

BUYING A SAFER CAR FOR CHILD PASSENGERS 2004



BUYING A SAFER CAR FOR CHILD PASSENGERS 2 0 0 4

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BUYING A SAFER CAR FOR CHILD PASSENGERS 2 0 0 4

Buying a Safer Car for Child Passengers is designed to help you make an informed decision when purchasing a vehicle for your family. The brochure includes information on safety features and designs specific to child passengers. It also includes safety tips, guidelines from the Federal government, plus a “Family Car Checklist” to take along when you shop for your next vehicle.

Narrowing Your Choices

Here are some important questions to consider before you begin shopping for your next vehicle:

Q: *How many children will you be transporting?*

A: *A safety belt for each passenger is essential. Remember, children 12 years and under should be properly restrained in the back seat of the vehicle. It is estimated that children are 26 percent less likely to be fatally injured if seated in the rear seat of a passenger vehicle.*

Q: *What are the ages and sizes of the children?*

A: *This information will help you decide the type of restraint systems you will need. Refer to the Age, Size & Weight Chart on the opposite page to help you choose the child restraint system that is correct for the age, size and weight of your child.*

Q: *Will you be installing child safety seats? Where will you place them?*

A: *All children are safest when properly restrained in the back seat. NEVER use a rear-facing child safety seat in the front seat of a vehicle with a front passenger air bag unless the air bag has been turned off.*

- *If your child weighs less than 20 pounds (regardless of age), use an infant-only or convertible child safety seat, rear facing, in the back seat of the vehicle.*
- *If your child weighs more than 20 pounds and is not yet 1 year old, use a rear-facing convertible seat that is made for heavier infants. Children at least 1 year old and at least 20 pounds may ride facing forward. Since the rear-facing position is generally safest, children should ride rear facing as long as possible.*

- Children who are 1 to 4 years old, and weigh at least 20 pounds to approximately 40 pounds, should be correctly restrained in a forward-facing-only seat, a forward-facing convertible, or a combination forward-facing/booster seat used as forward-facing with harness.

Q: *When should your child use a booster seat?*

A: *All children who have outgrown child safety seats should be properly restrained in booster seats until they are at least 8 years old, unless they are at least 4'9" tall.*

When used correctly, booster seats can help prevent injury to older children by making adult-sized safety belts fit better. The adult lap and shoulder belt should fit the child snugly, with the lap belt lying flat across the upper thigh area, and the shoulder belt crossing the chest, resting against the middle of the child's shoulder.

Q: *What could happen if my child doesn't use a booster seat?*

A: *Without a booster seat:*

- The lap belt can ride up over the child's stomach and cause serious internal injuries in a crash.



- The shoulder belt may be uncomfortably high, leading to misuse if the child puts the safety belt behind his or her back or under the arm. These misuses can cause serious internal injuries.

Regardless of weight, height, or age, all children 12 years and younger should be properly restrained in the back seat. Always read the child safety seat or booster seat manufacturer's instructions, as well as the vehicle owner's manual before installing a child safety seat.

Q: Will the vehicle safety belt system meet the needs of my children?

A: Correct safety belt use for all vehicle occupants should be the rule in your vehicle. Children who have outgrown child safety seats and booster seats should be able to fit the adult belt system correctly.

- *The lap belt should fit low over the child's upper thighs when he or she is sitting straight against the vehicle seat back. The child's knees should bend comfortably over the edge of the vehicle seat.*
- *The shoulder belt should stay on the shoulder and lie against the child's chest. Never put the shoulder belt under the arm or behind the child's back.*



- All children who have outgrown child safety seats should be properly restrained in booster seats until they are at least 8 years old, unless they are at least 4'9" tall.
- A **lap-only belt** (without a shoulder belt) should be used to restrain a child only if no other safety belt system is available. If you must transport several children in a vehicle that has a lap-only belt in the middle rear seat, and one of the children is in a rear facing or a convertible/toddler child safety seat, follow these guidelines:
 - Have the older children use the lap and shoulder belts
 - Put the child riding in a child safety seat in the middle
 - Secure the child safety seat with the lap-only belt.

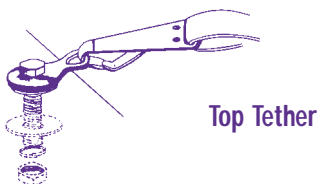
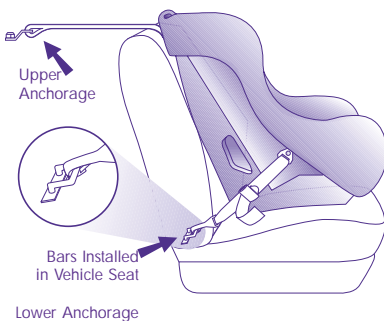
Read the vehicle owner's manual to be sure you understand how to use the seat belt correctly.

Be a role model – Always buckle up

Q: What is the "LATCH" child restraint system?

A: LATCH (Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children) is a child restraint anchorage system that allows child safety seats to be installed in the vehicle more easily without using the vehicle's safety belt system. All new vehicles are required to include LATCH systems consisting of an upper tether anchor and two lower anchors. Depending on the type of vehicle, top tether anchors may be located on the shelf behind the back seat, under the seat, on the floor, or on the interior roof. The lower anchors are located where the vehicle seat cushion meets the seat back. Read your vehicle owner's manual to locate the anchors in your vehicle.

2-Point Attachment with Top Tether



Most child safety seats manufactured after September 1999 have a top tether strap that attaches to the top anchor in the vehicle. Since September 2002, child safety seats have a lower set of attachments that fasten to the lower anchors in the vehicle.

Q: Which vehicles have the LATCH system?

A: Since September 2000, all new passenger vehicles (except most convertibles) have been equipped with the top tether anchors. All vehicles manufactured after September 1, 2002, are equipped with the lower anchors. Although convertible vehicles are exempt from tether anchor requirements, some manufacturers offer them as a safety enhancement. Check your vehicle owner's manual or contact the vehicle manufacturer to see if your older vehicle is equipped with tether anchors or has pre-drilled points where tether anchors can be installed.

Q: What if my vehicle is not LATCH-equipped?

A: Any child seat, even one with LATCH, can be installed using the vehicle safety belt and, if available, a top tether. Be sure to follow the vehicle owner's manual and child safety seat instructions.

Q: What about side-impact air bags?

A: Side-impact air bag technology has advanced rapidly over recent years and various types of side air bags have emerged. These side air bags can provide additional protection in many crashes and have been developed to minimize the risk of injury for small children. Children 12 years and under should always be properly restrained in the back seat, using the appropriate restraint system. You should read the owner's manual for specific information about how the side air bag system in your vehicle works in the event of a crash.

Q: What about advanced air bags?

A: Advanced air bag systems are a next generation frontal air bag system designed to further reduce the likelihood of serious injury or death to occupants, both adult or child, who may be too close to the air bag when it deploys. Most advanced air bag systems use sensors that can automatically detect the severity of the crash, the occupant's size, safety belt use, and/or seating position and deploy the appropriate level of power to the driver and passenger frontal air bags.

Talk with the dealer or review the vehicle owner's manual to learn about the specific features and sensor technologies in use as part of the advanced air bag system.

Remember: Children are safest when properly restrained in the back seat, whether the vehicle has an air bag or not.

Safety Features for Child Passengers

Safety is one of the most important considerations when buying a family vehicle. Manufacturers offer many safety features you should look for to transport children safely. The charts beginning on page 12 include 2004 model year vehicles that have one or more of the following features:

- Manual Air Bag On-Off Switch
- Rear Center Seat Lap and Shoulder Belts
- Built-in Child Safety Seats
- Adjustable Upper-Belts (Rear)

Manual Air Bag On-Off Switch

Vehicles with no rear seat, or a rear seat that is not appropriate for a child safety seat, may have a switch that lets the driver control the front seat passenger air bag. The switch has a warning light that must be clearly visible to all front seat passengers to let them know when the air bag has been turned off. A rear facing child safety seat should **NEVER** be placed in the front seat of a vehicle equipped with an active passenger air bag. Infants and children can be seriously injured - or even killed - if the air bag inflates.

Some manufacturers offer vehicles with a system that turns off the passenger air bag when a special child restraint, sold by these manufacturers, is correctly installed. At the time of this publication, two vehicle manufacturers offer these systems: Mercedes-Benz and Porsche.

There are some people who should not be exposed to an inflated air bag. If you can certify that you or someone else who uses your vehicle would be at risk if the air bag inflates, you can have a retrofit on-off switch installed in your vehicle. Please review the information below on air bag on-off switches to decide whether your driving situations fit certain risk profiles to have an on-off switch installed by a dealer or repair facility.

Risk Profiles:

- *People who must transport infants riding in rear-facing infant seats in the front passenger seat.*
- *People who must transport children ages 1 to 12 in the front passenger seat.*
- *Drivers who cannot change their customary driving position and keep 10 inches between the center of the steering wheel and the center of their breastbone.*

- *People whose doctors say that, due to their medical condition, the air bag poses a special risk that outweighs the risk of hitting their head, neck or chest in a crash if the air bag is turned off.*

You can get a brochure about retrofitting on-off switches and an installation request form from local vehicle dealerships or state motor vehicle offices. The form can also be found at NHTSA's web site, www.nhtsa.gov. Given that on-off switches are not available for all vehicles, make sure a switch is available for your vehicle before you request authorization to have it installed.

On The Web
www.nhtsa.gov

Auto Safety Hotline
888-327-4236
TDD 800-424-9153

Proper Use – Air Bag on-off Switches

While some people should not be exposed to an air bag deployment, the vast majority of people don't need an on-off switch. Virtually everyone older than age 12 is much safer with air bags than without them. Manual air bag on-off switches, if properly used, allow even a high-risk passenger to safely sit behind an air bag.

A NHTSA study of vehicles equipped with air bag on-off switches reveals there is widespread misuse. If you purchase a vehicle with an air bag on-off switch, or have a retrofit air bag on-off switch installed, **you must evaluate the passenger in the front seat of the air bag and set the switch to the correct position before each trip.** The study shows that some drivers left the switch on all the time, thinking air bags were safe for all their passengers. The study also shows that 18 percent of adult passengers, ages 13 and older, were seated behind a deactivated air bag. Many drivers kept the switch turned off permanently to guarantee their child would not be exposed to deployments. This deprives the adult passenger of any potential benefits of air bags. If your vehicle has an air bag on-off switch for the passenger air bag, and you must transport children aged 12 and under in the front passenger seat, turn the switch to the "air bag off" position.

Refer to the vehicle owner's manual for information on the correct use of the air bag on-off switch.

Rear Center Seat Lap and Shoulder Belts

All rear center seats **must** be equipped with at least a lap belt. As an added feature, some manufacturers include lap and shoulder belts in rear center seats. This benefits older children and children in booster seats who often ride in the rear center position.

Built-in Child Safety Seats

These permanent seats are designed to restrain children at least 1 year old and weighing more than 20 pounds in a forward-facing position. Built-in child safety seats generally have an advantage over add-on child seats because they do not have compatibility problems with the vehicle's seat design or safety belt systems.

Adjustable Upper Belts (Rear)

Because safety belts must fit people of various sizes, including older children, some manufacturers offer an adjustable upper belt that lets you change the position of the shoulder strap to accommodate a person's size. This feature allows adjustment and may improve the shoulder belt fit for the passenger. Check the manufacturer's instructions to correctly adjust the safety belts in your vehicle.

Child Safety Seat Compatibility

Not all child safety seats can be installed in all vehicles and in all seating positions. With so many models of child safety seats, more than 300 models of passenger vehicles, and the wide range of belt systems available today, correctly installing a child safety seat can be a challenge. The best way to be sure your child safety seat is compatible with the vehicle you may buy, is to test it before you buy or lease the vehicle, or before you buy or receive the child safety seat.

Read the child safety seat's instruction manual and review the information in the vehicle owner's manual about correct installation. Once the seat is installed, check it by firmly pulling at the base of the child seat, at the safety belt path, from side to side and forward. The child safety seat should not move more than one inch in any direction.

Other Factors to Consider

- **Two-door vehicles**—It can be difficult to install a child safety seat correctly because you have to get into the back seat to install it securely. Two-door cars also make it harder to get your child in and out of the child safety seat.

- **Small back seats**—The back seats of some small cars and pick-up trucks are too small to correctly install some child safety seats, especially those in the rear-facing reclined position. The base of the child safety seat must not be wider than the space between the seat buckle and safety belt attachments. Wide bases can cover buckles for outboard lap and shoulder belts, making installation difficult. In this case, try a child safety seat with a narrow base or a different seating position.
- **Deep bucket seats**—Many child safety seats will not fit in vehicle seats with deep buckets. Try a child safety seat with a narrow base or top tether strap, provided the vehicle has a top tether anchor.
- **Slope of back seat**—Rear-facing child safety seats should be reclined at about a 45-degree angle. The slope of the vehicle seat may raise the back of the child safety seat too much, putting the infant in an upright rather than reclined position. To fix this situation, place a tightly rolled towel or firm, solid-core foam between the vehicle's seat cushion and the seat back. This will help get the correct angle. Always check the child safety seat instructions and vehicle owner's manual for correct installation.
- **Contour of back seat**—While the center of the rear seat may appear to be the safest place for a child, many back seats have a hump in the center, making it hard to install a child safety seat correctly. The safest position in the back seat is where the child safety seat fits securely.
- **Splits in bench seats**—Splits in wide bench seats can make it difficult to install a child safety seat correctly. Move it to a different rear seating position.
- **Forward-anchored belts**—If the safety belt extends from the seat forward of where the back and seat cushions meet, the child safety seat may be too loose. Move the child safety seat to a different rear seating position, or try a different style child safety seat with a top tether strap, provided the vehicle has a top tether anchor.
- **Pick-up truck jump seats/extended cabs**—Child safety seats will not fit safely in rear seats of many small pick-up trucks. There is not enough space between the rear of the front seat and the child to allow forward motion in a crash or even a sudden stop. Side-facing jump seats are unsafe for a child safety seat under any circumstances.

Continued on page 40

Year 2004 Vehicle Safety Features

These charts list vehicle safety features including manual air bag on-off switches, built-in child seats, rear center seat lap and shoulder belts, and adjustable upper belts (rear). Check with the dealer for the latest safety feature information. Only vehicles with at least one of these safety features are listed.

Safety Key

- S Standard on all vehicles in that model line
- A Available as an option on some or all vehicles in that model line; or standard on some vehicles in that model line but not available or an option on others; or will be introduced part way through that model year as standard on all vehicles in that model line
- * Federal requirements allow the switch only for vehicles that have no rear seat, or that have rear seats too small to safely accommodate a rear-facing infant seat.

SAFETY FEATURES

VEHICLE TYPE		SAFETY FEATURES			
Make	Model	Manual Air Bag On-Off Switch*	Rear Center Lap/Shoulder Belts	Built-In Child Seats	Adjustable Upper Belts (Rear)
2004 LIGHT PASSENGER CARS					
Kia	Amanti				S
Kia	Rio				S
Mazda	MX-5 Miata	S			
Toyota	Echo 2-door	A	S		
Toyota	Echo 4-door	A	S		
Toyota	MR2	S			
2004 COMPACT PASSENGER CARS					
BMW	Z4 Roadster	S			
Chevrolet	Cavalier		S		S
Chevrolet	Cavalier Coupe		S		S
Dodge	Neon		S		
Ford	Focus		S		
Ford	Focus Coupe		S		
Ford	Focus Wagon		S		
Honda	Civic (except GX)		S		
Honda	Civic Coupe		S		
Hyundai	Elantra		S		
Hyundai	Elantra Wagon		S		
Hyundai	Tiburon		S		
Mitsubishi	Eclipse	A			
Mitsubishi	Eclipse Spyder	A			
Mitsubishi	Lancer	A	S		

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VEHICLE TYPE		SAFETY FEATURES			
Make	Model	Manual Air Bag On-Off Switch*	Rear Center Lap/Shoulder Belts	Built-In Child Seats	Adjustable Upper Belts (Rear)
Mitsubishi	Lancer Evolution	A	S		
Mitsubishi	Lancer Sportback Wagon	A	S		
Nissan	Sentra		S		
Pontiac	Sunfire Coupe		S		S
Saturn	Ion		S		
Saturn	Ion Coupe		S		
Saturn	L Series		S		S
Saturn	L Series Wagon				S
Subaru	Impreza		S		S
Subaru	Impreza Wagon		S		S
Suzuki	Aerio GX		S		
Suzuki	Aerio GX Wagon		S		
Suzuki	Forenza		S		
Toyota	Celica	A			
Toyota	Corolla	A	S		
Toyota	Corolla Matrix	A	S		
Toyota	Prius	A	S		
Toyota	Scion XA	A	S		
Volkswagen	Golf 2-door		S		
Volkswagen	Golf 4-door		S		S
Volkswagen	GTI 2-door		S		
Volkswagen	Jetta		S		
Volkswagen	Jetta Wagon		S		S

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Make	Model	Manual Air Bag On-Off Switch*	Rear Center Lap/Shoulder Belts	Built-In Child Seats	Adjustable Upper Belts (Rear)
Volkswagen	R32		S		
2004 MEDIUM PASSENGER CARS					
Acura	TL		S		
Acura	TSX		S		
Audi	A4/S4		S		
Audi	A4		S		
Audi	A6		S		
Audi	A6 Avant		S		
Audi	S4 Avant		S		
Audi	TT Coupe	S			
Audi	TT Roadster	S			
BMW	325i Sport Wagon		S		S
BMW	325xi Sport Wagon		S		S
BMW	M3 Coupe				S
Buick	Century				S
Buick	Regal				S
Cadillac	XLR Convertible	S			
Chevrolet	Aveo				S
Chevrolet	Classic				S
Chevrolet	Corvette	S			
Chevrolet	Impala		S		S
Chevrolet	Malibu		S		S
Chevrolet	Monte Carlo		S		S

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VEHICLE TYPE		Manual Air Bag On-Off Switch*	Rear Center Lap/Shoulder Belts	Built-In Child Seats	Adjustable Upper Belts (Rear)
Make	Model				
Chrysler	Concorde		S		
Chrysler	Concorde Limited		S		
Chrysler	Crossfire	S			
Chrysler	Sebring		S		
Chrysler	Sebring Coupe		S		
Chrysler	Sebring Convertible				
Dodge	Intrepid		S		
Dodge	Stratus		S		
Dodge	Stratus Coupe		S		
Dodge	Viper SRT-10	S			
Ford	Taurus Sedan		S		
Honda	Accord		S		
Honda	Accord Coupe		S		
Honda	Accord V-6		S		
Honda	Accord V-6 Coupe		S		
Infiniti	G35		S		
Infiniti	I35		S		
Infiniti	M45		S		
Infiniti	Q45		S		
Jaguar	X-Type		S		
Kia	Spectra		S		S
Kia	Spectra Wagon		S		S
Lexus	ES300	A	S		

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These charts list vehicle safety features including manual air bag on-off switches, built-in child seats, rear center seat lap and shoulder belts, and adjustable upper belts (rear). Check with the dealer for the latest safety feature information. Only vehicles with at least one of these safety features are listed.

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VEHICLE TYPE		Manual Air Bag On-Off Switch*	Rear Center Lap/Shoulder Belts	Built-In Child Seats	Adjustable Upper Belts (Rear)
Make	Model				
Lexus	IS300	A	S		
Lexus	IS300 Sportcross	A	S		
Mazda	3		S		
Mazda	3 Wagon		S		
Mazda	6		S		
Mercedes-Benz	C-Class		S		
Mercedes-Benz	C-Class 2-door				S
Mercedes-Benz	C-Class Wagon		S		S
Mercedes-Benz	CL-Class				S
Mercedes-Benz	CLK Class Convertible				S
Mercedes-Benz	CLK Class 2-door				S
Mercury	Sable Sedan		S		
Mitsubishi	Galant	A	S		
Nissan	Altima		S		
Nissan	Maxima		S		
Oldsmobile	Alero				S
Oldsmobile	Alero Coupe				S
Pontiac	Grand Am				S
Pontiac	Grand Am Coupe				S
Pontiac	Grand Prix		S		
Saab	9-3 4-door		S		
Subaru	Forester		S		S
Subaru	Legacy		S		

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Make	Model				
Subaru	Legacy Wagon		S		
Suzuki	Verona		S		
Toyota	Avalon	A	S		
Toyota	Camry	A	S		
Toyota	Camry Solara 2-door	A	S		
Toyota	Camry Solara Convertible	A			
Volkswagen	Passat		S		
Volkswagen	Passat Wagon		S		
Volvo	S40		S	A	
Volvo	S60		S	A	
Volvo	V40		S	A	
Volvo	V70		S	A	
Volvo	XC70		S	A	
2004 HEAVY PASSENGER CARS					
Acura	3.5RL		S		
Audi	A8L		S		
Bentley	Arnage R		S		
Bentley	Arnage T		S		
Bentley	Continental T	S			
BMW	5 Series Sport Wagon		S		
BMW	5 Series/M5 Sedan		S		
BMW	7 Series		S		
Buick	LeSabre		S		S

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VEHICLE TYPE		SAFETY FEATURES			
Make	Model	Manual Air Bag On-Off Switch*	Rear Center Lap/Shoulder Belts	Built-In Child Seats	Adjustable Upper Belts (Rear)
Buick	Park Avenue				S
Cadillac	CTS		S		S
Cadillac	DeVille		S		S
Cadillac	Seville		S		S
Chrysler	300M		S		
Ford	Crown Victoria		S		
Ford	Thunderbird	S			
Hyundai	XG 350		S		
Jaguar	S-Type		S		
Jaguar	XJ		S		
Lexus	GS300/430	A	S		
Lexus	LS430	A	S		
Lexus	SC430	A			
Lincoln	LS		S		
Lincoln	Town Car		S		
Mercedes-Benz	E-Class		S		S
Mercedes-Benz	E-Class Wagon		S		S
Mercedes-Benz	S-Class		S		S
Mercedes-Benz	Maybach 57				S
Mercedes-Benz	Maybach 62				S
Mercury	Grand Marquis		S		
Mercury	Marauder		S		
Mitsubishi	Diamante	A	S		

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Pontiac	Bonneville	S			S
Rolls-Royce	Phantom	S			
Saab	9-5 4-door	S			S
Saab	9-5 Wagon	S			
Volvo	S80	S		A	
Volkswagen	Phaeton	S			
2004 SPORT UTILITY VEHICLES					
Acura	MDX	S			
Audi	allroad	S			
BMW	X3	S			
BMW	X5	S			
Buick	Rainier	S			S
Buick	Rendezvous	S			S
Cadillac	Escalade	S			S
Cadillac	Escalade EXT	S			S
Cadillac	ESV	S			S
Cadillac	SRX	S			S
Chevrolet	Avalanche	S			S
Chevrolet	Blazer 2-door				S
Chevrolet	Blazer 4-door				S
Chevrolet	Suburban	S			S
Chevrolet	Tahoe	S			S
Chevrolet	TrailBlazer	S			S

Year 2004 Vehicle Safety Features

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- * Federal requirements allow the switch only for vehicles that have no rear seat, or that have rear seats too small to safely accommodate a rear-facing infant seat.

These charts list vehicle safety features including manual air bag on-off switches, built-in child seats, rear center seat lap and shoulder belts, and adjustable upper belts (rear). Check with the dealer for the latest safety feature information. Only vehicles with at least one of these safety features are listed.

SAFETY FEATURES

VEHICLE TYPE		SAFETY FEATURES			
Make	Model	Manual Air Bag On-Off Switch*	Rear Center Lap/Shoulder Belts	Built-In Child Seats	Adjustable Upper Belts (Rear)
Chevrolet	TrailBlazer EXT	S			S
Chrysler	Pacifica				S
Dodge	Durango	S			S
Ford	Excursion				S
Ford	Expedition	S			S
Ford	Explorer	S			S
Ford	Explorer Sport Trac	S			
GMC	Envoy	S			S
GMC	Envoy XL	S			S
GMC	Envoy XUV	S			S
GMC	Yukon	S			S
GMC	Yukon Denali	S			S
GMC	Yukon Denali XL	S			S
GMC	Yukon XL	S			S
Honda	CR-V	S			
Honda	Pilot	S			
Hummer	H2	S			S
Hyundai	Santa Fe	S			S
Infiniti	FX45	S			S
Isuzu	Ascender	S			
Isuzu	Axiom				S
Isuzu	Rodeo				S
Jeep	Liberty	S			

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Make	Model				
Jeep	Wrangler	S			
Kia	Sorento		S		S
Land Rover	Discovery		S		
Land Rover	Freelander 2-door		S		
Land Rover	Freelander 4-door		S		
Land Rover	Range Rover		S		S
Lexus	GX470	A	S		S
Lexus	LX470	A	S		S
Lexus	RX300	A	S		
Lincoln	Aviator		S		S
Lincoln	Navigator		S		S
Mercedes-Benz	G-Class				S
Mercedes-Benz	M-Class		S		S
Mercury	Mountaineer		S		S
Mitsubishi	Endeavor	A	S		
Mitsubishi	Montero	A	S		
Mitsubishi	Montero Sport	A	A		
Mitsubishi	Outlander	A	S		
Nissan	Murano		S		S
Nissan	Pathfinder Armada		S		S
Oldsmobile	Bravada		S		S
Pontiac	Aztek		S		S
Porsche	Cayenne		S		S

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Make	Model	Manual Air Bag On-Off Switch*	Rear Center Lap/Shoulder Belts	Built-In Child Seats	Adjustable Upper Belts (Rear)
Saturn	VUE		S		
Suzuki	Grand Vitara XL7		S		S
Toyota	4Runner	A	S		
Toyota	Highlander	A	S		
Toyota	Land Cruiser	A	S		S
Toyota	RAV4	A	S		
Toyota	Sequoia	A	S		S
Volvo	XC90		S	A	
Volkswagen	Touareg		S		S
2004 LIGHT TRUCKS					
Chevrolet	Colorado	S			
Chevrolet	Colorado Ext. Cab	S			
Chevrolet	Colorado Crew Cab		S		
Chevrolet	S-10	S			
Chevrolet	S-10 Ext. Cab	S			
Chevrolet	S-10 Crew Cab	S			
Chevrolet	Silverado	S			
Chevrolet	Silverado Ext. Cab	S			S
Chevrolet	Silverado Crew Cab		S		S
Chevrolet	SSR	S			
Dodge	Dakota	S			
Dodge	Dakota Club Cab	S			
Dodge	Dakota Quad Cab				

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SAFETY FEATURES

VEHICLE TYPE		SAFETY FEATURES			
Make	Model	Manual Air Bag On-Off Switch*	Rear Center Lap/Shoulder Belts	Built-In Child Seats	Adjustable Upper Belts (Rear)
Dodge	Ram 1500	S			
Dodge	Ram 1500 Quad Cab		S		
Dodge	Ram 2500	S			
Dodge	Ram 2500 Quad Cab		S		
Dodge	Ram 3500	S			
Dodge	Ram 3500 Quad Cab		S		
Ford	F-150	S			
Ford	F-150 Super Cab		S		
Ford	F-150 Super Crew		S		
Ford	F-150 Heritage	S			
Ford	F-150 Heritage Super Cab	S			
Ford	F-150 Heritage SVT	S			
Ford	Ranger	S			
Ford	Ranger Ext. Cab	S			
GMC	Canyon	S			
GMC	Canyon Ext. Cab	S			
GMC	Canyon Crew Cab		S		
GMC	Sierra	S			
GMC	Sierra Ext. Cab	S			S
GMC	Sierra Crew Cab		S		S
GMC	Sonoma	S			
GMC	Sonoma Ext. Cab	S			
Mazda	B-Series	S			

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Make	Model				
Nissan	Frontier Ext. Cab	S			
Nissan	Titan Crew Cab		S		
Nissan	King Crew Cab		S		
Toyota	Tacoma	S			
Toyota	Tacoma Double Cab	A			
Toyota	Tacoma Ext. Cab	A			
Toyota	Tundra	S			
Toyota	Tundra Access Cab	A			
2004 VANS					
Chevrolet	Astro				S
Chevrolet	Express Cargo	S			
Chevrolet	Express Passenger 1500		S		S
Chevrolet	Express Passenger 2500	S	S		S
Chevrolet	Express Passenger 3500	S	S		S
Chevrolet	Venture			S	S
Chrysler	PT Cruiser		S		
Chrysler	Town & Country			A	S
Dodge	Caravan			A	S
Dodge	Grand Caravan			A	S
Dodge	C/V Cargo Van				S
Ford	Freestar		S		S
GMC	Safari				S
GMC	Savana Cargo	S			

- **Vehicles manufactured before September 1, 1995**—Some vehicles may have safety belt systems—such as automatic safety belts—that require additional hardware to install child safety seats correctly. Be sure to read both the vehicle and child safety seat manuals and any safety belt labels.
- **Vehicles manufactured after September 1, 1995**—Vehicles are now equipped with safety belt locking features—such as locking or switchable retractors—that make installation of a child safety seat easier. Read the vehicle owner's manual and any safety belt labels to be sure you are installing the seat correctly.

Go to www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/childps and click on the Fitting/Inspection Stations button for help in finding a child safety seat inspection station nearest you. You can also call 1-888-327-4236 or 1-866-SEATCHECK.

Ease of Use Child Safety Seat Ratings:

The easier a child safety seat is to use, the greater the chance it will be installed and used correctly. And a seat that is used correctly is more likely to protect your child in the event of a crash. That is why NHTSA developed an ease-of-use rating system to rate child safety seats and booster seats. These are not safety ratings because all child restraints are required to meet Federal safety standards. Instead, the new ratings can give you confidence to select a child restraint that will be easier to use correctly. Child safety seats and booster seats are rated on several factors:

- Assembly
- Evaluation of labels
- Evaluation of instructions
- Installation features
- Securing the child safety seat features

Refer to the information in the back of this publication on how to order a free Child Safety Seat Ease-of-Use Ratings brochure, or go to www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/childps.

BEWARE OF DANGER AREAS TO CHILDREN

Every year, millions of children are left alone in or around vehicles. This danger is greatly underestimated, and within a few minutes, your child could die from heat stroke or carbon monoxide poisoning. If left unattended in a vehicle, he or she could be abducted or become trapped in the vehicle's trunk. Small children standing outside vehicles are difficult to see by a driver who may be coming out of a parking space or driveway. Your child could get hit, be run over accidentally, and be seriously injured or killed.

Unattended Children

Never let children have a way to get access to vehicles, and never leave them alone in a vehicle. Make sure they can't get the keys or remote locking/unlocking devices to get into the vehicle. Children might be able to start the vehicle or put it in neutral so it rolls away. In addition to the dangers of trunks and other enclosed spaces, unattended children, even when properly seated, can quickly become ill or die from heat build-up inside the vehicle when the weather is hot. They can also freeze from the extreme low temperatures when the weather is cold.

Trunk Entrapment

Children trapped in trunks can die of suffocation or heat stroke. There have been incidents where children have died when they climbed in their family car trunks and were unable to escape. Make sure children do not have access to trunks, from outside the car, or through the inside of the car, where they could crawl into the trunk. Once they are in the trunk they may not be able to get out, even if they entered through the interior, because many rear seats only release to the trunk from inside the passenger area.

Interior Trunk Releases

Almost all passenger cars with trunks manufactured after September 1, 2001, are equipped with interior trunk releases. This safety feature is intended to help individuals, including children, who may become locked in the trunk of a vehicle. Check with your automobile dealer for specific information on the type of trunk release system offered, and which vehicle manufacturers offer retrofit kits for older cars.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Motor vehicles are the primary cause of unintentional carbon monoxide deaths, occurring in moving as well as stationary vehicles. Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning by avoiding conditions that place you and vehicle occupants in closed spaces where exhaust accumulates. Other tips include:

- Once a year, before cold weather begins, check and repair any holes in mufflers or exhaust pipes that can cause carbon monoxide to leak into your vehicle.
- After heavy snowfalls, be sure to inspect the vehicle to see that tail pipe outlets are cleared of snow before the engine is started.
- When the vehicle is idling, keep a window open.
- Do not sit in a vehicle that is idling in a closed garage or confined space.
- Open the garage door fully before starting the engine, then drive out as soon as possible.

Kids Aren't Cargo!

Never let children ride or play in the cargo area, trunk, or bed of any vehicle. They can be thrown from the vehicle in the event of a crash, sudden stop, or even a rough road.

Keep them safe by keeping them out of your vehicle unless you are there!

Family Car Checklist

Take this checklist with you when you go shopping for a vehicle.

Safety belt and Air Bag System

- Are there enough safety belts for everyone?
- Can the vehicle's lap and shoulder belts fit children who have outgrown child safety seats?
- Will a child be sitting in a booster seat?
- Is there enough room in the rear seat to install child safety seats correctly?
- Does the vehicle have lower anchors and tethers (LATCH) for a child safety seat?
- Can the vehicle manufacturer provide retrofit tether anchor kits?
- If the vehicle has a bench or bucket seat design, will it interfere with child safety seat installation? (Check slopes, humps, contours, seat splits, and forward-anchored belts.)
- Do safety belts have locking features (locking or switchable retractor) for child safety seats?
- Are adjustable upper belts available?
- Are built-in child restraint systems available?

Other Important Safety Features (not discussed in this brochure)

- Head restraint protection for rear seats (to reduce rearward head movement).
- Safety door locks (so children cannot open doors from inside the vehicle).
- Override window controls (driver controls the windows).

To Learn More...

This brochure is a companion to the Buying a Safer Car brochure, which contains a full range of safety feature information, crash tests, and rollover resistance results on cars, light trucks, sport-utility vehicles and vans.

To order a copy, stop by your local AAA office or write to:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street SW, NPO-503
Washington DC 20590
Fax: 301-386-2194

Other child passenger safety information available from NHTSA:

- *Comprando Un Auto Mas Seguro Para Niños Pasajeros (Buying a Safer Car for Child Passengers)* HS-809-648
- *"Simple Facts about LATCH" (flyer and poster)* HS-809-508
- *"Los datos simples acerca del sistema de anclaje LATCH" (flyer)* HS-809-507
- *"Are You Using It Right" (brochure)* HS-809-245
- *"A Parent's Guide to Buying and Using Booster Seats" (guide)* HS-809-503
- *"Child Safety Seat Ease of Use Ratings" (guide)* HS-809-638

Web site at www.nhtsa.gov

Auto Safety Hotline

1-888-327-4236

TDD 1-800-424-9153

DOT HS 809 545
March 2004

BUYING A SAFER CAR **FOR CHILD PASSENGERS** 2004

Important Car-Buying Information Brought to You By:



American Automobile Association

