



# It's Up to You

WHEN YOU ARE RIDING IN A MOTOR VEHICLE. . . .

**Always Buckle Up!** and remember that it is safer for you to ride in the back seat. One reason for this is that most vehicles now have air bags. Air bags save lives and they are an important safety feature for adults. However, air bags are not designed to protect small children, even those children who are not in child safety seats. Children riding in the front seat can be seriously injured or killed when an air bag deploys in a crash. Deaths or injuries can occur because an air bag bursts out of the dashboard at up to 200 mph - faster than the blink of an eye. The force of an air bag can hurt those who are too close to it, especially children.

**Remind your parents** that babies and children up to the age of 4 should ride in a child safety seat that's been approved for their weight and height. Tell them that children who weigh up to 80 pounds, and are less than 4'9" tall, should ride in a booster seat.

**And, it's the Law.** The New York State Seat Belt Law says all children up to the age of 16 riding anywhere in a vehicle, including the back seat, must wear a seat belt or be in a child safety seat. If your parents don't enforce this rule, and they get stopped by a police officer, they can receive a fine of at least \$25 and up to \$100. They can also get 3 points on their driver's license for this violation.

## SOME DO'S AND DON'T'S ABOUT USING SAFETY BELTS AND CHILD SAFETY SEATS

**DO** remind your parents, caregivers and other adults to use their seat belts on every trip. Ask Mom or Dad to make it a family policy that everyone in the car buckles up before the car moves.

**DO** remind your parents, caregivers and other adults to use child safety seats and booster seats (for children who have outgrown their safety seats but are still too small to use seat belts properly). It is also important that all these seats be properly installed. Tell Mom or Dad to give it a good tug; if it moves more than one inch, it is probably not installed correctly. If they can't get the seat to fit properly, they can call their local highway safety representative toll free at 1-877-459-9189 to find out where and when a child safety seat checkpoint will be held. They can also look up this information on-line at [www.safeny.com](http://www.safeny.com).

- **DON'T** put the seat belt shoulder strap behind your back or under your arm. This makes the lap belt ride up and that can damage internal organs if you crash or even stop quickly.
- **DON'T** let Mom or Dad put a rear-facing infant seat in the front seat of a vehicle that has a passenger air bag.
- **DON'T** get into a car with anyone who has been drinking even if you do plan to wear your safety belt.

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