

# FACT SHEET

## To harness or not to harness

# RACT

**Booster Seat with seat belt**



**Booster Seat with child safety harness**



**Recent Australian research has shown that a child safety harness offers no additional protection over a modern booster seat with a properly fitted lap/sash seatbelt.**

Recent changes to the Standard have also seen booster seats improve in design, now providing an excellent seatbelt fit.

Parents and caregivers should look for a booster seat that:

- holds the sash part of the seatbelt on the child's shoulder,
- holds the lap part low down across the hips, and
- provides good head protection.

Continue to use the booster seat until the child is tall enough to wear an adult seatbelt correctly.

**RACT data shows that around 80% of harnesses checked over the last year were incorrectly fitted, putting the child at greater risk of injury.**



High sides providing excellent side impact protection

Sash guide that positions seatbelt on shoulder

Lap guide that positions seatbelt low down on hips

However, a child safety harness may still be recommended when:

- there is only a lap belt available, or
- extra support is required for a child with disabilities.

Note: If your vehicle has a lap-only seatbelt it may be possible to replace it with a lap-sash seatbelt rather than use a harness. This would make it safer for everybody that sits there, including adults.

## What advice do you have if I do need to use a harness?

If a harness is required, it is recommended to only use it on a booster seat that features an antismarining buckle, such as the one below. The anti-submarining clip holds the lap part of the belt down low across the hips and doesn't allow the belt to be pulled up over the abdomen.

If you must use a child safety harness ensure that:

- the harness is compatible for use with the booster
- it is only used on a booster with an antismarining clip
- it is fitted in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- the lap part of the seatbelt is low and firm across the hips
- the shoulder straps of the harness are not overtightened
- the harness is fitted or checked by a restraint fitter to ensure that it is fitted and adjusted correctly
- the harness is checked for good fit each time that it is used.



Shoulder straps are not overtightened

Lap part is low and firm across hips

Anti-submarining buckle used

For more information on RACT Child Restraints contact RACT on 132 722, visit [www.ract.com.au](http://www.ract.com.au) or email [education@ract.com.au](mailto:education@ract.com.au)