# Fact Sheet To harness or not to harness



### **Booster Seat with seatbelt**



#### 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 now look for a booster seat that:

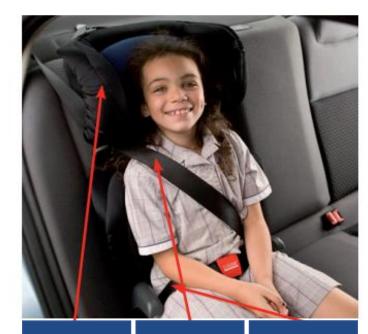
- holds the sash part of the seatbelt on the child's shoulder,
- holds the lap part low down across the hips, and
- provides good head protection.

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

Our data shows that around 80% of harnesses checked in previous years were incorrectly fitted, putting children at greater risk of injury.

## Booster Seat with child safety harness





High sides providing excellent side impact protection.

Sash guide that positions seatbelt on shoulder. Lap guide that positions seatbelt low down on hips.

### ract.com.au 13 27 22

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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 if may be possible to replace it with a lap-sash seatbelt rather than use a harness. This would make it easier 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 antisubmarining 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's only used on a booster with an antisubmarining clip
- it's 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's fitted and adjusted correctly, and
- the harness is checked for a good fit each time that it's used.

Shoulder straps are not overtightened.

Lap part is low and firm across hips.

Anti-submarining buckle used.

For more information on child restraints please call 13 27 22, visit ract.com.au or email child.restraints@ract.com.au