

February

### **Is your child in a booster seat?**

You may think a child who has outgrown a forward-facing car seat is ready for a seat belt, but this is not the case. Adult seat belt systems are not designed to fit a child. A child's hip bones are not developed enough to keep a seat belt properly in place. During a collision the lap belt can ride up onto a child's abdomen instead of sitting low across their hips. This can cause serious internal injuries.



Children often tuck the shoulder belt under their arm or behind their back because the shoulder belt touches their face or neck. This is also very dangerous because the upper body is not restrained. This can lead to a severe spinal cord or head injury.

A booster seat can significantly reduce these risks. A booster seat works with the existing seat belt system to raise a child so that the seat belt fits correctly across the shoulder, chest and hip bones. Booster seats provide 60 per cent more protection than seat belts alone and they substantially reduce the risk of serious injury.

In the fall of 2005, booster seats became required by law for children who weigh between 18-36 kg (40-80 lbs), are less than 145cm (4'9") or under eight years of age.

**For health-related information call York Region  
Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 or visit [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca)**