

No lap kids please!

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Yes, yes, most of us are the healthy product of days gone by where car seats and seat belts didn't exist. However, thanks to modern technology and research we now have the means to protect our children more safely.

You've seen it. Your friends and neighbors leisurely driving through Mineo, Maranai and 205 housing with their small children (or infants) on their lap. Often, these children are even on the laps of the driver! Statistics show that most accidents occur less than five miles from your home and at speeds less than 25 miles per hour. Realizing that the speed limit in housing is much below this and that "you're being careful", consider this:

- A small child runs out into the street from behind a parked car and you must brake
- A stray dog or cat runs into the street in front of you and you must brake
- Your air bag malfunctions and deploys upon quickly braking

Where does your child go in these instances? Into the dashboard, steering wheel or windshield. How far away is the base ambulance? 30-45 minutes.

Many people new to Sigonella quickly learn how to drive like the locals; with increased speed, a lot of luck and much prayer. Unfortunately, we also become too complacent with our children's safety and do not properly install car seats, booster seats or even use seatbelts. In the words of a former Navy pilot who's son was permanently brain damaged from an airbag, "You can't get those 30 seconds back".

MANDATORY USE OF CARSEATS AND HELMETS

**FOR THE CHILDREN WE LOVE, BE SMART,
AND DO THE RIGHT THING!**

LEAVE YOUR IGNORANCE AT HOME!

**CARSEATS, SEATBELTS AND HELMETS SAVE LIVES!
SMOKING DOES NOT!**

REAR FACI NG-20 lbs AND one year.

- straps at or below shoulders
- never in front with airbag

STANDARD CARSEAT-4 years AND 40 lbs.

- straps at or above shoulders

BOOSTER SEAT-8 years AND 60-80 lbs.

*carseats should move less than one inch in any direction

*tighten straps firmly, remove outer bulky clothing.

*center buckle should be at armpit level.

**smoking in the car, even without the child present, increases childhood morbidity and the risk of ear infections, prolonged colds, and SI DS.

For more info: USNH Pediatric Dept, NASSIG Safety Dept, WWW.NHTSA.DOT.GOV

Please buckle up and put your children in their proper place in the car; the car seat. If you have questions or concerns about the proper placement of your car seat please contact the Naval Hospital Sigonella Pediatric Department.