

## Keep Your Child Safe



1. It seems so easy to just hold a baby in your lap when you are driving. But, **did you know that your little baby can seem like he or she weighs close to 250 pounds if there is a slow-speed accident?** That's a lot of weight for your arms to hold!
2. **Protect your child and yourself by using appropriate car seats.** Use the type of seat that you need; your selection depends upon the age, weight and height of your child:
  - **Infant Car Bed:** for babies and young children who need to lay flat.
  - **Rear-Facing Infant Seat:** for **infants and toddlers until they are 2 years** of age or reach the highest weight allowed by the car safety seat manufacturer. This type is important because their body needs the extra support in case of an accident. A toddler will need to move from the infant only seat to a convertible or 3-in-1 seat and continue to ride rear facing until 2 years of age or he/she reaches the height and weight limit for the car seat.
  - **Forward-Facing Child Seat:** for kids **2 years and older** who have outgrown rear facing seat weight and height limits should use forward-facing car safety seat with harness (up to about 4 years old).
  - **Booster Seat:** for kids until the vehicle seat fits properly, typically when they reach **4 feet 9 inches** in height and are between ages of 8 and 12 years old. Booster seats help seat belts fit your child better. Illinois law requires that all children up to their 8<sup>th</sup> birthday must be secured in an appropriate car seat or booster seat.
3. **Bring your child with you when you get a new seat to make sure that you get the right size.**
4. **If you need help getting a car seat, talk with your health care provider about where you can get a loaner seat in your community.**
5. If the average car seat found at stores is not the right fit to meet your child's specific needs, discuss your concerns with your child's health care provider or therapist. If you need a special car seat, you may be able to get help with the cost. Contact your DSCC Care Coordinator to help you find funding sources.
6. **Remember, proper car seats can help save you and your child's lives.**
7. You may find the following resources helpful:
  - **Car-Safety.org:** <http://www.car-safety.org/>
  - **Child Safety Seat Inspection Stations in Illinois.** Call toll-free **866-732-8243** or go online to: [http://www.nhtsa.gov/cps/cpsfitting/FindFittingSt.cfm?q\\_state=IL&](http://www.nhtsa.gov/cps/cpsfitting/FindFittingSt.cfm?q_state=IL&)
  - **Infant Passenger Safety: Guidance for Parents** <http://www.aap.org/family/infantpassengersafety.htm>
  - **Special Needs CPS Resource Center:** <http://childrenshospitalofil.org/body.cfm?id=70> or call **877-277-6543**.
8. Children **younger than 13** should always ride in the back seat.

**We're here to help.** To learn more about UIC-Specialized Care for Children's programs and services, check out our website at:

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