



NHTSA Guidance on Recommendations for Rear-Facing and Forward-Facing Child Car Seats

We have received some questions regarding NHTSA's guidance on recommendations for rear-facing and forward-facing child car seats. As you may be aware, there have been recent communications and technical reviews regarding the validity of the 2007 study comparing the injury risk between rear- and forward-facing car seats for children less than 2 years of age in the United States (Henary et al, 2007). Some of these communications may have caused uncertainty regarding educational information we should be sharing with parents and caregivers.

It is important to note that all the studies being discussed still demonstrate the value and effectiveness that car seats play in keeping children safe while traveling.

NHTSA's 2011 best practice child car seat recommendations state that:

- Children under age 1 should always ride in rear-facing car seats; and
- Children 1 to 3 years of age ride in rear-facing car seats as long as possible and until they reach the upper height or weight limit according to the manufacturers' instructions.

The information and analyses available thus far supports NHTSA's position on car seats. Our best practice recommendations remain the same in 2017. Ensuring children's transportation safety is an ongoing process at NHTSA, and we will review additional data as they become available.