

EMBARGOED UNTIL 12:01 A.M. ET, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2017

November 21, 2017

Contact: Jessica Jermakian +1 703 247 1582 (office) or +1 571 277 1856 (cell)

Russ Rader +1 703 247 1530 (office) or +1 202 257 3591 (cell)

VNR: TUES. 11/21/2017, 10:30-11 a.m. EST; repeat 1:30-2 p.m. EST (KU) GALAXY 17
SD transponder 19/slot 4 (dl12083H) bandwidth 6 MHz; symbol rate 3.9787 FEC ¾
HD transponder 19-lower (dl12071H) bandwidth 18 MHz; symbol rate 13.235 FEC ¾

13 out of 16 new boosters earn top rating of BEST BET

ARLINGTON, Va. — Thirteen out of 16 new booster seats for 2017 earn the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's highest rating of BEST BET, bringing the total number of boosters on the market with that designation to 118.

The BEST BET rating means a booster provides good safety belt fit for typical 4 to 8 year-olds in almost any car, minivan or SUV. Boosters that are rated GOOD BETs provide acceptable belt fit in almost any vehicle, while those rated Check Fit could work for some children in some vehicles. Seats designated "Not Recommended" don't provide good belt fit and should be avoided.

Three of the newly rated boosters are rated Check Fit. None are Not Recommended.

Only one current seat — the Safety 1st Summit 65 — is rated Not Recommended. Four others that had been were discontinued this year.

Vehicle safety belts are designed for adults, and the job of a booster is to make them fit a child. IIHS has been rating boosters since 2008 on their ability to provide good lap and shoulder belt fit.

IIHS strives to cover the entire U.S. booster market with its ratings. The 16 seats added this year are made up of 12 distinct models; four are rated twice because they are dual-use boosters that can be used either in highback or backless mode.

The 13 new BEST BETs (nine distinct models) range in price from about \$40 for the highback Cosco Finale and the backless Chicco GoFit to \$250 for the highback Maxi-Cosi RodiFix. Among booster seats currently on the market, the Harmony Youth Booster and the Diono Hip are the least expensive at \$13 each.

"You don't have to spend a lot of money to get a quality booster seat. Unlike more complicated harness-equipped restraints, a booster is a simple device that doesn't require any special features to do its job," says IIHS Senior Research Engineer Jessica Jermakian. "Boosters need to elevate the child and guide the lap belt so that it lies flat on the upper thighs and not up against the tummy and position the shoulder belt so that it fits snugly across the middle of the shoulder."

Booster seats are designed for children who have outgrown harness-equipped restraints. Children ages 4-8 are 45 percent less likely to sustain injuries in crashes if they are in boosters than if they are using safety belts alone.

Children should ride in boosters until a vehicle safety belt fits correctly by itself. For some kids, that doesn't happen until age 12 or so.



IIHS began its booster rating program after finding that many seats didn't consistently provide good belt fit. In the Institute's first booster ratings, only a quarter of the seats evaluated earned the BEST BET designation.

Ensuring that children are in the right kind of car seat for their age and size is a critical step for reducing highway deaths, which have been on the rise. Deaths of children ages 4 to 8 — the most common ages for booster users — rose to 13.8 per million children in 2016 from 11.5 in 2012. Deaths of children ages 9 to 12, many of whom still need boosters, rose to 12.4 per million children in 2016, compared with 9.7 in 2012.

New dummy simplifies booster evaluations

IIHS has begun using a new, specially designed dummy to evaluate booster seats. Dubbed Jasper, the dummy should make it easier for manufacturers to design seats that provide proper safety belt fit for young passengers.

Previously, the Institute has measured belt fit using a crash test dummy that represents a 6-year-old child. That dummy, known as the Hybrid III 6 year-old, is a complex tool designed for dynamic tests. Jasper — which stands for Juvenile Anthropomorphic Seat-belt Position Evaluation Rig — is cheaper and takes less time to produce. It's also easier to use and less prone to deterioration.

IIHS worked with Humanetics to develop Jasper, and the Michigan-based company manufactures and sells the new dummy. Like the Hybrid III 6 year-old, also made by Humanetics, the 45-pound Jasper represents a typical 6 year-old.

New booster models for 2017

BEST BETS

Chicco GoFit (backless)

Graco Wayz (backless mode)

Cosco Finale (highback)

Graco Wayz (highback mode)

Cosco Finale DX (highback)

Maxi-Cosi RodiFix (highback)

Diono Monterey XT (backless mode)

Nuna AACE (backless mode)

Diono Monterey XT (highback mode)

Nuna AACE (highback mode)

Evenflo Spectrum (backless mode)

Peg-Perego Viaggio Shuttle (backless)

Evenflo Spectrum (highback mode)

Check Fit

Harmony Folding Travel Booster (highback)

Ride Safer Delighter Booster (backless)

Kiddy Cruiser 3 (highback)

For more information, go to iihs.org

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) is an independent, nonprofit scientific and educational organization dedicated to reducing the losses — deaths, injuries and property damage — from motor vehicle crashes. IIHS is wholly supported by auto insurers.

