

## *Belt-positioning Booster Seats: Easy to use, affordable and safe.*

When your child reaches the top weight or height for his or her child safety seat, the child's shoulders are above the harness or the child's ears have reached the top of his child safety seat, a booster seat becomes necessary. A booster seat raises your child so that the vehicle's lap/shoulder belt fits correctly.

### **How do you use a booster seat?**

- Read the booster seat and vehicle user manuals.
- Place the booster seat in the back seat in a position with a lap/shoulder belt.
- Never use a booster seat with only a lap belt.
- After your child sits in the booster, pull the lap/shoulder belt across him or her and buckle the seat belt.
- Check to ensure that the belt crosses the shoulder between the neck and arm and that the lap belt is low and snug on the hips, just touching the thighs.

### **What type of booster is best?**

- Use a backless booster seat if the back seat of your car has head rests or a high back seat. Otherwise choose a high-back booster seat.
- Prices start at \$20 for a backless booster. More expensive seats are not necessarily safer.

### **How effective are boosters? Why aren't seat belts good enough?**

- Belt-positioning boosters are safest for your school-age child in a crash. Any restraint is better than no restraint, but boosters are 60 percent safer than seat belts alone. In a crash, poor-fitting seat belts can result in serious injury to a child's abdomen, neck and head.
- Seat belts are made to fit adults. Until your child is big enough, he or she needs a boost.

### **What to do if your child says, "But I'm a big kid now!"**

- Tell your child that the car will not move until everybody is buckled correctly.
- Let your child help select the booster seat and teach him or her how to buckle in.
- Show your child that the booster will let him or her see out the window better and make the seat more comfortable.
- Tell your child that boosters are for "big kids." Don't call a booster seat a child's seat.

*Belt-positioning Booster Seats (continued)*

**When is it safe to move child from his booster seat to an adult seat belt?**

Your child should stay in a booster seat until the adult seat belt fits. This usually occurs when your child is about 4'9" in height and is 8 to 12 years old. The seat belt fits properly when:

- The shoulder belt lies across the chest, not the neck of face.
- The lap belt is low and snug across the thighs, not across the stomach.
- The child is tall enough to sit against the vehicle seat back with his legs bent at the knees and feet hanging down.