

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 www.safekids.org