

# School Bus (LARGE + SMALL)

## Georgia Law:

- School buses are **exempt** from using Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS) based on Georgia law. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recommends that preschool age children on a school bus be secured in a CSRS if seat belts are available or an add-on seat.
- Not every CSRS will fit in school buses due to narrow spacing between seats.
- **No booster seats are allowed on a school bus.**

## Best Practice:

- Place preschool age children in CSRS.

**CAUTION: REAR-FACING CAR SEATS** – The limited spacing between van seats may not allow adequate space for proper installation due to the angle requirements. Refer to the car seat instructions for more information.

- All children age 5 and older should be in seat belts, if provided. Lap belts do not provide upper body protection, consider keeping the child in a CSRS appropriate for his or her height and weight (some CSRS have higher weight limits, 50+ lbs.).

**IF A SCHOOL BUS DID NOT COME FROM THE FACTORY EQUIPPED WITH LAP BELTS AND IT NOW HAS LAP BELTS, MAKE SURE THE LAP BELTS ARE INSTALLED ACCORDING TO THE MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS. IF UNSURE, OBTAIN THE VIN NUMBER, MAKE, MODEL OF THE SCHOOL BUS AND CONTACT THE MANUFACTURER.**

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For questions or more information contact the Child Occupant Safety Program

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Georgia Code 40-8-76 Child Restraint Requirements and 40-8-76.1 Seat Belts.

<https://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/gacode>, insert code number in search box to see additional exceptions.

Child Care Services – Rules, CCLC 591-1-1-.36(4)(f)1, FCCLH 290-2-3-.11(2)(j)



# Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS)

All Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS) **must be** used according to the CSRS and MFSAB instructions. **BOOSTER SEATS (High + Backless) cannot be used on a School Bus or a Multi-Function School Activity Bus (MFSAB).**



## 1. REAR-FACING ONLY CAR SEAT

Place the child in the seat. Harness straps should be **at or below** the shoulders and snug so that you cannot pinch the webbing together at the shoulders. The chest clip should be at **armpit level**. Install the seat at an angle, not more than 45 degrees from vertical, follow car seat instructions. Keep a child rear-facing until he/she has reached the **maximum weight or height limit** specified by the car seat manufacturer.

**BEST PRACTICE:** The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) & most car seat manufacturer's recommend keeping a child rear-facing until he/she is at least 2 years of age.



## 2. CONVERTABLE, REAR-FACING + FORWARD-FACING CAR SEAT

While Rear-facing same as # 1. Forward-facing at age 2. Place the child in the seat. The seat should be in **upright** position. Harness straps should be **at or above the shoulders** and snug so that you cannot pinch the webbing together at the shoulders. The chest clip should be at **armpit level**.

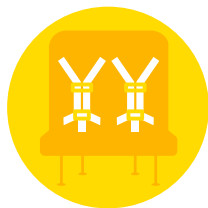
**BEST PRACTICE:** The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) & most car seat manufacturer's recommend keeping a child rear-facing until he/she is at least 2 years of age.



## 3. COMBINATION CAR SEAT, FORWARD-FACING + BOOSTER SEAT

Same as #2 for forward-facing. Place the child in the car seat in the **upright** position. Harness should be **at or above the shoulders** and snug so that you cannot pinch the webbing together at the shoulders. The chest clip should be at **armpit level**. Keep child in the car seat until he/she has reached the maximum weight or height limit or the **child's ears are above the top of the car seat**.

**CAUTION:** Do not use on a school bus or MFSAB without the harness.



## 4. BUILT-IN CHILD RESTRAINT (INTEGRATED SEATS)

Place the child in the integrated seat, the harness straps should be **at or above** the shoulders and snug so that you cannot pinch the webbing together at the shoulders. The chest clip should be at **armpit level**. Keep child in the seat until he or she has reached the **maximum weight or height limit** of the seat or the **child's shoulders are above the top harness slot** of the bus seat.

**IMPORTANT:** When an add-on seat is used (SafeGuard, STAR or BESI Pro-tech), the entire seat behind it must be empty or have another restrained child.\*\* The other restrained child could use a car seat, add-on seat or a seat belt.



## 5. ADD-ON SEATS – BESI PRO-TECH, SAFEGUARD STAR

Place the child in the integrated seat, the harness straps should be **at or above** the shoulders and snug so that you cannot pinch the webbing together at the shoulders. The chest clip should be at **armpit level**. Keep child in the seat until he or she has reached the **maximum weight or height limit** of the seat or the **child's shoulders are above the top harness slot** of the bus seat.

**IMPORTANT:** When an add-on seat is used (SafeGuard, STAR or BESI Pro-tech), the entire seat behind it must be empty or have another restrained child.\*\* The other restrained child could use a car seat, add-on seat or a seat belt.



## 6. LAP BELT ONLY

Lap belts do not provide upper body protection. As a result serious head, spine and/or neck injuries can occur. **BEST PRACTICE:** Consider keeping the child in a CSRS appropriate for his or her weight and height.

# Installation Tips and Things to Consider

## Multi-Function School Activity Bus (MFSAB)

- **Always** follow the Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS) instructions for use and installation.
- Install using the seat belt. Contact vehicle manufacturer if you have questions about how seat belts lock.
- Place the CSRS on vehicle/bus seat in the proper direction at the correct recline angle or upright position.
- Put the seat belt or lower anchor strap through the appropriate belt path for the direction of the seat. Convertible seats will have two paths, one for rear-facing and one for forward-facing.
- Buckle the seat belt. Place your hand in the CSRS seat and press the vehicle/bus seat cushion down and pull any slack out of the seat belt. Lock the seat belt. For forward-facing installations, follow instructions for use of tether-strap. An anchor may not be available on the MFSAB or school bus. Check for tightness after installation and before each use. Place hands on each side of the CSRS (near the belt path). There should be no more than 1 inch of side-to-side or forward movement at the belt path.
- Keep the child in the CSRS as long as possible, until the child outgrows the seat by weight or height.
- **WARNING!** A CSRS should never be installed at an emergency exit on a School Bus or Multi-function School Activity Bus (MFSAB).
- **Never** make changes to a CSRS to make it fit.
- All CSRS have labels on the seat with the manufacturer's contact information. **Always** register CSRS with the manufacturer either on-line or by mailing in the registration card. CSRS have expiration dates indicating when the CSRS should be replaced; expiration dates will vary by manufacturer.
- CSRS should **always** be purchased new and not from yard sales, consignment stores or thrift shops.
- If the CSRS has been involved in a crash, check with the CSRS manufacturer for guidelines on replacing the product.

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## Resources

### Multi-Function School Activity Bus

- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) – <http://www.nhtsa.gov/safety/cps>  
Installation videos, ease of use ratings, latest information
- NHTSA Consumer Advisory: 15 Passenger Van  
<https://www.nhtsa.gov/press-releases/consumer-advisory-nhtsa-reissues-15-passenger-van-safety-caution>
- The Ultimate Car Seat Guide, Safe Kids Worldwide – Practical Tips to Keep Kids Safe in Cars,  
<https://www.safekids.org/ultimate-car-seat-guide/>
- NHTSA – Guideline for Safe Transportation of Pre-School Age Children in School Buses  
February 1999, <http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/buses/guide1999/prekfinal.htm>
- NHTSA – School Bus Driver In-Service Safety Series – This refresher training provides 9 lesson modules on driving a school bus. <https://one.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/buses/updatedweb/index.html>
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) – [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org), click on Safety & Prevention for current recommendations, other helpful resources
- Safety Equipment – Multi-Function School Activity Bus (MFSAB) / School Bus
  - C E White – [www.cewhite.com](http://www.cewhite.com), integrated seats
  - Besi Inc. – [www.besi-inc.com](http://www.besi-inc.com), add-on seats
  - EZ On products – <http://ezonpro.com>
  - IMMI/Safeguard - <https://www.safeguardseat.com/>, adjustable lap/shoulder belts and other school bus information
- Georgia Code 40-8-76 Child Restraint Requirements and 40-86.1 Seat Belts  
<https://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/gacode>, type code number in search box to see additional exceptions.
- Recalls – [www.recalls.gov](http://www.recalls.gov)  
To provide better service in alerting the American people to unsafe, hazardous or defective products, six federal agencies with vastly different jurisdictions have joined together to create this sites as a one stop shop for U. S. Government recalls.
- National Child Passenger Safety Certification – A program of Safe Kids Worldwide <http://cert.safekids.org>
- Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety – [www.gohs.state.ga.us](http://www.gohs.state.ga.us)

**Trusted Internet Sources:** NHTSA • Safe Kids Worldwide or USA • GA Department of Public Health-Injury Prevention • American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) • Car Seat, Vehicle and School Bus Manufacturers • Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)

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