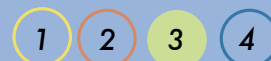




SUMMER SAFETY

A Miami Children's Hospital Summer Safety Series, July 2007



PUT SAFETY FIRST BEFORE YOU HIT THE ROAD

Suitcases? Check. Snacks? Check. Safety restraints? Not so fast...

As families hit the road for summer travel or even a trip to the grocery store, adhering to proper safety restraint guidelines should be at the top of everyone's checklist. "Motor vehicle crashes are one of the leading killers of children," said Dr. Malvin Weinberger, Director of Trauma Services at Miami Children's Hospital. "Contributing to these sad statistics is the fact that nearly a third of children ride in the wrong restraints for their age and size and four out of five child safety seats are used incorrectly."

Dr. Deise Granado-Villar, Director of the Division of Preventive Medicine and Community Pediatrics at Miami Children's Hospital, said, "Many of the most devoted parents are surprised to learn that they are putting their children at risk when restraining them in the car. While parents dutifully fasten babies and toddlers in child safety restraints, they must take the additional step of ensuring that the restraining device is age and weight appropriate and installed correctly." What's more, many people allow their children to graduate from their booster seats to the back seat – and even more perilously – the front seat of a car with air bags long before they should.

Here's what parent should know about safely restraining children of varying ages before pulling out of the driveway: (For complete guidelines from Safe Kids Worldwide, visit the web site at www.usa.safekids.org and click on the safety seat guide at the top of the page.)

"Motor vehicle crashes are one of the leading killers of children. Contributing to these sad statistics is the fact that nearly a third of children ride in the wrong restraints for their age and size and four out of five child safety seats are used incorrectly."

—Dr. Malvin Weinberger,
Director of Trauma Services,
Miami Children's Hospital



INFANTS

- Infants should ride rear facing until they are at least 1 year old and weigh at least 20 pounds, to reduce the risk of cervical spine injury in the event of a crash. To protect a rear-facing child's head from injury, the top of his/her head should be at least one inch from the top of the child safety seat's shell.
- Use a rear-facing child safety seat (infant-only or convertible).
- Never use a rear facing child seat with an active frontal air bag. The force of a deploying air bag could result in serious injury or death.
- Route the harness straps according to the manufacturer instructions, generally at or slightly below shoulder level for rear facing children.
- Adjust the harnesses so they are snug and flat against the child's body, and position the harness clip at armpit level. An adult should not be able to fit more than one finger, comfortably between the child's collarbone and the harness.
- If your child safety seat has a handle, follow the manufacturer instructions for positioning it. Most manufacturers state that handles should be kept in the down position, during transport.
- Recline the rear facing child safety seat enough so your child's head can rest flat against the child safety seat's shell. A firmly rolled towel or other soft material may help. Never recline the child safety seat flatter than 45 degrees.
- Read both the child safety seat instructions and the vehicle owner's manual for correct use and installation.

1-TO 4-YEAR-OLDS, 20 TO 40 POUNDS

- Use a forward-facing child safety seat (convertible or forward-facing only), with harnesses and place it in an upright position, according to manufacturer directions.
- Route the harness straps according to the manufacturer instructions, generally at or slightly above shoulder level, using reinforced slots for forward-facing children.
- Adjust the harnesses so they are snug and flat against the child's body, and position the harness clip at armpit level. An adult should not be able to fit more than one finger, comfortably between the child's collar bone and the harness.

- The lap belt should be snug and flat against the upper thighs. If it fits over the abdomen, it can result in serious internal injuries in a crash.
- The shoulder belt should be snug and flat against the chest and collarbone.

Note: Never let your child put a shoulder belt under his/her arm or behind his/her back. This could result in serious injuries.

- Read both the child safety seat instructions and the vehicle owner's manual for correct use and installation of your child safety seat.

Guidelines provided by Safe Kids Worldwide.

CHILDREN OVER 5 YEARS OF AGE, WEIGHING 40 TO 80 POUNDS

- Children ages 12 and under should ride properly restrained in the back seat, even if there is no air bag in the front. In general, the back seat is much safer than the front seat.
- If the child cannot sit with his or her tail bone against the seat, with knees bending naturally over the edge of the seat, then they should use a belt-positioning booster seat.
- Child must sit all the way back against the seat (high back booster shell or vehicle seat, depending on model selected).
- Both lap and shoulder belts must be used with belt positioning boosters.



Make sure your children are safe!

Miami Children's Hospital offers free safety restraint inspections. A trained technician will check to ensure that your safety restraint equipment is utilized properly, is appropriate for your child's height and weight, and that seats are safe from defects and recalls.

To arrange for an inspection, call 305-663-6800.

SUMMER = TRAUMA SEASON

Ah, those carefree days of summer... But parents, beware! Summer is the season when children ages 1 to 14 are most likely to experience traumatic injury. Unintentional injuries among children soar along with the temperatures during the sizzling summer months. And South Florida with its many water hazards and traffic congestion has more than its share of perils.

During the next several weeks, Miami Children's Hospital and Safe Kids Worldwide will sponsor information on how to keep your children safe this summer.



Summer is the season when children ages 1 to 14 are most likely to experience traumatic injury.

NO ONE KNOWS CHILDREN LIKE MIAMI CHILDREN'S.

There's no greater love than a parent's love for a child. It's a love that we at Miami Children's Hospital share. It's why we've been caring for children for over 55 years, longer than any other children's hospital in South Florida. And it's why we've been ranked by *Child Magazine* among the best children's hospitals in the nation. MCH is renowned throughout the world. Nowhere will you find physicians more experienced, facilities as advanced, or a staff more devoted to children. We're South Florida's only licensed specialty hospital *exclusively* for children. And that means we have an understanding of children's physical and emotional needs that no other hospital can offer.

If you would like to learn more about us, visit mch.com. You'll see that no one knows children like Miami Children's.



3100 S.W. 62ND AVE., MIAMI, FL | CALL 305-666-6511 | WWW.MCH.COM | PHYSICIAN REFERRAL 305-MCH-4KIDS OR 888-556-4KIDS