

The left side of this guide outlines Iowa's Child Restraint Law

The right side of this guide outlines National Safety Recommendations

A GUIDE TO THE IOWA CHILD RESTRAINT LAW

Iowa Code 321.446, Data Code 198a - as of July 2006

Key Points:

- A child under 1 year old **and** weighing less than 20 lbs. must be secured in a rear-facing child restraint system
- A child **age 1 up to 6** years old must be secured in a child restraint system (a safety seat or booster seat--NOT a seat belt)
- A child from the age of 6 up to the age of 11 must be secured in a child restraint system or by a safety belt

A "child restraint system" is a specially designed seating system, including a belt positioning seat or a booster seat that meets federal motor vehicle safety standards.

- The driver is responsible for the fine
- The misdemeanor fine is \$25, plus costs (non-moving violation) totaling at least **\$83**
- The law applies to both residents and non-residents of Iowa
- The child restraint system must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- The child must be secured in the child restraint and the child restraint must be properly secured to the vehicle
- Non-use of a child restraint is probable cause to stop a vehicle
- An officer may investigate a suspected violation
- **First-offense citations will not result in convictions if the driver "produces in court" proof of acquisition of a child restraint**

Exceptions:

- Children certified by a physician as having a medical, physical or mental disability making restraint use inadvisable
- Children on bus, including a school bus
- Children riding on motorcycles
- Children riding in vehicles manufactured before 1966
- Children being transported in authorized emergency vehicles
- Children transported by peace officers on official duty
- Children riding in motor homes except if riding in the front passenger seat (where they must be restrained)

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Iowa Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau
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A GUIDE TO SAFELY TRANSPORTING CHILDREN IN A MOVING VEHICLE

COMMON CHILD SAFETY SEAT MISUSES:

- Seat installed too loose
- Improper seating position (in front of an air bag)
- Not buckling child into restraint
- Not securely anchoring the child restraint to the vehicle
- Improper seat for child's age and size
- Infant riding forward facing
- Harness retainer clip not at armpit level
- Loose harness straps

To graduate to an adult belt -- a child must be able to sit with their back/buttocks against the seat and with their knees bent at the edge of the seat. The belt system must be snug across the center of the child's chest and across their lap at the hips.

COMMON SAFETY BELT MISUSES FOR CHILDREN:

- Lap belt up on abdomen
- Lap belt loose; shoulder belt loose
- Shoulder belt behind back
- Shoulder belt under their arm

NATIONALLY RECOMMENDED STANDARDS FOR SAFE USE OF CHILD RESTRAINT SYSTEMS

	INFANTS	TODDLER/ PRESCHOOL	YOUNG CHILDREN
Weight	Birth to 1 year Up to 20-22 lbs.	Over 1 year 20-40 lbs.	Over 40 lbs. up to about 80 lbs. and 4'9" tall
Type of Seat	Infant only or rear-facing convertible	Convertible or Forward-facing	Belt positioning booster seat
Seat Position	Rear-facing only	Forward-facing	Forward-facing
<u>Always Make Sure</u>	Children to one year AND at least 20 lbs. in rear- facing seats Harness straps at or below shoulder level	Harness straps should be at or above shoulders Most seats require top slot for forward facing	Belt positioning booster seats must be used with both lap AND shoulder belt
WARNING	Do not place infants in the front passenger seat of cars with air bags	All children under age 13 should ride in the back seat	Make sure the lap belt fits low and tight to avoid abdominal injuries

For further information you may contact the
State Injury Prevention Coordinator at 1-800-728-3367
 For Certified Child Passenger Technicians / Child Restraint
 Checks Visit this Website:
www.blankchildrens.org/cps