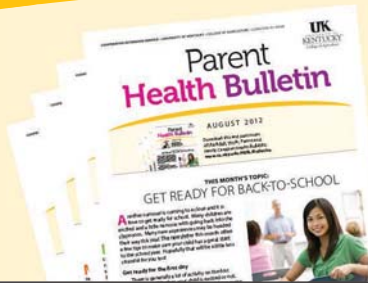


Parent Health Bulletin



MAY 2015

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: CAR SAFETY

Traveling in a car is almost unavoidable — it is necessary. When you have children in the car, make sure that they are as safe as possible. There are lots of safety features in cars. Items such as seatbelts, air bags and automatic door locks are very important tools to help stay safe while in the car. There are also dangers around the car to think about when you have children. Take a little time to consider ways to keep your child safe in and around the car.

Seatbelts

Make sure your child is wearing a seatbelt. As soon as your child is settled in his or her seat, the seatbelt should be snapped into place. Whether it is for a 5-minute trip or a 5-hour trip, wearing a seatbelt is the best way to protect your child. You should always make sure that your child's seatbelt is on.

If your child has a friend with him or her, you may be tempted to let them buckle up together. This is



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Wearing a seatbelt is the most important safety step you can take for yourself and your child.

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not a good idea. You should never let two people share a seatbelt — both could get very hurt if there was an accident.

If your child does not want to wear a seatbelt, talk to him or her and find out why he or she feels that way. Perhaps the seatbelt is rubbing or just does not feel good in a certain spot. If this is the case, you may be able to wrap the actual strap with some fabric or something soft so that it does not irritate the skin of your child.

What is an air bag?

Air bags are also important safety features in cars. In the case of an accident, an air bag releases quickly to protect the people inside the car by preventing them from hitting the dashboard or the windshield. Although air bags are very important, they do not replace the use of a seatbelt. Wearing a seatbelt is the most important safety step you can take for yourself and your child.

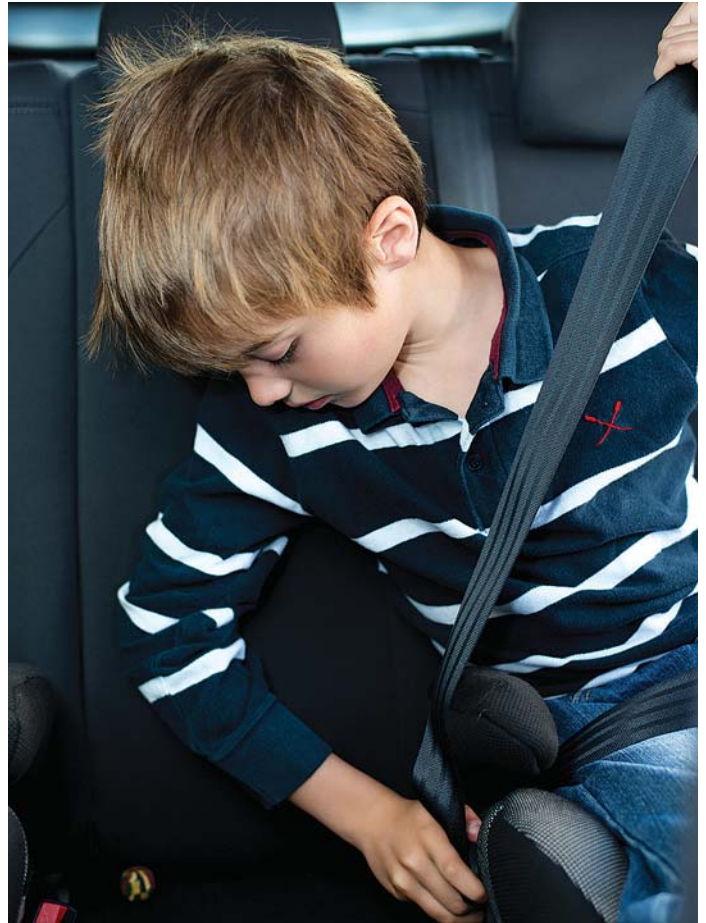
Where is the best place for your child to sit in the car?

For safety reasons, children under the age of 12 should not sit in the front seat. Although seatbelts and air bags are made to protect in the case of an accident, sitting in the front seat increases the chance that your child could hit his or her head on the windshield or dashboard. Also, air bags can hurt children if they are in the front seat when an air bag is released.

Other dangers around cars

There are other dangers parents need to be aware of when children are around cars. If your car is parked and your children are playing around it, please make sure that the keys are out of the ignition. If the key is available, the children may accidentally cause the car to roll or even drive away. This is especially possible if the engine is running. Leaving a child in a car alone is never a safe practice.

A child can be run over by a car leaving a parked



spot. Backing over a child can cause serious injury or even death. Tell your children not to play around parked cars. Make sure to check around a parked car before pulling out. Make sure children are far away from the car and that you can actually see them until you are completely backed out.

Cars make travel much faster. But, no matter how much they help us, we have to be safe in and around them. Make sure that you and your child wear seatbelts and travel safely.

SOURCE:

Kidshealth. (2011). Staying safe in the car and on the bus
Parents Central: From car seats to car keys; Keeping Kids Safe.
<http://www.safercar.gov/parents/home.htm>

Parent
Health Bulletin

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