



## Teach older kids to be safe passengers

Car crashes are the number one cause of death and injuries to children. Older kids between the ages of 8 and 14 need clear, consistent messages about how to stay safe in a car as they become more independent.

### Why are 8- to 14-year-olds at risk?

- Many are still too small to ride safely in seat belts only and should use a booster seat.
- They are less likely to ride safely than younger children due to peer pressure.
- They are more likely to be riding in the front seat, where the risk of injury is greater.
- Older kids often ride with new drivers such as siblings and friends.

### What parents can do:

- Make sure everyone in the car buckles up before every trip, no matter how short. It is the law.
- Make sure each child sits in their own seat with a seat belt or booster seat if needed.
- Have all kids younger than 13 in the back seat.

- Set rules for who your child can ride with.
- Wisconsin law limits the number and age of passengers for new teen drivers.
- Let your children know what to do if they do not feel safe riding with someone. Tell them to call you, and you will pick them up.

### What older kids can do:

- Always buckle up, even if others do not.
- Sit in the back seat if they are younger than 13, even if the driver tells them they can sit in the front seat.
- Say something if they see something unsafe or feel unsafe.
- Know that it is okay to say, "I am not going to ride without a seat belt. It is not safe."
- Call an adult if they need help or a safe ride home.

[safekidswi.org](http://safekidswi.org)  
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Car seat hotline: (855) 224-3692

