

# Motoring Safety first

sponsored  
by

  
**A.A. CLARK**  
OF  
WINDSOR  
01753 800600  


■ **SECURE:** Don't take chances with your child's safety in the car.

2099/a

IT'S a horrifying fact. Each year hundreds of children are injured or killed in car accidents. Most happen near home at an average speed of just 22mph.

Research suggests that two out of three deaths or serious injuries could have been prevented if child restraints had been used and fitted correctly.

Around seven out of 10 child seats are not fitted correctly or used properly.

Car accessories suppliers Halfords give the following advice on fitting:

- Fit the seat firmly, there should be no excessive movement.

- Try different positions in the car or use a fitting kit to get the most secure fit.

- If your child seat is suitable, fit the seat in the middle as this is the safest place.

- Under NO circumstances should you use a child car safety seat in a front passenger seat that is equipped with an airbag.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) and child car seat manufacturers Britax give the following advice on using the child seat:

- Adjust the child's harness before every trip.

- The harness buckle has to be positioned as low as possible, to keep the lap sections of the harness across the pelvis – NOT on the vulnerable stomach.

- Secondhand child car seats should never be used.

*Next Monday sees the start of 'Child Safety Week'. Richard Hill takes a look at child safety in the car.*

Tempting as the price might be at a local car boot sale, there is no way of knowing how it has been used and whether it has already been in an accident.

Child restraints are divided into categories, according to the weight of the children for which they are suitable.

These correspond broadly to different age groups, but it is the weight of the child that is most important when deciding what type of child restraint to use.

All child restraints must conform to either a British Standard or a European Standard.

Unborn children are also at risk.

Pregnant women are offered the following advice by RoSPA:

- Always choose a lap and diagonal seatbelt rather than a lapbelt.

- Place the diagonal strap between the breasts and the lapbelt on the thighs, comfortably beneath the 'baby bump'. ■ Never try to cushion the impact by placing anything between you and the seatbelt.



This reduces the seatbelt's ability to protect you and your unborn baby.

A leaflet 'Are they sitting safely?' is available free of charge (SAB required) from The Information

Centre. RoSPA. 353 Bristol Road, Birmingham, B5 7ST. Telephone: 0121 248 2000 or call in to Halfords and ask for a copy of their free leaflet 'Child Car Safety – your questions answered'.