt should lie across the upper thighs and be snug across the shoulder and chest to restrain the child safely in a crash. It should not rest on the stomach area or across the neck.
  - ▶ An improperly fitted seat belt, with the shoulder belt placed under the arm or behind the back, is neither legal nor safe for children or adults. Improper use such as this can lead to serious injuries to the head, internal organs, or spine in a crash.

Georgia code 40-8-76 Child Restraint Requirements and 40-8-76.1 Seat Belts.

Child Care Services – Rules

591-1-1.36(2)(f)1

290-2-3.11(2) (j)

290-2-1-.11(i)20







\*If all rear seating positions are occupied by other children, Georgia Law does allow a child under 8 to be in an appropriate car seat/booster seat in the front seat.

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This series of Fact Sheets is intended to inform child care professionals about Georgia law and transporting children safely.

**All Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS) MUST BE used according to the CSRS and vehicle instructions.**

<p><b>1. Rear-facing Only Car Seat</b></p>		<p>Place the child in the seat, harness straps <b>at or just below</b> shoulders, chest clip at <b>armpit level</b>, harness straps <b>snug</b> where you cannot pinch the webbing together at the shoulders. Install the seat at an angle, not more than 45 degrees from vertical, follow car seat instructions. Keep child rear-facing until the child has reached the <b>maximum</b> weight <b>or</b> height limit of the car seat – <b>minimum</b> age 1 and 20 lbs. American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends until <b>age 2</b>.</p>
<p><b>2. Rear-facing and Forward-facing Car Seat (Convertible)</b></p>		<p>Same as #1 for rear-facing. Forward-facing at age 2. Place the child in the seat, seat should be in <b>upright</b> position, harness straps at or just above the shoulders, chest clip at <b>armpit level</b>, harness straps <b>snug</b> where you cannot pinch the webbing together at the shoulders. Keep child in the seat until they reach the <b>maximum</b> weight <b>or</b> height limit or until the <b>child's ears are above the top</b> of the seat.</p>
<p><b>3. Forward-facing Car Seat (can convert to booster seat mode)</b></p>		<p>Same as #2 for forward-facing. When the child has reached the <b>maximum</b> weight <b>or</b> height limit allowed by the car seat, follow the instructions for removal of the harness straps and buckle. The seat becomes a booster seat and <b>MUST BE</b> used with the lap and shoulder belt. It <b>CANNOT</b> be used with a lap belt only. Use the booster seat until the child has reached the <b>4'9" height or the upper weight limit</b> of the seat (80-100+ pounds).</p>
<p><b>4. High-Back Booster Seat</b></p>		<p>Use a high back booster only after the child has outgrown the forward-facing car seat. At <b>least</b> age 4. Some of these boosters may be adjusted to fit the child's height. The booster seat <b>MUST BE</b> used with lap and shoulder belt. It <b>CANNOT</b> be used with lap belt only. Position the lap belt below the arm rest and the shoulder belt between the neck and the arm of the child. Use the booster seat until the child reaches the <b>4'9" height or the upper weight limit</b> of the booster seat (80-100+ pounds).</p>
<p><b>5. No Back Booster Seat</b></p>		<p>A no back booster seat can be used in a vehicle, <b>MUST HAVE</b> head rests. Use a no back booster only after the child has outgrown the forward-facing car seat. At <b>least</b> age 4. The booster seat <b>MUST BE</b> used with lap and shoulder belt. It <b>CANNOT</b> be used with lap belt only. Position the lap belt below the arm rest and the shoulder belt between the neck and the arm of the child. Use the booster seat until the child reaches the <b>4'9" height or the upper weight limit</b> of the booster seat (80-100+ pounds).</p>
<p><b>6. Lap Belt Only</b></p>		<p>A lap belt only position in the vehicle <b>should be used</b> for installation of a car seat not a child. Lap belts <b>do not</b> provide upper body protection. As a result serious, head, spine and/or neck injuries can occur. <b>BEST PRACTICE:</b> Consider keeping the child in a CSRS appropriate for their weight and height.</p>

## Installation Tips and Things to Consider

- **ALWAYS** follow the Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS) instructions for use and installation.
- Install using the seat belt or lower anchors – **DO NOT** use both. Read your vehicle owners manual for information about how to lock your seat belts or location and use of LATCH connections (LATCH – **L**ower **A**nchors and **T**ethers for **C**hildren).
- Place the CSRS on vehicle/bus seat in the proper direction at the correct recline angle or upright position.
- Put the seat belt or LATCH strap through the belt path of the seat as directed by the manufacturer. Convertible seats will have two paths, one for rear facing and one for forward facing.
- Buckle the seat belt or attach LATCH clip to anchors. Place your hand in the CSRS seat and press the vehicle/bus seat cushion down and pull any slack out of the seat belt or LATCH straps. Lock the seat belt. If the CSRS has a tether, a long strap on the back and at the top, follow the instructions for installation (may not have an anchor location on the MFSAB or school bus). Check for tightness after installation and before each use. Place hands on each side of the CSRS (near belt path). There should be no more than 1 inch of side-to-side or forward movement at the belt path.
- Keep the child in the CSRS as long as the child fits within the weight **or** height limits.
- **WARNING!** A CSRS should **never** be installed at an emergency exit on a School Bus or Multi-Function School Activity Bus (MFSAB) or the front seat of a car, SUV or 12/15 passenger van.
- **NEVER** make changes to a CSRS to make it fit.
- All CSRSs have labels on the seat with their contact information. Register CSRS with the manufacturer either on-line or by mailing in the registration card. CSRS have expiration dates indicating when the CSRS should be replaced, expiration dates will vary by manufacturer.
- CSRS should be purchased new and not from yard sales or thrift shops.
- If the CSRS has been **involved in a crash**, check with the CSRS manufacturer for guidelines to replace the product.

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## Resources

- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) – <http://www.nhtsa.gov/Safety/CPS> installation videos, ease of use rating, latest information
- NHTSA Consumer Advisory: 15-Passenger Van  
<http://www.safercar.gov/Vehicle+Shoppers/Passenger+Van+Safety>
- NHTSA – Guideline for the Safe Transportation of Pre-School Age Children in School Buses - February, 1999 <http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/buses/guide1999/prekfinal.htm>
- NHTSA – Child Safety Restraint Systems on School buses  
Training videos - <http://www.nhtsa.gov/SchoolBuses>, look under Additional Resources
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) – [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org), click on Safety & Prevention current recommendations, other helpful information
- Safety Equipment – Multi-Function School Activity Bus (MFSAB) / School Bus
  - C E White – [www.cewhite.com](http://www.cewhite.com), integrated seats
  - Safe Guard Seat – [www.safeguardseat.com](http://www.safeguardseat.com), integrated & add-on seats
  - Besi Inc. – [www.besi-inc.com](http://www.besi-inc.com), add-on seats
- Georgia Code 40-8-76 Child Restraint Requirements and 40-8-76.1 Seat Belts  
<http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/gacode/>, type code number in search box
- Recalls – [www.recalls.gov](http://www.recalls.gov)  
To provide better service in alerting the American people to unsafe, hazardous or defective products, six federal agencies with vastly different jurisdictions have joined together to create [www.recalls.gov](http://www.recalls.gov) -- a “one stop shop” for U.S. Government recalls.
- Child Passenger Safety Technician – Become one, Find one - <http://cert.safekids.org/>
- Georgia Governor’s Office of Highway Safety -[www.gohs.state.ga.us](http://www.gohs.state.ga.us)
- Georgia Traffic Injury Prevention Institute -[www.ridesafegeorgia.org](http://www.ridesafegeorgia.org)

**TRUSTED INTERNET SOURCES:** NHTSA ∞ Safe Kids USA ∞ Georgia Department of Public Health-Injury Prevention ∞ AAP Car Seat, Vehicle and School Bus Manufacturers ∞ Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) ∞

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