

Questions & Answers

Q: Aren't booster seats a parent's responsibility?

A: Booster seats **are** a parent's job – and a social responsibility as well.

- 62% - 83% of children between the ages of 4 and 8 continue to be inappropriately restrained in adult seat belts.
- Current laws have increased restraint use by as much as 35% and reduced fatalities by 25-60%.
- An upgrade in Texas' law would show caregivers how important booster seats are for child safety. Citizens (parents, caregivers, family, and others) look to the law for support and information regarding best practices for staying safe.

Q: What about families who can't afford booster seats?

A: Unlike other child safety seats, booster seats are very inexpensive.

- Booster seats are sold through major retailers for \$15-\$20.
- State and local community resources are available for families needing assistance. This information is already accessible through hospitals and trauma centers, social services, grass roots organizations, emergency services contacts, and other state and local agencies providing health care and social services.

Q: Shouldn't vehicle manufacturers be required to change seat belts so that they fit these children more appropriately?

A: Although vehicle manufacturers are working on adapting vehicles for increased child passenger safety, it will be difficult for seat belts to ever fit the entire range of people who use vehicles. The needed technology is not currently available, thus boosters provide the best option for children less than 57" tall.

Q: I never used a booster seat, or even a car seat for that matter, and I turned out just fine. Why is this even important?

A: We know more about child passenger safety than we used to.

- Using a booster seat lowers the risk of injury to children in crashes by 59% compared to the use of adult safety belts.
- Motor vehicle crashes remain the number one killer of children in this age group.

Q: Are other states upgrading their laws?

A: Yes, as of February 2004, 22 states and the District of Columbia have passed child passenger safety laws, or upgrades to their existing laws. Many others are in the legislative process of making upgrades as well.

Q: Our law enforcement systems are already stretched – how could they possibly take on this additional responsibility?

A: Many law enforcement organizations and agencies support this proposed legislation. In addition, child passenger safety advocates frequently provide education and information to boost law enforcement efforts in this area, as well as partner with local agencies on various programs and initiatives.

References

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