

SHOPPING for Car Safety Seats

The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests that you keep the following tips in mind when shopping for a car safety seat:

- **No one seat is the “best” or “safest.”** - The best seat is the one that fits your child’s age and size, is correctly installed, fits well in your vehicle, and can be used properly every time you drive.
- **Don’t decide by price alone.** A higher price does not mean the seat is safer or easier to use.
- **Avoid used seats if you don’t know the seat’s history. Never use a car seat that -**
 - **Is too old--** Look on the label for the date it was made. Check with the manufacturer to find out how long it recommends using the seat)
 - **Has any visible cracks**
 - **Does not have a label with the date of manufacture and model number.** Without these, you cannot check to see if the seat has been recalled.
 - **Does not come with instructions.** You need them to know how to use the seat.
 - **Is missing parts** - Used car safety seats often come without important parts and you need to check with the manufacturer to make sure you can get the right parts.
 - **Was recalled** - You can find out by calling the manufacturer or by contacting the **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Vehicle Safety Hotline** at 888/327-4236 or by visiting their web site at www;odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems/recalls/childseat.cfm.
- **Do not use seats that have been in a moderate or severe crash-**Seats that were in a minor crash may still be safe to use. The NHTSA considers a crash minor if all of the following are true:
 - The vehicle could be driven away from the crash.
 - The vehicle door closest to the car safety seat was not damaged.
 - No one in the vehicle was injured.
 - The air bags did not go off.
 - You can’t see any damage to the car safety seat.

If you are unsure of any of the information, call the manufacturer of the seat. (www.aap.org)

For more information on Child Passenger Safety in Tennessee, visit www.tntrafficsafety.org/childpassenger or contact your regional Child Passenger Safety Center .