

A woman with dark hair and glasses is smiling and looking down at a baby in a car seat. She is holding the baby's hand. The car seat is grey and black. The background shows the interior of a car.

'Heroes  
keep  
themselves  
and others  
safe'

# Child restraints save lives

It's the law that all children under seven must be secured in an approved child restraint appropriate for their age and size. Children aged seven must be secured in an approved child restraint if one is available in the vehicle, and if not, in any child restraint or safety belt that is available.

# Stage 1

## Rear-facing infant restraint

'My restraint goes with me'



### Points to remember when you fit a rear-facing infant restraint in your vehicle:

- ***Always carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions.***
- Always install a baby's infant restraint so the baby is facing the rear of the car.
- Rear-facing infant restraints should never be placed in the front seat if there is an active front airbag.
- Check your child's restraint fits firmly against the seat and cannot wobble; if your restraint does not fit firmly, seek advice from a registered Child Restraint Technician.

### Points to remember when you put your baby in a rear-facing infant restraint:

- If there is a chest clip, make sure the clip sits at the baby's armpit level.
- The harness must fit snugly against your baby and go over the baby's shoulders.
- Blankets must be put over the baby only **after** the baby is firmly secured into the harness.
- Babies are better protected travelling in a rear-facing restraint until they are at least two years old.
- Babies have outgrown their infant restraint when they are over the restraint manufacturer's recommended weight or height restrictions.

# Stage 2

## Forward-facing child restraint



'My  
restraint  
goes  
with me'

### Points to remember when you fit a forward-facing restraint in a vehicle:

- ***Always carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions.***
- The back seat is the safest place for the child restraint.
- Check your child's restraint fits firmly against the seat and cannot wobble; if your restraint does not fit firmly, seek advice from a registered Child Restraint Technician.
- If your child restraint comes with a tether strap, it must be used according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- If your vehicle doesn't have an anchor point for the tether strap to be attached to, have one fitted into your car by a qualified mechanic.

### Points to remember when you put your child in a forward-facing child restraint:

- The harness must fit snugly and comfortably against your child.
- The shoulder harness must always go over the shoulders and be moved up as your child grows.
- Check the manufacturer's instructions for the correct harness shoulder height.
- If there is a chest clip, make sure it is sitting at the level of your child's armpits.
- Children have outgrown their restraint when they are over the manufacturer's recommended weight or height restrictions for that model of forward-facing child restraint.

# Stage 3

## Booster seat

'My booster goes with me'

Best practice recommends that children stay in a restraint or booster seat until they're 148cm tall.



### Points to remember when using a booster seat:

- **Always carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions.**
- Never, ever use a booster seat with a lap safety belt only.
- The back seat is the safest place for your child's booster seat.
- If you have a booster seat that has a built-in harness system, use the harness until the child reaches the height or weight limit advised in the manufacturer's instructions, and then use the vehicle's safety belt.
- If your booster seat has a safety belt guide, make sure it is used on every trip.
- Make sure the safety belt goes over the child's shoulder and is not resting against the child's neck.
- A full booster seat with an adjustable head rest will provide better protection for your child than a booster cushion.

### How do you know when your child is ready to progress from a booster seat to the adult safety belt?

**Try this simple test. (If the answer is NO to any of these points, then your child needs to use a booster seat to keep them safe.)**

- ✓ **My child can sit right back on the seat with their legs bent comfortably over the edge.**
- ✓ **The shoulder belt comes over their shoulder, not against their neck.**
- ✓ **The lap part of the safety belt stays low against their thighs, not across their stomach.**
- ✓ **My child can stay seated like this for the whole trip.**

# Child restraints and airbags

**Always check your vehicle's manual and the child restraint manufacturer's instructions for advice on where to install the restraint in relation to the location of the airbags.**

## **FRONT AIRBAGS**

- Rear-facing child restraints must **always** be placed in the back seat if there is an active front seat airbag.
- If an older child has to sit in the front, move the vehicle seat as far back as possible.

## **SIDE AIRBAGS**

- If you have to install a child restraint directly beside a vehicle door, make sure there are no loose items lying between the child restraint and door.
- Encourage your child not to lean out of the booster seat.

## **BEFORE YOU PURCHASE OR HIRE A CHILD RESTRAINT**

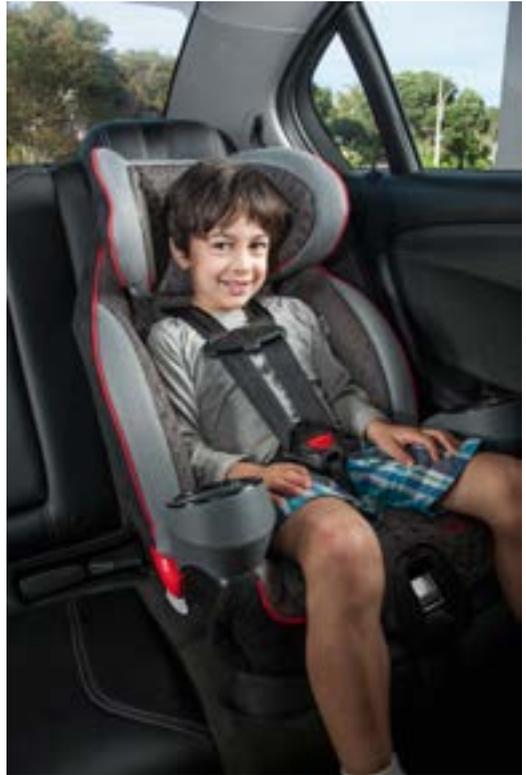
- Make sure the child restraint fits and is suitable for your child.
- Make sure the child restraint fits into your vehicle; not all child restraints fit all vehicles.



# Child Restraint Technicians

Retailers and other organisations may have certified Child Restraint Technicians who can provide you with advice and assistance.

**Trained Child Restraint Technicians have NZ Qualifications Authority unit standards.**



## For more information

on how to safely use child restraints and to find your local Child Restraint Technician, visit the following websites:

[www.nzta.govt.nz/childrestraints](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/childrestraints)

[www.plunket.org.nz](http://www.plunket.org.nz)

[www.safekids.org.nz](http://www.safekids.org.nz)

## OUR CONTACT DETAILS

If you want more information, call our contact centre on **0800 699 000**, email us at [info@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:info@nzta.govt.nz) or write to us:

NZ Transport Agency  
Private Bag 6995  
Wellington 6141.

This publication is also available on the NZ Transport Agency's website at [www.nzta.govt.nz](http://www.nzta.govt.nz)

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