

Basic Education for Safe Travel (B.E.S.T.) Program:

Required Program for Foster Care and Daycare Providers

As part of Minnesota Statute § 142B.51, foster care and daycare providers are required to complete a car seat safety training every 5 years. The Child and Restraint Systems (C.A.R.S.) Program is transitioning to the new B.E.S.T. (Basic Education for Safe Travel) Program. This streamlined, hybrid approach will ensure providers receive up-to-date information, while offering proper training on the correct use of child restraint systems, based on the child's size, weight and age, as well as the proper installation of car seats or booster seats in the vehicle used by the provider to transport children.

How B.E.S.T. Works: The 2-Step Process

Step 1: Complete the Online Car Seat Basics Course

The first step is to find a B.E.S.T. Facilitator to begin the process. They will assist you in signing up for the online course, Car Seat Basics, provided by the National Safety Council. This introductory e-learning course that covers essential car seat safety, including the proper use and installation of child restraint systems.

- **Duration:** Approximately 1 hour
- **Completion Requirement:** A certificate of completion will be issued upon finishing the course. You must retain this certificate as proof of completing the online course. You will need to show this certificate to your B.E.S.T. Facilitator prior to the in-person evaluation (Step 2).
- **Important:** Each individual must complete this course and obtain their own certificate. Certificates are not transferable.
- **Accessibility:** The Car Seat Basics course is available in English. For non-English speakers, consult B.E.S.T. Facilitator to arrange a course in a classroom setting with a translator.

Important Details for Step 2 (In-Person Evaluation)

- **Proof of Online Course Completion:** Before the hands-on session, participants must show proof of completing the Car Seat Basics online course. You can present your certificate to your B.E.S.T. Facilitator either electronically (on a mobile device or email) or as a printed copy. Each individual must show their own certificate.
- **Timeframe for Completion:** The in-person evaluation (Step 2) must be completed within 30 days of finishing the Car Seat Basics online course to remain valid.



Basic Education for Safe Travel (B.E.S.T.) Program:

Step 2: In-Person, Hands-On Skills Evaluation

After completing the online course, participants must attend an in-person, hands-on evaluation session with a certified B.E.S.T. Facilitator. During this session, you will:

- Practice proper installation techniques for car seats and/or booster seats.
- Learn how to correctly harness a child into a car seat or use a booster seat with the lap belt and shoulder belt.
- Receive guidance and support from the B.E.S.T. Facilitator.

If you do not have access to a car seat or vehicle, the B.E.S.T. Facilitator can provide equipment for the in-person, hands-on skills evaluation.

- **Duration:** Approximately 60-90 minutes
- **Completion Requirement:** After successfully demonstrating the proper use of the car seat and/or booster seat, you will receive a signed B.E.S.T. In-Person Evaluation Form, verifying completion of the hands-on evaluation. This form must be kept for your records and submitted to your licenser.

Record Keeping and DHS Compliance

It is the responsibility of the individual completing the B.E.S.T. Program to maintain a record of the following documents:

1. **Car Seat Basics** Certificate (Step 1)
2. **B.E.S.T. In-Person** Evaluation Form (Step 2)

These documents must be provided to your DHS licenser as proof of having completed the B.E.S.T. Program, which must be renewed every 5 years.

Find B.E.S.T. Facilitators

To locate a B.E.S.T. Facilitator and find a B.E.S.T. Program, visit BuckleUpMN.org.

About B.E.S.T. and Its Benefits

- **Updated Curriculum:** The new B.E.S.T. Program curriculum incorporates the latest car seat safety guidelines, ensuring that foster and daycare providers receive the most current instruction.
- **Flexible Learning:** The hybrid format allows for online learning and a more focused, hands-on experience during the in-person evaluation.



Basic Education for Safe Travel (B.E.S.T.) Program:

C.A.R.S. Transition to B.E.S.T.

- The C.A.R.S. Program will be valid through December 2024. Starting January 2025, the B.E.S.T. Program will be the only approved training program that meets the requirements of Minnesota Statute §142B.51 for foster care and daycare providers.
- The transition to the B.E.S.T. Program is designed to make car seat training more accessible, efficient, and relevant to caregivers' needs.

Important Reminder

If you transport children under age 9, you must complete the required car seat training, the B.E.S.T. Program, within 6 months of becoming licensed and every 5 years thereafter. This training is mandated by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) and must be provided by a B.E.S.T. Facilitator certified and approved by the Minnesota Safety Council on behalf of the Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety, through the Occupant Protection Grant. B.E.S.T. Facilitators have a certificate to verifying their approval to conduct this training.

Have Questions?

For more information or to find a B.E.S.T. facilitator, visit the Buckle Up Minnesota website.

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