

# CHILD BOOSTER SEATS



## *IT'S THE LAW*

The new **California Booster Seat Law**, effective January 1, 2012, prohibits parents, guardians, or drivers from transporting on a highway in a motor vehicle any child **under 8 years old** without securing that child in a child restraint meeting federal motor vehicle safety standards.

The new child safety seat law for 2012 imposes stiff fines and penalties for violations, including the possibility of **child endangerment** charges.

The old California Booster Seat Law had required a child under 6 years of age, who weighed less than 60 pounds, to be secured in a rear seat in a child restraint that met federal standards, but allowed the child to ride in the front seat if properly secured, including riding in taxis if all rear seats are already occupied by children under 12 years of age.

The new California law for 2012 extends the old law by requiring children to ride in booster seats in the back seat **until their 8th birthday**.

Seat belts are made for average adults and don't fit a child who is not at least 4'9" tall. 6-7 year old kids are at risk because they might be too big for child car seats and yet too small to be protected by seat belts.

A booster seat raises the child up, so the seat belt allows the lap belt to lay across the upper thighs (rather than the child's stomach), and allows the shoulder harness to lay across the shoulder and chest (rather than across the neck or face).

Statistics show that using a booster seat, as opposed to a seat belt, reduces a kid's risk of injury by 59 percent, thus the new 2012 California Booster Seat Law.

The new California car seat law does contain a provision, however, that **a child under 8 years of age who is 4'9" inches in height or taller may use a safety belt rather than a child safety seat or booster seat.**