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# AAP News

## AAP releases interim guidance on safe transportation in vehicles as schools reopen

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**Editor's note:** *This guidance has been updated. Please visit <https://bit.ly/3CT5G6K>. AAP interim guidance is based on current evidence and best data at the time of publication. Updates are provided to reflect changes in knowledge about the impact of the disease on children and adolescents. For the latest news on COVID-19, visit <https://www.aappublications.org/news/2020/01/28/coronavirus>.*

New AAP interim guidance *COVID-19 and Safe Transportation in Motor Vehicles* offers direction on how to clean, disinfect and manage vehicle seating systems to mitigate the risk of SARS CoV-2 transmission.

The guidance, which links to supplementary information, applies to families, schools, child care programs, social service agencies and others who transport children. Recommendations should be considered based on transmission of the virus in a community.

While implementing the guidance may increase costs for schools and other organizations, the AAP "strongly advocates for financial support from federal, state and local governments to ensure that programs can operate as safely as possible."

Children should ride properly restrained in the appropriate car safety seat, belt-positioning booster, travel vest or seat belt on every trip in every vehicle regardless of the form of transportation. Restraint devices may not be required on public transit buses or for older children on school buses.

### Reducing risk of infection

The guidance and supplement offer detailed information on safe transportation and cleaning related to the following areas:



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- carriers transporting multiple children in school buses, child care vans and other vehicles;
- guidance for families;
- transportation of children with special needs;
- general guidance for the management of seating systems; and
- riding on public transit.

In general, routine cleaning is appropriate if only one person uses a car safety seat or seat belt and the individual does not have COVID-19 symptoms.

If a child is suspected of having COVID-19 or tests positive for SARS-CoV-2, the car safety seat or harness should be removed if possible and not used for a few days. After that period, the equipment should be cleaned and returned to service. Proper personal protective equipment techniques as [outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) should be used when removing any occupant restraint systems from vehicles.

In buses and other passenger vehicles, the vehicle seat usually can be disinfected. Because seat belts cannot be disinfected, no one should use the seat for a few days.

**Secondary spread** of SARS-CoV-2 is possible if an infected child coughs, sneezes, drools or chews on harnesses and seat belts and other passengers touch those surfaces.

While the CDC **recommends disinfection** with an Environmental Protection Agency-registered disinfectant, in most cases, car safety seats and seat belts can be cleaned *only with mild detergent and water*. Chemicals in disinfectants can degrade the products, which might compromise their performance in a crash.

Caregivers should take added precautions to help prevent transmission of the virus through use of physical/social distancing, cloth face coverings and hand hygiene.

## Resources

- [AAP interim clinical guidance on COVID-19](#)
- [Information from the CDC for health care professionals about COVID-19](#)
- [HealthyChildren.org article, "Travel safety during the COVID-19 pandemic"](#)