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The Ontario government has passed a new law that makes child car seats and booster seats mandatory for all drivers travelling with young children. Ontario joins Quebec as the second province in Canada to pass this type of legislation. According to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, a properly installed child car/booster seat can reduce the risk of serious injury or death by as much as 75 per cent. The new legislation will take effect on September 1, 2005.

Understanding the new law is important as all drivers, including grandparents and babysitters, are required to use child/booster seats when transporting young children.

So, what do you need to know? The law requires the following:

- Child car seats are mandatory for children less than 18 kg (40 lb). Please see the chart on the next page for an explanation of the type of seat required.
- Booster seats are mandatory for children up to 8 years of age, weighing between 18 kg and 36 kg (40 - 80 lb) and having a standing height of less than 145 cm (4 ft 9 in).
- A child can start using a seat belt alone once any **one** of the following criteria is met:
 - **child turns** 8 years of age
 - **child weighs** 36 kg (80 lb)
 - **child is** 145 cm (4 ft 9 in) tall

It is important that drivers understand the consequences. Those who do not use the child car/booster seat or use them incorrectly will be assigned two demerit points and a fine of \$110.





The Ontario Ministry of Transportation provides the following requirements when securing a child in a vehicle:

	Age	Requirements
Rear-Facing Infant Car Seats	Newborns/Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weigh less than 9 kg (20 lb) • Up to one year old • Use until baby can pull him/herself to a standing position
Forward-Facing Car Seats	Toddlers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weigh between 9 kg and 18 kg (20 - 40 lb) • About one-year of age • Are able to pull themselves up to a standing position • Use with a tether strap to anchor seat securely
Booster Seats	Pre-school to 8 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weigh between 18 kg and 36 kg (40 - 80 lb) • Height is less than 145 cm (4 ft 9 in) tall • Up to eight years old
Seat Belts	Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child can use a seat belt alone once one of the following has been met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have had their eighth birthday - At least 145 cm (4 ft 9 in) tall - Weigh more than 36 kg (80 lb) • Children under 13 years of age should sit in the rear of vehicles, away from airbags

For more information about child car seat safety you can download an information brochure called “Safe and Secure: Choosing the right car seat for your child” by visiting the Ontario Ministry of Transportation website at www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/carseat/choose.htm or by calling 1-800-268-2686.

For additional information on safety and car seat recalls, contact your local Health Unit or Transport Canada at www.tc.gc.ca or 1-800-333-0371.