



# Boosters R 4 Big Kids

## When can my child stop riding in a car seat?

Your child should ride properly restrained in a car seat with a harness for as long as possible (at least age 4 & 40 lbs.) or until the maximum weight limit of the car seat has been reached. Several brands of car seats are available for children 65-80 pounds. Keeping your child in a car seat with harness for as long as possible is your safest option!



When your child is ready to stop riding in a car seat, he or she should ride in a booster seat until age 8 or 4'9" tall or at least 80 pounds, according to the safety experts at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. ([www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov))

## What is a booster seat?

A booster is NOT the same as a car seat. It is a separate seat that does not use a harness. A booster seat simply "boosts" your child up about six inches so the seat belt can restrain your child properly. Using booster seats reduces your child's risk of injury by 60% and helps ensure proper placement of the seat belt on your child's body (as shown).



## How do booster seats work?

A booster seat is used with the vehicle's seat belt to restrain a child in a crash. Boosters can only be used with a lap-shoulder belt combination, NEVER a lap belt alone. Both the lap & shoulder belt straps are needed to restrain a child riding in any type of booster seat. The booster helps the seat belt fit your child properly.



**A.**

## Why does my child need a booster seat?

Booster seats are needed for the simple reason that seat belts are not designed to fit children under age eight (on average) or under 4'9" tall or less than 80 pounds. Seat belts are designed for adults. Booster seats come in three styles:

- A.** High back
- B.** Combination (harness must be removed)
- C.** No back/backless (as shown).



**B.**

Most boosters accommodate children from 40-100 pounds.



**C.**



## When is my child ready to use a seat belt without the booster?

If your child can pass the 5-Step Test, your child is ready to use the seat belt alone.

### 5 Step Test

- 1 Your child can sit with a straight back against the vehicle seat **AND**
- 2 Your child's legs bend comfortably over the edge of the vehicle seat **AND**
- 3 The lap belt stays low on the hips, touching the thighs **AND**
- 4 The shoulder belt lays across the center of the shoulder/chest **AND**
- 5 Your child can ride properly without slouching or sliding down in the seat.

For more information, please visit [www.flhsmv.gov/fhp/CPS](http://www.flhsmv.gov/fhp/CPS) or call (850) 617-2000 or email [fhp@flhsmv.gov](mailto:fhp@flhsmv.gov).

