

# IS A HIGH-WEIGHT HARNESS RIGHT FOR YOUR CHILD?

ASK THE  
EXPERTS!

Safety experts and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) agree that using a 5-point harness restraint is the safest way for a child to ride. The AAP urges parents to keep children in a harnessed car seat for as long as possible: up to the highest weight or height allowed by their car seat's manufacturer and at least to 4 years of age.

## **My 3 year-old is 42 pounds. Can he be in a booster?**

Some children reach 40 pounds before they are 4 years old. For these children, choosing a restraint with a high-weight harness (> 40#) is a must. In fact, Wisconsin law says that children must be both 40 pounds AND 4 years old to ride in a booster. Children of this size may be physically large, but are not developmentally or physically ready for a booster seat or seatbelt alone.

## **My daughter is 4 years old and almost 40 pounds. What is the best seat for her?**

Even though Wisconsin law allows a child to use a booster seat when they are 40 pounds AND 4 years old, a child is safest in a harness restraint until the weight limit set by the manufacturer is reached. Many seats now have harness weight limits of 50, 65, and 80 pounds. Keeping your child in a harness to these higher weights decreases the likelihood of injury in a crash.

## **My 6 year-old is 45 pounds and rides in a high-weight harness seat (65 pound weight limit). I want to keep her in the harness because I know it is safer, but my family and friends don't understand. How can I explain this?**

You are right, there is no rush to move a child into a booster seat. Seat belts were designed for adults and crash tests show us that riding in a 5-point harness is much safer than a booster or seat belt. The child is more likely to stay in the right position and less likely to be ejected in a crash. Even racecar drivers wear 5-point harnesses as they are known to be safer. You lose safety each time you transition your child to the next stage seat, so don't rush into a booster.

## IS YOUR CHILD READY TO MOVE OUT OF HIS HIGH-WEIGHT HARNESS ?

Signs your child has outgrown his car seat and is ready for a booster:

- over the weight limit of the seat, or
- child's shoulders are above the top harness strap position, or
- child's ears are above the top of the seat



Wood County Health Department (8/2011)

The mission of the Wood County Health Department is to maximize the quality of life across the lifespan by promoting health, protecting the environment, and preventing disease and injury.

# EXAMPLE SEATS WITH HIGHER MAXIMUM WEIGHTS

Manufacturer	Model	Weight Range	Max Weight as Booster	Approx. Retail Price	Price Category
Britax	Boulevard 70, Boulevard 70 CS	5-40 RF 20-70 FF		\$320 \$340	\$\$\$\$
	Marathon 70	5-40 RF 20-70 FF		\$290	\$\$\$\$
	Frontier	25-85 FF	120	\$300	\$\$\$\$
Evenflo	Generations 65	20-65 FF	100	\$100	\$
	Maestro	20-50 FF	100	\$75	\$
	Symphony 65	5-35 RF 20-65 FF	100	\$200	\$\$\$
	Titan Elite, Titan Sport	5-35 RF 20-50 FF		\$80-100	\$
Graco	MyRide 65	5-40 RF 20-65 FF		\$160	\$\$\$
	Nautilus	20-65 FF	100	\$180-190	\$\$\$
Learning Curve	True Fit	5-35 RF -65 FF		\$190-200	\$\$\$
Safe Traffic System	Ride Safer Travel Vest	35-60 or 50-80		\$100	\$
Safety 1 <sup>st</sup> (Dorel)	Complete Air 65	5-40 RF 22-65 FF		\$190	\$\$\$
	Easy Fit 65	5-40 RF 22-65 FF		\$100	\$
Sunshine Kids	Radian 65	5-40 RF 20-65 FF		\$230	\$\$\$\$
	Radian 80	5-45 RF 20-80 FF		\$250-270	\$\$\$\$

**NEED HELP?**

**Contact the Wood County Health Department at 715-421-8911 to schedule your free car seat check today!**

**Price Categories**

\$ = \$50-100  
 \$\$ = \$100-150  
 \$\$\$ = \$150-200  
 \$\$\$\$ = \$200+

This list is not an endorsement of the named products nor is it a complete list of all available high-weight harness restraints.