

National Best Practice Guidelines

Safety of Children in Motor Vehicles

This resource provides an overview of the **Top 5 changes** in the best practice child restraint guidelines recommendations since their initial development in 2013.



NEW

Practice Point 6 & 7 (Small and Pre-term infants)

(6) Infants <2.5kg should use rear facing restraints designed for low-birth weight babies;

(7) Limit time premature infants are in restraints and observe the child to minimise the risk of apnoea.

NEW

Recommendation 6.7 (seating posture)

Children should sit in an upright seating posture when travelling.

Recommendation 2.1 (Taxis and other vehicles)

Children should use their recommended restraint in private hire cars and ride share services.

NEW

Recommendation 2.11 (Integrated restraints)

Up to 8 years old use a high back booster seat. Integrated boosters suitable for children over 8 years if adjacent to curtain airbag.

Recommendation 1.9 (Booster to adult belt transition)

Use the 5 step test to determine if a child is big enough to use an adult seat belt in each car they travel in. Height is not a good guide.



Image Source: Integrated booster seat images used accessed from Volvo cars media.volvocars.com. Accessed on 09032021

Below is a summary of the key changes made to the guidelines during the 2020 update. This summary was provided to the Technical Drafting group, Steering Committee representatives and as part of the public comment package to enable readers to identify the key changes. Full details of the evidence underpinning these changes is contained in the main Guidelines document.

Substantive Changes:

Introduction - Additional information on use of child restraints for children with disability.

Recommendation 1.9 (booster to adult belt transition):

- *Stronger recommendation for use of the '5 step test' to guide booster seat to adult seat belt transition, and removal of 145-150cm height as approximate target for transition.*

Consensus-Based Recommendation 2.1 (taxis and other vehicles):

- *Addition of private hire cars and ride share services to the recommendation for children to use their recommended restraint in taxis.*

Recommendation 2.11 (integrated restraints):

- *New recommendation for use of add-on high back booster seats in preference to integrated boosters for children aged 4-8*
- *New recommendation that for older children, integrated boosters are suitable for use if adjacent to a curtain airbag*

Consensus-Based Recommendation 4.2 (seating position for child restraint users):

- *Removal of advice to use centre rear position for children seated in booster cushions*

Consensus-Based Recommendation 5.8 (inflatable seat belts and child restraints):

- *Advice that child restraints should only be used in seating positions with inflatable seat belts if advised to be safe by both vehicle and child restraint manufacturer.*

Recommendation 5.7 (seat belt pretensioners)

- *New advice that it is safe for children in child restraints and booster seats to sit in seating positions equipped with seat belt pretensioners*

Recommendation 6.7 (seating posture):

- *New recommendation to ensure child is in good upright seating posture when travelling*

Recommendation 6.10 (ISOFIX):

- *Additional advice that there is no evidence to recommend ISOFIX compatible restraints over restraints installed with a seat belt*

Practice Point 6 (small infants):

- *New practice point advising parents of small infants (<2.5kg) to use rear facing restraints designed for low birthweight infants until they get good fit in a standard rear facing restraint*

Practice Point 7 (preterm infants and apnoea):

- *New practice point advising parents of premature infants to minimise time in the child restraint and observe the child in the restraint to minimise the risk of apnoea (stopping breathing)*

Minor changes:

Altered wording on consensus-based recommendation use of extended rear facing restraints (Type A4) noting no recommendation can be made about their safety in comparison with forward-facing restraints for children over 12 months of age who have outgrown their Type A1 or A2 restraint. (CBR 1.6)

Altered wording on consensus-based recommendation use of extended forward facing restraints (Type G) noting no recommendation can be made about their safety in comparison to booster seats for children who have outgrown a Type B restraint (CBR 1.8)

Addition of advice to check for missing components in second hand restraints (CBR 2.16)

