



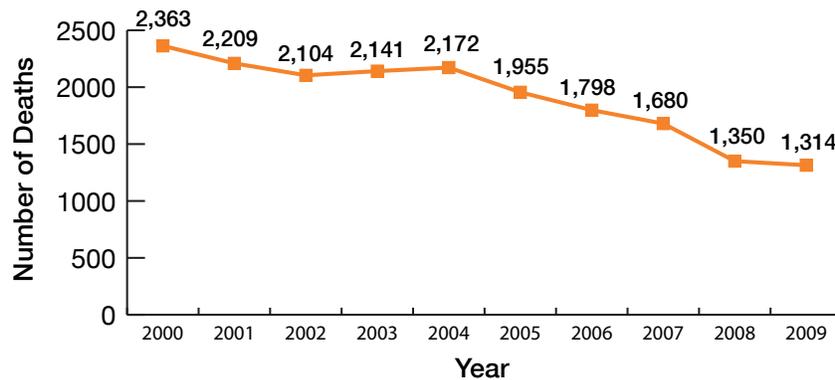
Motor Vehicle Safety



Key Facts

- Since 2000, an average of approximately 1,900 children ages 14 and under have died in a motor vehicle-related incident each year.
- In 2009, 1,314 children ages 14 and under died in a motor vehicle-related incident as occupants, pedestrians and cyclists.
- In 2009, more than 179,000 children were nonfatally injured in motor vehicle-related incidents.
- In 2008, motor vehicle crashes were the leading cause of injury-related death to children ages 1 to 14 and the second leading cause of injury-related death for children under 1 year of age.

2000-2009 Unintentional Motor Vehicle-Related Deaths Among Children
(United States, Ages 14 and Under)



- In 2008, 968 child occupants ages 14 and under died in motor vehicle crashes.
- Since 2001, an average of 227,000 children ages 14 and under were nonfatally injured in motor-vehicle related incidents each year.
- From 2002 to 2008, restraint use decreased from 88 percent to 87 percent for children ages 8 and under.
- In 2009, 309 children under age 5 were saved due to restraint use.
- Among child passenger deaths in 2009, 31 percent of children under age 4 and 42 percent of children ages 4 to 7 were unrestrained.
- When installed and used correctly, child safety seats and safety belts can prevent injuries and save lives. Child safety seats can reduce fatal injury by up to 71 percent for infants and 54 percent for toddlers (ages 1 to 4).
- Children are more likely to be properly restrained when the driver is properly restrained.

Who

- Approximately 55 percent of fatal crashes occur in rural settings. Crashes in rural areas tend to be more severe.
- African American children ages 8 to 12 have the lowest restraint use among children; an estimated 28 percent are not restrained while riding in a motor vehicle.

- From 1990 through 2008, it is estimated that airbag deployment caused 290 deaths. More than 90 percent of passenger deaths associated with airbag deployment were among children and infants; most of these children and infants were unbelted or in rear-facing child safety seats that placed their head too close to the airbag in a front seat.
- Of children ages 14 and under who were killed in a motor vehicle crash, 14 percent were killed in crashes that involved alcohol impairment.
- Children 2 to 5 years of age using safety belts prematurely are four times more likely to suffer a serious head injury in a crash than those restrained in child safety seats or booster seats.

Costs

- In 2005, motor vehicle-related fatalities among children ages 14 and under resulted in total lifetime injury costs of almost \$3 billion. Nonfatal hospitalization resulted in a total lifetime injury cost of approximately \$2.5 billion.
- In the U.S., a \$52 child safety seat generates on average \$2,200 in benefits to society.
- A \$35 booster seat generates \$2,500 in benefits to society.

Proven Interventions

- Ensure that every occupant is properly restrained for every ride. Children should ride in a back seat until they are at least 13 years of age. A recent study found that almost 99 percent of child seats are installed in a back seat.
- Children should ride in a car seat as long as possible, as long as the child is within the height and weight requirements described by the manufacturer. Always follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Children should ride in rear-facing child safety seats as long as possible. They should remain in a rear-facing child seat until they are at least 2 years of age or reach the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer of the child safety seat.
- Children ages 2 or older, or those who have outgrown their rear-facing safety seat, should ride in a forward-facing car seat for as long as possible. Many of these seats can accommodate children up to 65 or 80 pounds.
- Children should remain in a forward-facing car seat until they reach the upper height or weight limit specified by the manufacturer. Once beyond the height or weight limit of a forward-facing car seat, a child should ride in a booster seat until an adult seat belt fits properly.
- Children no longer require the booster seat when a seat belt fits correctly—the adult lap belt must lie snugly across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt must lie snugly across the shoulder and chest (usually when a child is approximately 4'9" and between 8 and 12 years of age).
- Return the product registration card provided for all new child safety seats to the manufacturer to ensure you will be notified of any recalls.
- Check www.recalls.gov to inquire about recalls or safety notices on child safety seats. Avoid purchasing safety seats from yard sales, flea markets and second hand stores or when there is no known history of the seat. A recent study found that more than 90 percent of people knew the history of their car seat and whether it had previously been involved in a crash.
- In some child seats, a top tether can be used for added safety. A 2011 study found that only 28 percent of forward facing car seats installed in vehicles used the top tether.

Child Restraint System Effectiveness

- Child safety seats reduce fatal injury by 71 and 54 percent, respectively, for infants and toddlers in passenger cars.
- Compared to seat belts, the use of child safety seats reduces the risk of injury among young children by 71 to 82 percent and fatal injury by 28 percent.
- Among children ages 4 to 8, the use of booster seats reduces the risk of nonfatal injury by 45 percent compared to seat belts.
- The overall critical misuse for child restraints is about 73 percent. Infant seats have the highest percent of critical misuse, followed by rear-facing convertible seats.

Laws and Regulations

- All 50 states and the District of Columbia have child occupant protection laws, which vary widely in their age requirements, exemptions, enforcement procedures and penalties.
- Child booster seat laws have been enacted in 47 states and the District of Columbia, which require older child passengers to be properly secured in a child safety seat.
- Thirty states and the District of Columbia have primary enforcement seat belt laws, meaning that a law enforcement officer can stop a vehicle and issue a citation solely for a violation of the seat belt law.