South Dakota's kids are our most valuable resource. Project 8 targets parents, guardians and other caregivers to promote proper child seat use and installation.

Project 8 helps keep kids safe by ensuring that they are in the best child seat for their height and weight.

Certified Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Technicians provide car seat inspections at no cost to parents and guardians.

At the inspections, trained and certified child passenger safety technicians work with parents to ensure that children are in the best seat for their specific needs and then provides instruction on how to correctly use their child's car seat or seat belt.

Project 8 also distributes child seats to income eligible parents and children statewide, by assessing financial need.

Through education, training, and outreach, parents and caregivers in South Dakota can learn proper techniques for keeping their children safe.

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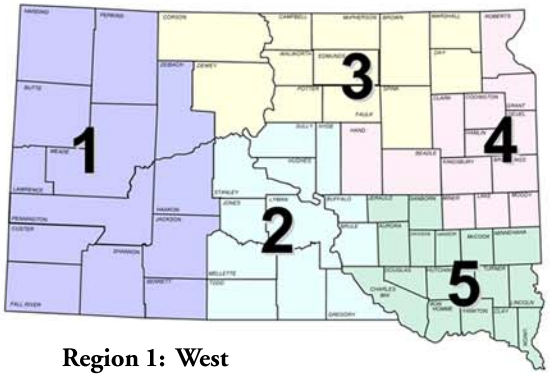
Contact Us

Project 8 is a child seat program providing awareness on keeping kids safe by making sure they are in the best child safety seat for their height and weight until they are at least 4'9". Remember, seats must also be properly installed to be effective.

To learn how you can keep your kids safe with Project 8 or if you qualify for a child seat, visit project8.sd.gov or contact a program in your region.



Region 1: West
Early Childhood Connections
809 S. Street, Suite 304, Rapid City, SD 57701
(605) 342-6464 or (888) 999-7759

Region 2: Central
Early Childhood Training Network
124 E. Dakota Ave, Pierre, SD 57501
(605) 773-4755 or (866) 206-8206

Region 3: North
Sanford Children's CHILD Services
110 6th Ave SE, Suite 201, Aberdeen, SD 57401
(605) 262-8505 or (800) 982-6404

Region 4: Northeast
Family Resource Network, SDSU
PO Box 2218, Brookings, SD 57007
(605) 688-5730 or (800) 354-8238

Region 5: Southeast
Sanford Children's CHILD Services
1115 W 41st Street, Sioux Falls, SD 57105
(605) 333-0698 or (800) 235-5923 Ext. 4

Parent's Guide to Child Seat Safety

Child Safety Seat Tips

- Always refer to your specific car seat manufacturer's instructions; read the vehicle owner's manual on how to install the car seat using the seat belt or LATCH system; and check height and weight limits.
- To maximize safety, keep your child in rear-facing car seat until age 2 or until they reach the manufacturer's maximum height and weight for their seat.
- Keep your child in the car seat for as long as possible, which is as long as your child fits the seat's height and weight requirements.
- Keep your child in the back seat until they reach at least 13 years of age.
- Your child should use a booster seat until they are 4 feet 9 inches (57 inches) tall and are between 8 and 12 years of age, when regular seat belts are most likely to fit properly.
- Be sure all occupants wear their seat belts correctly every time.

Car Seat Recommendations for Children

It's important to remember the "best" child safety seat is the one that correctly fits the child, the vehicle, and is used correctly every time.

Birth to 12 Months

Your child under age 1 should always ride in a rear-facing car seat. There are different types of rear-facing car seats: Infant-only seats can only be used rear-facing. Convertible and 3-in-1 car seats typically have higher height and weight limits for the rear-facing position, allowing you to keep your child rear-facing for a longer period of time.

4 to 7 Years

A forward-facing car seat with a harness should be used for your child until he or she reaches the top height or weight limit allowed by your car seat's manufacturer. Once your child outgrows the forward-facing car seat with a harness, it's time to travel in a booster seat, but still in the back seat.

1 to 3 Years

The best way to keep your child safe is to keep him or her rear-facing as long as possible. Your child should remain in a rear-facing car seat until he or she reaches the top height or weight limit allowed by your carseat's manufacturer. Once your child outgrows the rear-facing car seat, your child is ready to travel in a forward-facing car seat with a harness.

8 to 12 Years

Use a booster seat until your child is big enough to fit in a seat belt properly. To fit properly, the lap belt must lie snugly across the upper thighs, not the stomach. The shoulder belt should lie snug across the shoulder and chest and not across the neck or face. **Remember:** your child should still ride in the back seat because it's safer there.

Types of Child Safety Restraints

A **REAR-FACING CAR SEAT** is the best seat for your young child to use. It has a harness and in a crash, cradles and moves with your child to reduce the stress to the child's fragile neck and spinal cord.

A **FORWARD-FACING CAR SEAT** has a harness and tether that limits your child's forward movement during a crash.

A **BOOSTER SEAT** positions the seat belt so that it fits properly over the stronger parts of your child's body.

A **SEAT BELT** should lie across the upper thighs and be snug across the shoulder and chest to restrain the child safely in a crash. It should not rest on the stomach area or across the neck. NEVER let the child put the belt under their arm or behind their back.