

How to keep your child safe in the car

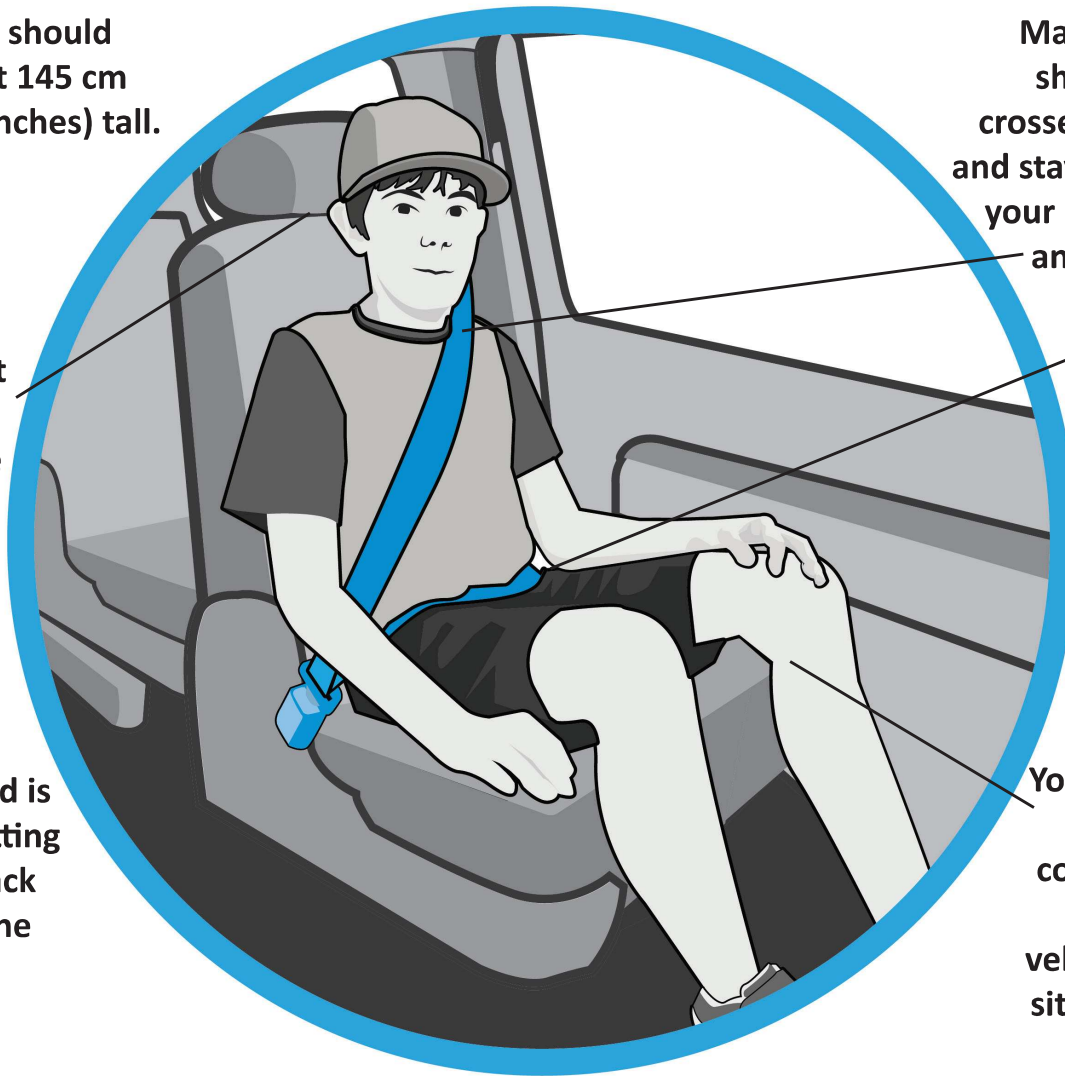
Once your child is taller than 145 cm (4 feet 9 inches), it may be time to move to a regular seat belt. If a child does not yet fit the seat belt as described below, use a booster seat. Your child is safest in the back seat until he or she is 13 years old.

How your child's seat belt should fit

Your child should be at least 145 cm (4 feet 9 inches) tall.

Make sure your child has support behind the head to the tops of the ears.

Your child is safest sitting in the back seat of the vehicle.



Make sure the shoulder belt crosses the chest and stays between your child's neck and shoulder.

The lap belt should fit low and snug across your child's hips.

Your child's knees should bend comfortably over the edge of the vehicle seat when sitting all the way back.

If your child does not fit the seat belt like this, use a booster seat.

Child Safety Link: a program of the IWK Health Centre. Here for you with helpful information to keep your children safe. PL-1073 2018

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When is your child ready for a seat belt alone?

- Is your child at least 145 cm (4 feet 9 inches) tall?
- When your child is sitting all the way back, do his or her knees bend comfortably over the edge of the seat?
- Does the lap belt stay low across the hips?
- Does the shoulder belt cross the chest and stay between the neck and shoulder?
- Can your child sit like this for the whole trip without slouching?

Until your child can meet these 5 steps, continue to use a booster seat on every ride.



What are the risks of using a seat belt too soon?



- Children who use a seat belt before they are ready are at risk for injuries to the head, neck, spinal cord and internal organs.
- A booster seat boosts a child up so that the seat belt fits across the strongest bones and away from the soft belly.
- A child may pass all 5 steps (above) to use a seat belt in one car, but still need to use a booster seat in another vehicle.

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