Every child under age 16 in the vehicle must use a safety restraint. If under age four, he or she must be properly secured in a federally-approved child safety seat that is attached to a vehicle by a safety belt or universal child restraint anchorage (LATCH) system. A child under age four who weighs more than 40 pounds may be restrained in a booster seat with a lap and shoulder belt. A child of age 4, 5, 6 or 7, must use a booster seat with lap and shoulder belt or a child safety seat (The child and safety restraint system must meet the height and weight recommendations of the restraint manufacturer.)

Exception: A child more than four feet nine inches tall or more than 100 pounds is allowed to use a seat belt that has both a lap belt and a shoulder harness. To use the seat belt, the child must be able to sit straight up against the vehicle's seat back with his or her knees bent comfortably over the edge of the seat. The lap belt should be placed low and tight across the upper thighs; the shoulder belt should rest tightly but comfortably across the child's chest and shoulder (collar bone) without touching the throat. If the seat belt does not fit properly, the child should use a booster seat with a lap and shoulder belt.

A booster seat can be used only with a lap and shoulder belt together. If all the combination lap and shoulder belt positions in the vehicle are already occupied by children using child safety seats or booster seats, a child who ordinarily would use a booster seat should be restrained using only the lap belt.

An appropriate child safety restraint system:

Is required for all children until their 8th birthday and must meet the size and weight requirements for the child based on the Federal requirements and the recommendations of the manufacturer, and can be a child safety seat, a harness, a vest or a booster seat attached with the vehicle seat belt or latch system, but not the vehicle seat belt alone, and should not be used in the front seat of the vehicle. If the child is eight years old and is under 4’9” tall or weighs less than 100 lbs, it is recommended that you continue to use a child restraint system.