

#### **Tip 4. Using locking clips**

Sometimes locking clips may be required to safely secure a child car safety seat in a vehicle. Consult your owner's manual to see if you need one. If so, install the locking clip on the seatbelt within 13 mm (1/2 inch) of the latch plate.

#### **Tip 5. Using harness slots**

Your child car safety seat's harness straps must be positioned correctly by ensuring they pass through the correct slots.

- Rear-facing child car safety seat harness straps should sit at or below the child's shoulders.
- Forward-facing child car safety seat harness straps should sit at or above the child's shoulders.

#### **Tip 6. Securing your child in the harness**

Place the child in the child car seat, ensuring the harness straps lie flat with no more than 1 finger space between the harness and the child's collarbone (rear-facing) or chest (forward-facing).

#### **Tip 7. Positioning your harness straps**

Ensure that harness straps lie flat and they do not twist or fold. Harness straps need to be straightened out each time the child is secured in the seat.

#### **Tip 8. Adjusting chest clip**

Properly adjust the chest clip on the harness. It should lie flat against the chest and be positioned at armpit level.

#### **Tip 9. Installing away from active air bags**

Always install child car safety seats away from active air bags. The safest place is in the back seat of a passenger car, sport utility vehicle or light truck and either the second or third row in a mini-van.

#### **Tip 10. Installing your rear-facing child car safety seat on a proper angle**

Most child car safety seats have a recline position that must be used when in the rear-facing position for an infant (up to 9kg or 20lb). Check your child car safety seat owner's manual for instructions. For rear-facing seats, if necessary, use a tightly rolled towel or a foam bar (pool noodle) under the base of the child car safety seat to adjust the angle to 45 degrees. A forward-facing child car safety seat should be in the upright position. Make sure that when the seat is turned from rear-facing to forward-facing, the recline feature is adjusted to the upright position.

#### **Tip 11. Booster seats**

Booster seats are required for children under the age of eight, weighing 18 kg or more but less than 36 kg (40-80 lb) and who stand less than 145 cm (4 feet-9 inches) tall.

Booster seats raise a child up so that the adult seatbelt fits and works more effectively. A lap and shoulder belt combination must be used for both the high-back and low-back booster seat. If your vehicle only has lap belts in the rear seat contact your local dealer regarding retrofitting it with a shoulder belt. Never

use a lap belt alone with a booster seat. Your child's head must be supported by the top of the booster seat and the vehicle seat or head rest. The shoulder strap must lie across your child's shoulder and the middle of their chest (not the neck or face) and the lap belt must cross low over the hips (not the stomach/abdomen). Never use seatbelt adjusters.

A child can start using a seatbelt alone once *any one* of the following criteria is met:

- the child turns eight years old;
- the child weighs 36 kg (80 lb.); or,
- the child is 145 cm (4 feet-9 inches) tall.

#### **Tip 12. Check for the safety label**

All child car safety seats manufactured for sale in Canada on and after March 15, 1998 must have a Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (CMVSS) label on the seat. Prior to this date, a Statement of Compliance label was attached to the side of the child car safety seat. Both the CMVSS and Statement of Compliance are the manufacturer's certification that the child car seat meets all applicable regulations in effect at the time the child car seat was manufactured.

Also, check your child car seat for an expiry date. Some manufacturers indicate an expiry date in the instruction booklet or on the child car safety seat. If there is no expiry date, do not use a seat that is older than 10 years from the date of manufacture.



**MILTON FIRE  
DEPARTMENT**



**CHILD CAR SEATS  
Safety Tips**

## Car crashes are the number one cause of death for Canadian children!

Properly used child seats and booster seats can significantly reduce the chance of children being hurt and/or killed in collisions.

Car seat clinics indicate that many car seats are installed improperly. Common errors include not tightening the seatbelt and harness enough, and not properly using a tether strap when required.

Make sure your child is safe and secure, and is buckled up right. Children under 13 years of age are safest in the back seat away from all active air bags.

### Infants

Newborn babies and infants require special protection while in a vehicle. In a collision, using properly installed rear-facing car seats can save your child's life.

Infant car seats should face the back of the vehicle, rest at a 45-degree angle and move no more than 2.5 cm (1 in.) where the seatbelt or Universal Anchorage System (UAS) strap is routed through the child car seat. If necessary, use a towel or a foam bar (pool noodle) under the base of the child car seat to adjust the angle. Harness straps should be slotted at or below a baby's shoulders. You should not be able to fit more than one finger underneath the harness straps at the child's collarbone. The chest clip should be flat against the chest at armpit level.

When the child outgrows the maximum height and weight of his/her infant seat, you may require a convertible rear-facing seat until your child is ready to be facing forward. The law requires using a rear-facing car seat until the baby is at least 9 kilograms (20 lb.)

The law is a minimum requirement. It's best to keep your child rear-facing until they are at least one year old or until they have reached either the maximum height or weight limits of the rear-facing seat.

- Birth to 9 kg (20 lb.)
- Rear-facing seat
- Use away from an active airbag

### Toddlers

A child can start riding facing forward when he or she is at least 9 kg (20 lb.).

To prevent the car seat from moving forward and causing injury in a collision, it is important to use the tether strap exactly as the manufacturer recommends. If your vehicle does not have a tether anchor in place, contact a dealership to have one installed.

To install a forward-facing car seat, fasten the tether strap, and then use your body weight to tighten and fasten the seatbelt or Universal Anchorage System (UAS) strap.

Ensure that the shoulder straps are at or above the child's shoulders. Straps should be snug, with only one finger width between the strap and the child's chest.

- 9 to 18 kg (20-40 lb.)

- Forward-facing seat
- Use with a tether strap

### Pre-school to 8 years old

*The law requires booster seats for children who have outgrown a child car seat but are too small for a regular seat belt.*

Booster seats are required for children under the age of eight, weighing 18 kg or more but less than 36 kg (40-80 lb.) and who stand less than 145 cm (4 feet-9 inches) tall.

A child can start using a seatbelt alone once *any one* of the following criteria is met:

- child turns eight years old
- child weighs 36 kg (80 lb.)
- child is 145 cm (4 feet-9 inches) tall.

A lap and shoulder combination belt must be used with all booster seats. Your child's head must be supported by the top of the booster, vehicle seat or headrest. The shoulder strap must lie across the child's shoulder (not the neck or face) and middle of the chest, and the lap belt must cross low over the hips (not the stomach/abdomen). Never use seatbelt adjusters.

- Between 18 and 36 kg (40—80 lb.)
- Booster seat
- Use with lap and shoulder belt

### Tip 1. Securing your child car safety seat

Always install the seat tightly, using your body weight to tighten and fasten the seatbelt. There should be no more than 2.5 cm (1") of movement where the seatbelt or the Universal Anchorage System (UAS) strap is routed through the child car seat. Each time you place your child in the car safety seat, give it a tug to make sure it is still secure. For securing the seat with the Universal Anchorage System (UAS), see [Tip 3](#).

### Tip 2. Using tether straps with forward-facing car seats

The tether strap for a forward-facing child car safety seat must be used. The tether strap is located on the rear of the child car safety seat and has a hook. The hook is designed to attach the strap to the tether anchorage on the vehicle as specified by the vehicle manufacturer. Ensure the tether is only secured to the designated anchorage point(s) in the vehicle as specified by the manufacturer.

### Tip 3. Using Universal Anchorage System (UAS)

Some Canadian vehicles manufactured on or after September 1, 2002 come with lower universal anchorage points. Consult the vehicle owner's manual before using the UAS system to determine where the anchorage points are located and ensure that the correct method is used as advised by the car seat manufacturer.