**CAR SEAT GUIDELINES**

* Car seats should be installed tightly using the vehicle seat belt or LATCH system. There should be no more than one inch of movement side to side or front to back.
* Before strapping in your child, always remove bulky clothing or winter coats. They can prevent the straps from tightening enough to properly restrain your child in a car crash.
* Once you have safely secured your child in the car seat with the chest clip placed at armpit level, pinch the strap at your child’s shoulder. You should not be able to pinch any excess webbing. If you can, you will need to tighten the strap.
* All children should ride rear-facing until they are at least 2 years old AND have reached the upper weight or height limit of the car seat.
* All children younger than 13 years should ride in the back seat.
* A car seat must be replaced if it has been in a crash, has been recalled or is past it’s expiration date.
* Always read the car seat manufacturer’s instruction manual and your vehicle owner’s manual for specific installation instructions.
* For complete guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics visit [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org) and search for “Car Seats”. Another excellent resource is <https://ucsg.safekids.org/>

**Infants/Toddlers** - Birth to at least 2 years old

 **Weight/Height Requirements:** Make sure your child fits within the weight and height limits of the car seat.

 **Types of Seats:** Rear-facing only,Convertible, All-in-one.

 **Seat Position:** Rear-facing.

 **Installation Tips:** Harness straps should slide through the slots that are at or below shoulder level. The chest

 clip should be placed at armpit level and the straps should fit snugly against your child. Make sure the seat is

 at the correct angle so your child’s head does not flop forward.

 **Toddlers/Preschoolers** - 2 years and up

 **Weight/Height Requirements:** Make sure your child fits within the weight and height limits of the car seat.

 **Types of Seats:** Convertible, Combination, All-in-one.

 **Seat Position:** Rear-facing until child has reached the weight or height limit of the seat, then forward-facing

 **Installation Tips:** In the forward-facing position, harness straps should slide through the slots that are at or

 above shoulder level. You may have to adjust the angle of the seat when switching to the forward-facing

 position. Use the tether strap according to the manufacturer’s instructions.

 **Young Children** - Do not move to a booster seat until the child is at least 4 years old AND has reached

 the weight or height limit of their current seat.

 **Weight/Height Requirements:** Children should remain in a booster seat until the seat belt fits properly,

 typically when they are 4 feet 9 inches tall and between 8 and 12 years of age. They should be able to use just

 the seat belt when they can ride with their knees bent at the seat edge without slouching and with their seat

 belt low across their upper thighs and snug across their shoulder and middle chest.

 **Types of Seats:** Combination, All-in-one, High back booster, Backless belt positioning booster.

 **Seat Position:** Forward-facing.

 **Installation Tips:** Belt-positioning booster seats must be used with both lap and shoulder belts. Make sure

 the lap belt fits low and snug across your child’s upper thighs. The shoulder strap should cross the mid-chest

 and shoulder.

 revised 01/2024