

Maryland's Child Safety Seat Law

Effective October 1, 2003

What does the law say?

Maryland law requires that all children younger than six years, regardless of weight, or who weigh 40 pounds or less, regardless of age, must be secured in a federally approved child safety seat* according to the safety seat and vehicle manufacturers' instructions. For example, a 7-year-old who weighs only 37 pounds, or a 3-½ year old who weighs 42 pounds, would be required to use child safety seats (this includes booster seats). The child restraint must be right for the child's size, age and weight. If vehicle is registered outside of Maryland, all children younger than four years, regardless of weight, or weighing less than 40 pounds, regardless of age, must ride in a safety seat.

How can I tell when my child needs a booster seat?

Children who outgrow a car seat with harness (check car seat labels for height and weight limits) need to ride in a booster seat because the vehicle seat belts will not fit them well. Take the five-step test on the back of this flyer or go to the website www.carseat.org.

How long should my child be in a booster seat?

The law requires that children ride in booster seats up to age six. However, most children should ride in booster seats until about age 8, when they are big enough for lap and shoulder belts to fit properly.

* Child safety seats include: infant seats, convertible seats, forward-facing seats, booster seats, or other safety devices federally approved for use by children in motor vehicles.

For more information, or to get a list of upcoming seat checks in your area, call Maryland Kids In Safety Seats (KISS) at 800-370-SEAT

Visit KISS on the Web:
www.mdkiss.org

