

Quick Checklist for Safety Seat Misuse

Check for these common and dangerous mistakes:

- 1. Child not using the safety seat or sitting in the seat without using the harness.
- 2. Baby facing the front of the car. Children should face the rear until at least age 2.
- 3. Rear-facing child riding in front seat of car with passenger air bag. Air bags are fatal for infants!
- 4. Toddler or older child riding in front. If car has passenger air bag and back seat is full, slide front seat back as far as possible, adjust shoulder straps snugly, make sure child does not lean forward.
- 5. Too many people in the car. There must be one safety belt per person.

Car seat problems:

- 6. Unsafe used seat (rusty, cracked, broken, bent, past expiration date, involved in crash or not known).
- 7. Child too big for seat (weight above limit, strap slots below shoulders, or head not supported).
- 8. Child too small or too young for seat (strap slots above shoulders; 2-year-old in booster).
- 9. Harness straps threaded incorrectly (check instructions) or too loose (should not be able to pinch a fold in the strap between the thumb and finger).
- 10. Harness straps on the arms or under the arms (straps must go over the shoulders).
- 11. Harness not buckled securely. Listen for the "click."

Installation problems:

- 12. Safety seat attached to car incorrectly. See label for correct location of belt or LATCH strap.
- 13. Loose installation (should not move more than 1" when pushed toward front of car or sideways).
- 14. Older child using safety belt incorrectly. Lap belt should touch thighs; upper belt on shoulder/chest.
- 15. Booster used with only a lap belt (lap-shoulder belt must be used).

Important: This is a partial list designed to help parents, drivers, and law enforcement officers recognize obvious misuse. It is not to be used as the basis of a detailed inspection.

How to find out more about keeping your child safe in the car

Nine out of ten of the car seats inspected at checkups have something wrong, and some of the problems could cause serious injuries to the child. Read the manufacturer's instruction booklet carefully to make sure you are using your seat correctly. To order the instruction booklet or to find out if your seat is covered by a recall, call the company that made the seat. Most recalled seats can be fixed by ordering free replacement parts from the manufacturer. When you call, have the seat in front of you so you can describe it. Look for the label stuck to the side or back of the seat and write down the following information:

Manufacturer _____ Model name and # _____ Date made _____

Contact information for some major car seat companies:

Baby Trend 800-328-7363 www.babytrend.com	Britax 888-427-4829 www.britaxusa.com	Chicco 877-424-4226 www.chiccousa.com	Clek 866-656-2462 www.clekinc.com
Combi 800-992-6624 www.combiusa.com	Diono 855-463-4666 www.us.diono.com	Dorel Juvenile Group 800-544-1108 www.djgusa.com	Evenflo Company 800-233-5921 www.evenflo.com
Graco 800-345-4109 www.gracobaby.com	Harmony Juvenile 877-306-1001 www.harmonyjuvenile.com	Peg Perego U.S.A. 800-671-1701 www.pegperegousa.com	Recaro 888-973-2276 www.recarocs.com

SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. P.O. Box 553, Altadena, CA 91003 www.carseat.org
310/222-6860, 800/745-SAFE (English) 310/222-6862, 800/747-SANO (Spanish)

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