

Student Transportation Service Consortium of Grey-Bruce

Procedures

Bluewater District School Board
Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board

TCP-B006

Procedure Title: CAR SEATS AND HARNESSSES	Approved: June 3, 2013 Modified: June 27, 2014 January 6, 2016
Related Forms:	Related Policies:

Intent: To identify when a car seat or harness is needed.
Stakeholders: School, Bus Operators, Public, Transportation Consortium
Procedure: <u>A) Passenger Vehicles</u> On December 6, 2004 the Ontario Legislature passed Bill 73, An Act to Enhance the Safety of Children and Youth on Ontario's Roads. Car seats and booster seats are required in Passenger Vehicles with a seating capacity of less than 10 persons (non-chrome yellow school bus purpose vehicles) as follows: a) Rear facing car seats for passengers who: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weigh less than 9 kg (20 lbs). b) Forward facing car seats for passengers who: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weigh 9 kg or more but less than 18 kg (20-40 lbs). c) Booster seats for passengers who: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are under 8 years of age,• and weigh 18 kg or more but less than 36 kg (40-80 lbs),• and are less than 145 cm (4'9") tall. These criteria are the minimum under the Highway Traffic Act (HTA). It is recommended a child continue to use equipment beyond the minimum so long as they don't exceed the capacity of that equipment. Any booster or car seat that has been compromised in an accident will be replaced. Students exceeding the HTA age and size requirements for special equipment may require age and size appropriate special equipment for their safe transportation in a passenger vehicle as follows; d) Harnesses for passengers who: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• exceed the capacity of a car seat or booster seat, or have needs better served by a Harness• and who have physical or other needs,• and that parents, school, and/or other agency staff agree the safety of people riding in the vehicle would be improved with the use of a harness. The procurement of a harness requires a prescription from a regulated professional. <ol style="list-style-type: none">If the device is required due to a physical need (tone, posture, specific physical medical condition, etc) a referral should be made to the appropriate professional (Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, Physician/Nurse Practitioner, etc) to evaluate the student's need and obtain a prescription.If the device is required due to cognitive or other developmental limitations (Autism Spectrum) that would present a safety risk, parental assistance would be necessary to consult with their family practitioner for a prescription that states the device is essential.

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B) School Buses

The HTA makes an exception to the need for car seats and booster seats for vehicles not manufactured with seat belts; this exception includes school buses. Although not required by law, the special equipment defined in a) to d) above may be used in school buses where its use will increase the safety of those persons riding in the vehicle. The following are differences in the use of this equipment in a school bus;

- i) Harnesses should be used in place of forward facing car seats and booster seats where possible and appropriate. Rear facing car seats are required for students weighing less than 9 kg (20lbs) as that is the minimum weight for a harness.
- ii) The seat behind a car seat, booster seat, or harness in a school bus will remain empty.

C) Responsibilities

Parent

- Notify the School when the student grows out of a piece of equipment.
- Work with the School and other stakeholders in evaluating the need for equipment and obtaining necessary prescriptions for the procurement of equipment.
- Work co-operatively with the vehicle driver to ensure that the student is properly secured in any equipment.

School/Board/Consortium

- In consultation with parents and/or Occupational Therapists, schools will identify students requiring special transportation devices.
- Work with other stakeholders to confirm a need for the device. This should include the use of alternative strategies before pursuing the use of a car seat or harness not required by law.
- Student Services staff of each board will manage, order and distribute special equipment. Car seats, booster seats and other devices which are no longer needed should be sent back to the respective Board's office, marked to the attention of Student Services. Student Services will maintain an equipment database that tracks the life cycle of each piece of equipment. Equipment exceeding the manufacturers recommended expiry date will be replaced and discarded.
- The Consortium can assist with coordinating the availability of Vehicle Operator staff and/or equipment. The Route Planner for the school will be the point of contact to the Consortium.
- Board staff will conduct an annual review of a student's needs to determine if the student still requires the device for safe transportation.

Vehicle Operator

- Bus operators will work with board staff and Occupational Therapists to ensure equipment is installed to meet the needs of the individual student.
- It is, by law, the driver's responsibility to ensure a student is secured properly. Vehicle drivers, attendants, parents and school staff will work co-operatively together to ensure that the student is properly secured in any equipment.
- Provide their drivers with training on the proper installation of car and booster seats and on the proper usage of other equipment.
- Inspect the equipment twice annually. Check for torn belts and cracked or broken components.