

Mom's Moment: Car Seat Safety Reminders

Written by Nadine Bubeck

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I spent four years as a TV traffic anchor. There were mornings that I simply talked about a back-up on I-10 or “smooth sailing” on the Loop 202. Those were the good days.

The bad days consisted of bad news: reporting on fatal crashes. On the very bad days, these crashes involved children, some of which died. I don't miss reporting bad news.

Child Passenger Safety Week is September 18th-24th. It's when news outlets remind you to securely fasten your children in properly installed car seats. And I'm no exception. I'm writing this post to remind you- beg you- to please take safety into consideration when transporting your kids. Your babies. Your everything.

But I'm no expert. And so I've connected with Allana Pinkerton, the Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician for Diono, a leading car seat design company.

Most recently, I got my toddler a new car seat. After much due diligence, I chose the [Diono Radian®RXT](#). In short, it comfortably seats rear-facing children from 5-45 lbs for maximum safety, composed of premium plush head and body support cushions for newborns and infants. It also grows with your child, accommodating forward-facing children up to 80 lbs in a 5-point harness. And when your babies become big kids, it converts to booster mode holding 50-120 lbs. Oh, and it folds flat for travel (can easily be worn as a backpack!). I highly recommend.

Now back to Allana.

This car seat safety expert has some insight all parents should read. I'll keep it short and sweet if you promise to digest this information. No traffic anchor wants to report on your child.

1. Be sure to select the right car seat for your child's, age, height and weight. Keeping a car seat rear facing is 5x safer in a frontal crash because their head, neck and spinal cord is supported by the back of the car seat.
2. Before installing your car seat, read the car seat manual and vehicle manual! Watch installation videos from the manufacturer's website and then double check your work by consulting with a certified Child Passenger Safety Technician.
3. #LookforBaby sounds silly, but we are all living more distracted lives these days. Too many children are unintentionally being left in hot cars. Keep your purse or phone on the floor in the back seat. When you reach your destination you are more likely to remember to get those items- therefore, reminding you baby is in the back seat.
4. Check the car seat installation before every ride. Just give it a tug at the belt path to be sure it is still secured to the seat belt or with the lower anchors. Which reminds me, be sure it's just one or the other, not both. Most car seats only allow installation using one method.
5. Harness baby properly every ride. The harness straps for a rear-facing child should be placed at or just slightly below their shoulders. For a forward-facing child, they should be at or slightly above their shoulders. The straps should be snug and comfortable, but not super tight. Try the pinch test at the collar bone. If your fingers slide and you can't grasp any webbing, it's a proper fit. Lastly, slide the plastic chest clip to armpit level. This helps keep the straps on top of the child's shoulders. This is especially important for newborns whose tiny shoulders are more rounded and tend to make fitting a harness a challenge. With winter around the corner, think twice about placing your child in a thick coat when harnessing them into their car seat.

Told you it would be brief.

Safe driving, everyone.

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