



Traffic Safety News

From the Delaware Office of Highway Safety

Is your child riding safe?

Is there anything more important than the well-being of our children? From the time we place our newborn in the car seat for the first ride home, to preparing our teen to drive alone, safety should be a top priority.

What you need to know

Did you know that car crashes are a leading cause of death for children 1 to 13 years old?

- Nationally, one child under age 13 is involved in a crash every 34 seconds.
- 4 out of 5 child safety seats in Delaware are not installed correctly.
- Young children are 5 times safer riding rear facing than forward facing.
- Children under 13 are safest in the back seat.
- Everyone is required to wear a seat belt by law, even those in the back seat.

What you can do

Many times deaths and injuries can be prevented simply by proper use of car seats, boosters, and seat belts. The age and size of your child will determine which option is the best choice.

- OHS provides **free child seat checks** in select locations across the state. Go to www.ohs.delaware.gov/carseats for more information or call our office at 302.744.2740 to find a fitting station near you.
- Delaware law requires that all children be properly restrained in a federally approved child safety seat appropriate for the child's age, weight, and height up to 8 years of age or 65 pounds, whichever comes first.
- The 'best' car seat is the one that fits your child, fits your vehicle and one you will use every time your child is in the car.
 - **Under the age of 1** – Children must always ride rear facing
 - **Ages 1 through 3** – Keep your children rear facing for as long as possible in either an infant or rear facing convertible seat. They should remain rear facing until the height and weight limit for rear facing use on that seat has been reached. This may result in many children riding rear-facing to age 2 or older
 - **Ages 4 through 7** – Keep children in a forward facing seat with a harness to the maximum height and weight limit allowed by the seat. Then transition them to a booster seat.
 - **Ages 8 through 12** – Keep children in a booster seat until they either exceed the height/weight requirement for remaining in a booster seat or until they are big enough to wear a seat belt properly. The shoulder belt should lie across the shoulder and chest, not cross the neck or face, and the lap belt must lie across the upper thighs not the stomach.

As a parent, you are your child's strongest influence when it comes to modeling safe riding practices, including buckling up every time you get in the car. Teach your family that safety is the responsibility of all passengers as well as the driver.

Buckle Up. Arrive Alive DE.

This message is being sent to you by the Office of Highway Safety, who asks you to drive safely at all times. For more information on this and other traffic safety programs, go to our webpage, www.ohs.delaware.gov.