



Safe Kids Lower Columbia  
PO BOX 118 \* Kelso WA 98626  
360.957.1979 (phone) \* safekidslc@gmail.com (email)  
[www.safekidslc.org](http://www.safekidslc.org)

## **Law Mandate Effective June 1, 2007:**

- Children 15 and under must be restrained in some manner regardless of seating position.\*
- Children ages 7 and under must use an appropriate child safety seat.
- Children ages 8 or older, or 4'9" in height or taller can be restrained by a safety belt or an appropriate child safety seat. If the child does not meet either of the two restrictions, the child needs to remain in a booster until either criteria is met.
- If a child is 8 years old, or 4'9", *but does not fit the seat belt properly when worn alone*, the child needs to remain in a booster until the seat belt fits the child properly, according to vehicle manufacturer instruction.
- Children ages 12 and under should sit in the back seat when practical.
- If a seating position is equipped with lap belts only, children weighing more than 40 pounds do not need to use a child safety seat.
- When Washington does mandate restraint use, it requires the driver to secure both the child safety seat and the child properly.

*\*This statement doesn't take into account any provisions mandating coverage for individual ages 16 and over.*

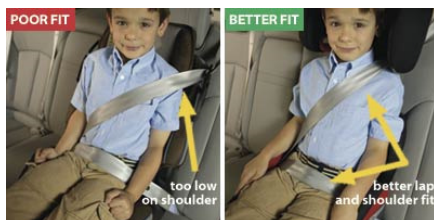
## **Is Your Child Ready for Seat Belt Use? Take the 5-Step Fit Test**

**Your child should use a booster seat until he/she is 4' 9" tall**

**To see if the seat belt will fit your child, try the following test:**

1. Does the child sit comfortably all the way back against the auto seat?
2. Do the child's knees bend comfortably at the edge of the seat & he/she still sits upright?
3. Does the lap part of the belt fit snugly across the top of the thighs?
4. Does the shoulder part of the belt come across the center of the shoulder and chest/collarbone?
5. Can the child sit in this position for the entire trip?

**If you answered "NO" to any of these questions, then the child should ride in a booster seat.**



**Booster seats are not installed tightly alone. They sit on the vehicle seat and the child wears the safety belt like every adult. Never use a lap belt only with a booster!**

**Still have questions? If so, feel free to contact Brandi Ballinger, a nationally certified car seat technician at 360.575.6280 or [brandi.ballinger@c2fr.org](mailto:brandi.ballinger@c2fr.org)**