

IOWA CHILD RESTRAINT LAW

(IOWA CODE 321.446)

- Children under 1 year of age **and** less than 20 pounds must be in an approved rear-facing child restraint system. **The child should remain rear-facing as long as possible** (1 year & 20 lbs. is just the minimum required by law).
- All children under age 6 must be in a child restraint system (a seatbelt is not a child restraint system – it must be an approved car seat, to include booster seats).
- All children 6 through 17 years of age must be restrained within the vehicle (regardless of seating position). Most children need to remain in a booster seat well past the age of 6 (4’9” minimum height before using the seatbelt without a booster seat).
- A violation of Iowa’s Child Restraint Law carries a total fine of \$195.
- A “child restraint system” is a specifically designed seating system, including a belt positioning seat (or booster seat) that meets federal motor vehicle safety standards (this should be indicated on the seat itself).

Common Child Safety Seat Misuse:

- Child safety seat improperly installed (including in front of an airbag)
- Improper seat for child’s age and/or size
- Forward facing a child prematurely
- Not using a booster seat until the child is 4’9” and (usually) over 80 pounds.

Common Safety Belt Misuses for Children:

- Lap belt too high on abdomen
- Lap and/or shoulder belt too loose
- Shoulder belt behind back
- Shoulder belt under arm

Safety Facts:

- 7 out of 10 child safety seats are used/installed improperly. Be sure to have yours checked by a certified child safety seat technician.
- Children 12 and under should always ride in the backseat (exception: single cab trucks or other vehicles with no backseat) – **NEVER IN FRONT OF AN ACTIVE AIRBAG.**

Questions?

Contact Lt. Ted McClimon, Dubuque PD, (563) 589-4473 or tmcclimo@cityofdubuque.org