



Risk Management *Tips*

Keeping it Safe while Transporting Kids

Keeping kids safe when transporting them to various locations is instrumental to making the trip enjoyable for all. Ensuring children are properly restrained in their seats reduces the likelihood of them being injured if a vehicle is involved in an accident.

The following Quick Checklist for Safety Seat Misuse, developed by SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. (www.carseat.org), offers useful information to help identify potential misuse of child restraint systems.

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 the car has a passenger air bag and the back seat is full, slide the front seat back as far as possible, adjust shoulder straps snugly, and 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, over 5-10 years old, involved in crash or not known).
7. Child too big for seat (weight above maximum per instructions or head not supported).
8. Child too small or too young for seat (shield in front of infant's face or neck; 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. Buckle not attached. Listen for the "click."

Installation problems:

12. Safety seat attached to car incorrectly. Check manuals for car seat and vehicle.
13. Loose installation (should not move more than 1" when pushed toward front of car or sideways).
14. Older child using safety belt incorrectly. Use a booster for safe belt fit and child's comfort.
15. Booster used with only a lap belt (lap-shoulder belt must be used).

(continued)



Important: This is a partial list designed to help recognize obvious misuse. It is not to be used as the basis of a detailed inspection.

Contact a local Child Passenger Safety Technician in your area for support with your child passenger restraint program. You can find one at cert.safekids.org.

In addition to proper child passenger restraint practices, you should also practice evacuating buses used for transporting children. The Guideline for the Safe Transportation of Pre-school Age Children in School Buses developed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration suggests:

- The establishment of a written plan on evacuating pre-school age children and other passengers in Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRSs) in the event of an emergency. This written plan should be provided to drivers, monitors, and emergency response personnel. The plan should explicitly state how children (both in and out of the CSRSs) should be evacuated from the school bus.
- Evacuation drills are practiced on a scheduled basis, at least as often as that required for the school system's school-aged children.
- All personnel involved in transporting children are trained in evacuation and emergency procedures, including those in the written school bus evacuation plan.
- All school buses carrying children in CSRSs carry safety belt cutters that are accessible only to the driver and any monitors.
- CSRSs are not placed in school bus seats adjacent to emergency exits.



If you have a safety or risk management question or a suggestion for a topic, please contact Markel's Risk Management Department at safety1st@markelcorp.com.