

Michigan's Current Child Passenger Safety Law ...and Where Our Children Need it to Go

Michigan House Transportation Committee Meeting

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Who We Are

Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians & Instructors

- National training program
- Created through a partnership between the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the National Child Passenger Safety Board and Safe Kids Worldwide
- 4 day/32 hour training
- Must recertify every 2 years
- Approximately 1000 certified technicians in Michigan with 50 instructors supporting*

Current Law is Too Confusing

Parents and caregivers are confused by current wording of laws

...but so are doctors, law enforcement and even some in the child passenger safety and injury prevention world.

257.710d Child restraint system required; position; exceptions; violation as civil infraction; points; abstract; exemption by rules; alternate means of protection.

Sec. 710d.

(1) Except as provided in this section, or as otherwise provided by law, a rule promulgated under the administrative procedures act of 1969, 1969 PA 306, MCL 24.201 to 24.328, or federal regulation, each driver transporting a child less than 4 years of age in a motor vehicle shall properly secure that child in a child restraint system that meets the standards prescribed in 49 CFR 571.213.

(2) A driver transporting a child as required under subsection (1) shall position the child in the child restraint system in a rear seat, if the vehicle is equipped with a rear seat. If all available rear seats are occupied by children less than 4 years of age, then a child less than 4 years of age may be positioned in the child restraint system in the front seat. A child in a rear-facing child restraint system may be placed in the front seat only if the front passenger air bag is deactivated.

Sec. 710e.

(a) A child who is less than 4 years of age shall be protected as required in section 710d.

(b) A child who is 4 years of age or older but less than 8 years of age and who is less than 4 feet 9 inches in height shall be properly secured in a child restraint system in accordance with the child restraint manufacturer's and vehicle manufacturer's instructions and the standards prescribed in 49 CFR 571.213.

Current Law is Too Confusing

So what's happening is we have had to continuously "interpret" it, which only confuses things more by creating mixed messages and leads to subjectivity.

Michigan's Child Passenger Safety Law requires:

Children younger than age 4 to ride in a car seat in the rear seat if the vehicle has a rear seat. If all available rear seats are occupied by children under 4, then a child under 4 may ride in a car seat in the front seat. A child in a rear-facing car seat may only ride in the front seat if the airbag is turned off. Children must be properly buckled in a car seat or booster seat until they are 8 years old or 4-feet-9-inches tall. Children must ride in a seat until they reach the age requirement or the height requirement, whichever comes first.

Current Michigan Law Not Keeping Children as Safe as Possible

- Because of data and research, we know that best practice says we should be keeping children in each restraint stage (rear-facing, forward facing, etc.) as long as possible.
- The AAP recommendations are for all children and are not based on where they live
- Parents will often ask what the law is in regards to their children riding in car seats. “Do you want to know the law or how to keep your child the safest?”
- The hardest conversations happen after crashes-
 - “I thought I was doing everything right. I was following the law. I had no idea the law wasn’t the safest.”
 - “Why didn’t anyone ever tell me this? I never would’ve taken him out, if I would’ve known.”

More Injuries Than We See



For every **1** child that dies there are...

25 hospitalizations

925 treated in ER

Many more treated in doctors' offices



In 2005, injuries that resulted in death, hospitalization or an ER visit cost nearly \$11.5 billion in medical expenses.

SOURCES: Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (NISQARS), CDC, 2009.

National Health Interview Survey, 2009 data release, CDC, National Center for Health Statistics.

Michigan's Car Seat Distribution Program

The Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning's car seat program provides funding to support child passenger safety technicians' efforts to provide brand new car seats to families who qualify. These car seats may only be provided along with the education necessary to know how to properly install and use the car seat correctly.



- In 2018, a total of 5,282 car seats were provided to 85 technicians in 47 counties for distribution to families in need

The Real Reason Why We Do This

