Buckle Up! It's a wise idea

Never place rear-facing infant seats on the front passenger seat. With the child's back that close to the dash, serious injury or fatality could occur if the airbag deploys.

Booster seats can save lives! For children weighing from 40 to 80 pounds and less than 4’9” tall, they are an important safety measure. When your kids outgrow forward-facing safety seats, buckle them in a booster seat.

Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for proper installation and use of child safety seats.

Here are some important facts that you should know about seat belt safety:

The back seat is the safest seat for kids. Auto accidents are the leading cause of death of children 5 to 15 years of age. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has concluded that kids up to age 12 are safest riding in the back seat.

Full child passenger safety information including where to find Safety Seat Inspection Stations in your community is available on the NHTSA web site: www.nhtsa.gov

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPER CHILD SAFETY SEAT USE CHART</th>
<th>BUCKLE EVERYONE. CHILDREN AGE 12 AND UNDER IN BACK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INFANTS</strong></td>
<td><strong>TODDLER</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WEIGHT</strong></td>
<td>Birth to 1 year at least 20-22 Lbs.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TYPE OF SEAT</strong></td>
<td>Infant only or rear facing convertible.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SEAT POSITION</strong></td>
<td>Rear-Facing Only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALWAYS MAKE SURE:</strong></td>
<td>Children to one year and at least 20 Lbs in rear facing seats. Harness straps should be at or below shoulder level. Most seats require top slot for forward facing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WARNING</strong></td>
<td>All children age 12 &amp; under should ride in the back seat.</td>
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The Danger of Distractions

Anything that distracts you and makes you take your mind off your driving is a serious threat to your safety. Driving distractions, whether inside or outside of the car, cause more than 4,000 crashes a day! Here's how to keep the risk down to a minimum.

Don't adjust the controls on the dashboard while the car is in motion. Keep your eyes on the road.

Don't smoke, eat or drink while driving. The danger of flying ashes, spills and the complications of handling food or beverages while trying to operate a moving vehicle are sure invitations to disaster.

Do be aware at all times of the dangers present in talking on cell phones while driving. Pull over safely out of moving traffic if you must make a call.

Don't answer your phone if it rings while you are driving. It's safer to check your voice mail later or even miss the message rather than put yourself, your passengers and your vehicle at risk.

Do exercise control and keep your mind on the road while driving past outside distractions like auto accidents, police activities, malls, new construction and roadside billboards.
More than 5,000 teenagers die every year because of their inexperience, or from taking unnecessary risks, or due to driver distractions. Teenagers today need to be particularly aware of the following do’s and don’ts while either operating or riding in a vehicle:

**Do**
- Resolve to drive wisely and safely at all times.
- Be mindful that loud music is in itself a distraction to competent driving. Also, blaring music drowns out horns and other traffic noises you need to hear.
- Be aware that the more friends you pile into your car, the more distractions and more dangerous it is to operate your vehicle.
- Don’t wear headphones while driving. Remember you need to hear what’s happening in traffic as well as see what’s going on.

**Don’t**
- Stick your head or hands and arms out the window to say “Hi” to friends or to play other foolish games while driving.
- Change tapes, CD’s or radio stations while the car is in moving traffic.

Minimize the risks of the road. Always buckle-up and take care to eliminate dangerous distractions while driving. Remember these important keys to safety:

1. The backseat is the safest seat for all children. Be sure they’re buckled up in the back.
2. Booster seats help insure a safer ride. When a child outgrows the forward-facing safety seat but is still too small for a secure fit with a safety belt, use a booster seat before buckling up.
3. Using cell phones while driving is a very dangerous distraction. Dialing or simply conversing takes your mind off the road, many times with tragic results. Leave the phone alone while driving.
4. Rubbernecking while driving can be a danger to yourself, your passengers and other motorists. Keep your mind on the road.
5. Eating or drinking while driving is a dangerous distraction. Food and beverage spills can take your mind off the road long enough for very serious consequences.
6. Keep kids entertained with books and games to avoid squabbles or distracting conversations.
7. If you must smoke, don’t do it while driving. Pull over for that cigarette break.
8. Don’t use the rear view mirror for personal grooming while driving.

LAFAYETTE FIRE DEPARTMENT
“OUR FAMILY HELPING YOUR FAMILY”