

# *Louisiana Safety Belt Law Alert:*

## **What is Louisiana's Law?** Effective: Jan 1, 2004

### **All kids to age 13 must be properly buckled up**

- Birth to at least 1 year and at least 20 pounds must ride facing the rear of the vehicle (backwards).
- At least 1 year and at least 20 pounds, must ride facing forward in a child safety seat harness.
- From 4 to 6 years and 40 to 60 pounds, must use a belt-positioning booster with a lap-shoulder belt.
- Above 60 lbs. must wear a properly fitting adult safety belt or a booster seat with a lap-shoulder belt.
- Although not part of Louisiana law, we recommend kids stay in a booster seat until they outgrow them, usually 80 to 100 pounds, until the child can correctly use an adult safety belt.

### **Kids should stay in the most protective seat as long as possible...**

- Keep a baby rear-facing (more protective) until they are too big or heavy, versus moving to forward-facing.
- Keep a child in full harness seat (more protective) versus moving them to a booster seat too soon.
- Keep a child in a booster seat until they are over its weight limit, versus moving them to an adult safety belt too soon.

### **MEET "50th PERCENTILE HYBRID III"**

**At 5 feet 10 inches tall and 172 pounds, he represents the average size man.**

This is important to know: this is who a belt is designed to protect.

This is also why air bags can kill children; many states have, understandably, passed laws preventing children under the age of 13 from sitting in the front seat.

**Your child is 30% safer in the back seat. Airbags deploy at 200mph and can break a child's neck on impact.**

Your 3' 10", 40-pound child is nowhere near the size and weight of an ADULT safety belt was designed to protect.

**Once over 40 pounds, Head Start Driving recommends children use a BOOSTER SEAT with a lap/shoulder belt until they are at least 80 pounds, 4' 9" and, 9 years old.**

### **QUICK FACTS:**

**Child safety seats reduce fatalities by 71%.**

**They are 67% effective in reducing the need for hospitalization. Four out of five CHILD SAFETY SEATS are not installed correctly.**

American Academy of Pediatrics Safe Kids  
[www.aap.org/family/carseatguide.htm](http://www.aap.org/family/carseatguide.htm) [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)