

BUCKLE UP

Childcare Transportation Using a Bus



CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY: The updated Minnesota Child Passenger Safety Law (Statute 169.685) went into effect on August 1, 2024. This law reflects best practice recommendations and gives guidance to caregivers on car seats, booster seats and seat belts for safely transporting children of all ages. Every driver who transports a child under the age of 18 years in a motor vehicle is required to have the child restrained in a car seat, booster seat, or seat belt.



Rear-Facing Car Seat Infant or Convertible Car Seat

Birth to at least 2 years old

Keep your child rear-facing for as long as possible, at least until 2 years old **AND** until they have outgrown their car seat by weight or height according to the car seat manufacturer.



Forward-Facing Car Seat with Internal 5-Point Harness

*At least 2 years old **AND** has outgrown the rear-facing car seat by height or weight*

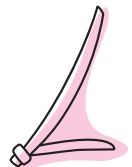
Once your child has outgrown their rear-facing car seat they can transition to a forward-facing car seat with an internal 5-point harness. They should remain in this seat until at least 4 years old **AND** until they have outgrown their car seat by weight or height according to the car seat manufacturer.



Booster Seat Using Lap Belt and Shoulder Belt

*At least 4 years old **AND** has outgrown the forward-facing car seat by height or weight*

Children must use a booster seat until at least 9 years old or until they have outgrown the booster seat by weight or height according to the manufacturer **AND** they can pass the 5-Step Test.



Vehicle Seat Using Lap Belt and Shoulder Belt

*At least 9 years old or has outgrown the booster seat **AND** can pass the 5-Step Test*

The 5-Step Test is a way to know when a child can ride without a booster seat. They must pass **ALL** 5 steps to safely use the vehicle seat with the lap belt and shoulder belt. *Children under 13 years old must ride in the back seat.*

Do We Need to Use Car Seats on Our Bus?

Yes! All licensed childcare centers that transport children are required to follow the Minnesota Child Passenger Restraint Systems Law (Statute 245A.18, subd. 1).

Providers can use a bus to transport children when ALL of the following criteria are met:

- The child is properly secured in a height and weight appropriate child restraint according to the Child Passenger Restraint Systems Law.
- The car seat must be properly installed on the bus according to the car seat manufacturer and the bus manufacturer instructions.
- **Booster seats cannot be used on a bus.** A child who meets the booster seat requirement in a vehicle must use a height and weight appropriate 5-point harness or safety vest on a bus until they meet the seat belt requirement of the Minnesota Child Passenger Safety Law.



Where Do We Find Child Safety Restraint Systems?

Conventional (store bought) car seats may work on a bus. Seat spacing, access to appropriate seat belts and tether anchors, location on the bus and emergency exits must be factored in when selecting a car seat to be used on a bus.

Many bus-specific Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS) are available on the market.

Using these CSRS's will ensure providers are properly protecting children and complying with the Minnesota Child Passenger Safety Law.



ONLINE RESOURCES

Minnesota Child Passenger Safety Law:

- **BuckleUpMN.org (5-Step Test)**
buckleupmn.org/infants-children/seat-belt-safety-for-older-children
- **Minnesota Department of Human Services**
<https://mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/licensing/child-care-and-early-education/centers/>
- **Minnesota Statutes** revisor.mn.gov/statutes

Bus Safety and Bus-Specific CSRS:

- **BESI** besi-inc.com
- **EZ-ON** ezonpro.com
- **IMMI** imminet.com/products/safeguard/star
- **National Child Passenger Safety Board**
cpsboard.org/trainings/school-bus-training
- **Safe Ride News**
saferidenews.com/product/the-school-bus-safety-handbook