Children progress through four modes of restraint as they grow:

1. **REAR-FACING CAR SEAT** until the child meets the weight or height limit in the instructions.
2. **FORWARD-FACING CAR SEAT WITH HARNESS** until the child meets the weight or height limit in the instructions.
3. **BOOSTER SEAT WITH LAP AND SHOULDER BELT** until the seat belt alone fits correctly.
4. **SEAT BELT** with the lap & shoulder belt properly fastened and adjusted.

Parents should delay transition to the next restraint mode until the child meets the maximum weight or height allowed by the manufacturer instructions.

Infants, toddlers and small children should ride **REAR-FACING** in a car seat for as long as allowed by manufacturer instructions and according to their state laws.

Children should ride in the **REAR SEAT** of a vehicle until they are at least 13 years old, and should be properly restrained in a car seat or booster seat until the vehicle belts alone fit correctly.

Parents and caregivers should carefully review and always follow manufacturer instructions for both the car seat and the vehicle when choosing and using car seats.

Parents who have questions about using car seats correctly should contact the manufacturer’s customer service, find educational resources in their area or consult with a child passenger safety technician.

**USE OF TETHERS** with forward-facing car seats is critical to protect a child in the event of a crash. Head injuries are the leading cause of hospitalization for forward-facing children.