2003 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT PROTECTION


Young Adults

The National Scope of Motor Vehicle Crashes
How To Use This Occupant Protection Booklet

## THE NEED TO PROMOTE OCCUPANT RESTRAINT USE FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND 16- TO 20-YEAR-OLDS

Adult Safety Belt Use Makes a Difference
Exhibit 1: Driver and Child Restraint Use in Fatal Crashes Involving
Children From Birth to 15 Years of Age
Occupant Restraints for All Age Groups Save Lives
Closing the Gaps in Occupant Restraint Laws Can Save Young Lives
Primary Enforcement Laws Help Protect Children of All Ages
Exbibit 2: States With Primary and Secondary Safety Belt Laws
Booster Seat Use Saves Lives and Reduces the Risk of Injury
FACTS ABOUT CHILDREN AND YOUTH
Facts About Restraint Use
Facts About Motor-Vehicle-Related Deaths and Injuries

## FACTS ABOUT YOUNG ADULTS AGES 16 TO 20

Facts About Safety Belt Use
Facts About Motor-Vehicle-Related Deaths and Injuries
Self-Reported Behavior, Attitudes, and Opinions on Safety Belt Use
Safety Belt Use Behavior
Attitudes Toward Safety Belt Use
Opinions About Safety Belt Use Laws
APPENDICES
Appendix A: Persons Killed in Motor Vehicle Crashes, by State and Age Group, 2003
Appendix B: Passenger Vehicle Occupants Killed in Motor Vehicle Crashes, by State and Restraint Use, 2003
Appendix C: State Child Restraint Laws

## FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## CHARTS

Chart 1: Occupant Fatalities in 2003, By Age and Restraint Use, In Passenger Vehicles
Cbart 2: Occupant Fatality and Injury Rates, 1994-2003, Per 100 Million VMT, In Passenger Vehicles
Cbart 3: Occupant Fatalities in 2003, By Age, In Passenger Vehicles
Cbart 4: Occupants Injured in 2003, By Age, In Passenger Vehicles
Cbart 5: Occupant Fatalities in 2003, By Age and Ejection Status, In Passenger Vebicles
Cbart 6: Occupant Fatalities in 2003, By Age and Restraint Use, In Passenger Vebicles
Chart 7: Occupants Injured in Passenger Vehicles 2004, by Age and Injury Severity
Chart 8: Percentage of All Occupants Killed or Injured in 2003, By Age, In Passenger Vehicles
Chart 9: Occupant Fatality Rates Per 100,000 Population in 2003, By Age, In Passenger Vehicles
Chart 10: Percentage of Driver Fatalities Among 16- to 20-Year-Olds, In Which Driver Was Unrestrained, 1994-2003, In Passenger Vehicles
Chart 11: Driver Fatality Rates Per 100,000 Licensed Drivers in 2003, By Age and Gender, In Passenger Vehicles
Chart 12: Driver Injury Rates Per 100,000 Licensed Drivers in 2003, By Age and Gender, In Passenger Vehicles


Throughout the United States, many people and organizations have worked to promote motor vehicle occupant protection for children, youth, and young adults. In spite of the great strides made, thousands of young people, from newborns through age 20 , continue to die or experience serious injuries that could have been prevented had they been properly restrained in a child safety seat, booster seat, or safety belt.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has developed this booklet to provide information supporting the ongoing need for legislative, enforcement, education, and public awareness activities promoting occupant protection for children, youth, and young adults. Collectively, this information illustrates the national imperative for addressing motor vehicle crashes as the leading cause of death and injury for children and youth in the United States.

As a resource for occupant protection advocates, this booklet focuses on passenger vehicles. The majority of data in this fact book are from 2003, which was the most recent year data was available at press time, and are generated from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) and the General Estimates System (GES) produced by the National Center for Statistics and Analysis at NHTSA.

## The National Scope of Motor Vehicle Crashes

In 2003, police filed reports on about 6.3 million traffic crashes. The police reports indicated that some 2.9 million people were injured, 42,643 people were killed, and property damage was sustained in about 4.3 million of these crashes. ${ }^{1}$

The economic cost of motor vehicle crashes (police-reported as well as non-reported crashes) that occurred in 2000 totaled $\$ 230.6$ billion. ${ }^{2}$ In 2003, safety belt nonuse in crashes caused an estimated $\$ 18$ billion in economic costs to society. ${ }^{3}$ When vehicle occupants do not wear safety belts, the potential costs increase because unbelted crash victims often sustain more severe injuries and more fatalities than belted crash victims. On average, hospital costs for unbelted crash victims are more than 50 percent higher than belted crash victims. ${ }^{4}$

[^0]
## In 2003, safety belt nomuse in crashes caused an estimated $\$ 18$ billion in economic costis to society.

In 2003, a total of 17,986 ( $56 \%$ ) passenger vehicle occupants who were killed in a crash were reported not to have used a safety belt or child safety seat. Chart 1 compares the percentage of fatally injured occupants who were restrained to those who were unrestrained in passenger vehicle crashes. ${ }^{5}$

Chart 1 Occupant Fatalities in 2003 By Age and Restraint Use, in Passenger Vehicles


[^1]
## Using this Booklet as a Resource

The facts contained in this booklet can be used to develop speeches and presentations, public information and education publications, backgrounders, and news releases for the media, and to promote the use of occupant restraints in conjunction with law enforcement officials. States and local communities have an important role to play in creating a national norm that makes it unacceptable to ride unrestrained in a motor vehicle. Our national goal must be to make occupant restraint use a lifelong habit for everyone.

The booklet is divided into three main sections. The first section presents general information on the need for and importance of promoting occupant restraint use for children, youth, and young adults. Most of the data and discussion in the document refer to these groups according to the following ages:
> Children: newborns to age 7
$>$ Youth: 8 to 15 (in some States 15 -year-olds are permitted to obtain a learner's permit, so they are sometimes included as "young drivers")
$>$ Young adults: 16 to 20
The next section provides occupant protection facts specific to children and youth, followed by facts for young adults. The last section includes survey findings from NHTSA's 2003 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey on self-reported behavior, attitudes, and opinions about safety belt use and laws. This biennial telephone survey measures consumers' attitudes and opinions about occupant protection.

## Definitions

As you review the data that follow, keep in mind the following general definitions:

Fatal Crasb: A police-reported crash involving a motor vehicle in which at least one person dies within 30 days of the crash (includes the deaths of individuals who were not in the vehicle, such as pedestrians and pedalcyclists)

Injury Crash: A police-reported crash involving a motor vehicle in which no one died but at least one person was reported to have (1) an incapacitating injury, (2) a visible but not incapacitating injury, (3) a possible but not visible injury, or (4) an injury of unknown severity.

Passenger Vehicles: Includes all cars, SUVs, vans up to 15-passenger capacity, and light trucks (under 10,000 lbs. gross vehicle weight rating) including pickups and truck-based station wagons. Motorcycles, buses, and large trucks (more than 10,000 lbs. GVWR) are not included in this category.

"The premature graduation of young children from child restraint systems to safety belts puts them at a greatly increased risk of significant injury in crashes."

## Youth

"In some States, a 10-year-old can ride legally in the back seat without being secured because the child is not covered by either the child restraint law or the safety belt law."

## Young Adults <br> है

"Sixty-three percent of the young adults who were killed when riding in passenger cars in 2003 were not wearing safety belts."

# THE NEED TO PROMOTE OCCUPANT RESTRAINT USE FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH 

> There is a strong positive correlation between the restraint use of an adult driver and that of young cbildren in the vebicle.

Thousands of children and young adults continue to be killed and injured in motor vehicle crashes. A total of 7,034 children and youth from birth to age 20 were killed and approximately 700,000 were injured in passenger vehicle crashes in 2003. Despite widespread public education campaigns promoting the use of proper occupant restraints, nearly 50 percent of children 4 to 7 and 66 percent of children 8 to 15 who were killed in passenger vehicle crashes in 2003 were unrestrained. Charts 3 and 4 illustrate the toll that motor vehicle crashes take on our children and youth, particularly among those 16 to 20.

Chart 3 Occupant Fatalities in 2003
By Age, in Passenger Vehicles


Chart 4 Occupant Injured in 2003
By Age, in Passenger Vehicles


## Adult Safety Belt Use Makes a Difference

Research conducted by NHTSA on occupant protection use from 1994 to 2003 confirms there is a strong positive correlation between the restraint use of an adult driver and that of young children in the vehicle. Among fatally injured children from birth to 15 , the research revealed the following:
$>$ The probability of being unrestrained was nearly four times greater for infants and toddlers when the child was with an unrestrained driver, versus being with a restrained driver.

- When drivers were unrestrained, 63 percent of children up to age 3 were also unrestrained; conversely, when a driver was wearing a safety belt, 25 percent of children up to 3 were unrestrained.
> Among fatally injured children 4 to 7, 80 percent were unrestrained when the driver was unrestrained; conversely, when the driver was wearing a safety belt, 35 percent of children 4 to 7 were unrestrained.
$>$ Among fatally injured children 8 to 15, 90 percent were unrestrained when the driver was unrestrained. Conversely, when the driver was wearing a safety belt, 45 percent of children 8 to 15 were unrestrained.

Exbibit 1 illustrates the relationship between driver and child restraint use in crashes in which a child was fatally injured.

Exhibit 1 Driver and Child Restraint Use in Fatal Crashes Involving Children from Birth to 15, 1994-2003

| Percentage of Child Passengers Unrestrained, <br> by Age Group |  |  |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | $<\mathbf{4}$ | $\mathbf{4 - 7}$ | $\mathbf{8 - 1 5}$ |
| Driver Unrestrained | $63 \%$ | $80 \%$ | $90 \%$ |
| Driver Restrained | $25 \%$ | $35 \%$ | $45 \%$ |

This strong association between parental and child restraint use speaks to the importance of maintaining ongoing programs and outreach for children, youth, and parents to encourage the use of occupant restraints. NHTSA's 2003 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey (MVOSS) further illustrates this need. In the 2003 MVOSS, researchers asked respondents their level of agreement with the statement, "I have a habit of wearing a seat belt because my parents insisted I wear them when I was a child." Among people 16 to 24, 69 percent either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed with this statement.

## Occupant Restraints for All Age Groups Save Lives

Most of the people who die in motor vehicle crashes are vehicle occupants (less than one-fourth of fatalities caused by crashes involve pedestrians, pedalcyclists, and motorcyclists). Safety belts and child safety seats have been designed to protect drivers and passengers from death and injury during a crash. But these restraints cannot save lives if they are not used. See Appendix B—Passenger Vehicle Occupants Killed in Motor Vehicle Crashes, by State and Restraint Use, 2003.
> In 2003, child restraints saved the lives of 446 children age 4 and under.
$>$ Child safety seats are 71 percent effective in reducing fatalities among infants (less than 1-year-old) and 54 percent effective for toddlers (1- to 4 -years-old) in passenger cars. ${ }^{6}$ For infants and toddlers in light trucks, the effectiveness in reducing fatalities is 58 percent and 59 percent, respectively.
Among passenger vehicle occupants over 4 years old, safety belts saved an estimated 14,903 lives in 2003.
$>$ Booster seat use substantially reduces the risk of injury for children 4 - to 8 -years-old; however, most children in this age group are currently (and very often incorrectly) restrained by safety belts designed for adults. A recent study by Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) found that the use of beltpositioning booster seats lowers the risk of injury to children in crashes by 59 percent, compared with the use of vehicle safety belts. ${ }^{7}$
$>$ According to NHTSA's The Economic Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes 2000, the use of safety belts saved society $\$ 585$ billion in medical care, lost productivity, and other injuryrelated economic costs (since 1975).
$>$ When lap/shoulder safety belts are used properly, they reduce the risk of fatal injury to front-seat occupants riding in passenger cars by 45 percent and the risk of moderate-to-critical injury by 50 percent. For light-truck front-seat occupants, safety belts reduce the risk of fatal injury by 60 percent and the risk of moderate-to-critical injury by 65 percent. ${ }^{8}$

[^2]$>$ Ejection from passenger vehicles is one of the most harmful events that can happen to people during a crash. In passenger vehicle crashes in which someone died in 2003, 74 percent of occupants who were completely ejected from the vehicle were killed. Safety belts are effective in preventing total ejections. In 2003, in crashes in which someone was killed, only 1 percent of the occupants using restraints were totally ejected, compared with 29 percent of unrestrained occupants.
$>$ Nearly 30 percent of 16 - to 20 -year-old occupant fatalities were ejections, compared with 22 percent for the general population, illustrating the need to promote safety belt use in this age group. See Chart 5 .

Chart 5 Occupant Fatalities in 2003
By Age and Ejection Status, in Passenger Vehicles


## Closing the Gaps in Occupant Restraint Laws Can Save Young Lives

Every State except New Hampshire has adult safety belt laws and all States have child restraint laws requiring drivers to restrain children in approved, age-appropriate child restraint devices or safety belts. In some States, though, these laws do not cover all occupants in all seating positions (rear seats).

In some States, laws concerning the use of child restraint devices cover children only up to age 4 , and laws concerning the use of adult safety belts cover only front-seat occupants, leaving some children uncovered by any occupant protection law. For example, in some States, a 10 -year-old can ride legally in the back seat without being secured because, at this age and in this seating position, the child is not covered by either the child restraint law or the general (front-seat-only) safety belt law. Appendix C contains information on State child restraint laws.

## Primary Enforcement Laws Help Protect Children of All Ages

Although child restraint laws are "primary" laws (laws that allow law enforcement officers to stop vehicles and issue citations for unrestrained drivers or passengers), the safety belt laws in many States are "secondary" enforcement laws. This means that police officers cannot stop drivers for the sole purpose of enforcing the use of occupant restraints. Rather, police officers can write tickets for not using occupant restraints only if they stop vehicles for another driving infraction. See Exbibit 2 for a map of States with primary and secondary laws that were enacted at the time of this publication.

## Booster Seat Use Saves Lives and Reduces the Risk of Injury

In 2003, 51 percent of 4 - to 7 -year-old passenger vehicle occupants who were killed in crashes were restrained. Persuading parents to place their children in any kind of occupant restraint would undoubtedly reduce the number of children killed or seriously injured. In addition, children who have outgrown child safety seats, but are too small to ride safely in adult belts, should be properly restrained in booster seats until they are at least 8 years old, unless they are 4 feet 9 inches tall. If placed in adult safety belts prematurely, children can suffer serious internal injuries, slip out of the safety belt, or be ejected from the vehicle during a crash.

Booster seat use substantially reduces the risk of injury for children 4 to 8 ; however, most children in this age group are currently restrained by safety belts designed for adults. In the 2002 study by Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), only 16 percent of 4 -year-olds, 13 percent of 5 -year-olds, and 4 percent of 6 - and 7 -year-olds were using booster seats. ${ }^{9}$

The CHOP study found that the use of belt-positioning booster seats lowers the risk of injury to children in crashes by 59 percent compared with the use of vehicle safety belts. The study also found that none of the 4 - to 7 -year-olds who were in beltpositioning booster seats had any injuries to the abdomen, neck, spine, or back. Yet, such injuries did occur in children who used safety belts alone. ${ }^{9}$

Children who are 4 feet 9 inches tall before their 8th birthday may be ready for adult belts. They can start using safety belts when they can place their backs firmly against the vehicle seatback cushion with their knees bent over the vehicle seat cushion.

As this booklet is published, 38 States and the District of Columbia had enacted provisions in their child restraint laws requiring the use of a booster seat or other appropriate restraint device by children who have outgrown their forward-facing child safety seats, but who are still too small to use an adult safety belt system correctly. The following jurisdictions have enacted these lifesaving provisions: Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming. See Exhibit 2 for a map of States that mandate booster seats or appropriate restraint use by older passengers. A number of other States are considering legislation that would require similar upgrades for booster-seatage child passengers. For up-to-date information on booster seats and State laws visit www.boosterseat.gov.

Exhibit 2 States With Primary and Secondary Safety Belt Laws, 2003


[^3]
## FACTS ABOUT CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for every age from 3 to $33 .{ }^{10}$ Although the fatality rate has decreased, the total number of child occupant deaths is still high. This is due to population increases (children up to age 14 represented about 21 percent of the population, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2003 American Community Survey) and a near doubling, over the past 20 years, of the number of miles Americans travel on our roadways.

## Facts About Restraint Use

$>$ In 2003, the use of child restraints saved the lives of an estimated 446 children age 4 and under.
$>$ During 2003, a total of 1,794 children from birth to age 15 were killed in passenger vehicle crashes. About 54 percent of passenger vehicle occupants in this age group were unrestrained. The breakdown by age group is:
$\checkmark 35$ percent of children from birth to 4 were unrestrained;
$\checkmark 55$ percent of children 5 to 9 were unrestrained, and
$\checkmark 68$ percent of children 10 to 15 were unrestrained.
$>$ Of the 471 occupant fatalities among children from birth to age 4 in 2003, more than 30 percent were unrestrained.
$>$ If 100 percent of motor vehicle occupants younger than age 5 had been protected by child safety seats, an estimated 550 lives (an additional 106 more lives than already were saved) could have been saved in 2003.
$>$ From 1975 through 2003, an estimated 7,020 lives of children age 4 and under were saved by the use of occupant restraints (this includes child safety seats and safety belts).

[^4]
## In 2003, the use of child restraints saved an estimated 446 lives:

Chart 6 shows data on the use and nonuse of occupant restraints among those killed in passenger vehicle crashes in 2003. In most age groups except the youngest (4 and under) and the oldest ( 65 and older) the majority of occupants who were killed were not restrained. Unfortunately, being properly restrained cannot prevent all passengers from being fatally injured, especially in certain high-impact crashes. However, a certain and higher percentage of occupants in all age groups would not have been killed had they been properly restrained.

There is a significant decrease in restraint use among the 5 -to9,10 -to-15, and 16-to-20 age groups (when compared to the 4 and under age group). This decrease illustrates the critical need for public information and education about the importance of restraint use, along with the need for ongoing enforcement of existing laws.

When viewing the chart, keep in mind that even with the use of occupant restraints:

Some crashes are so severe that occupants do not survive even when properly protected by a child safety seat, booster seat, or safety belt.
> There are instances in which the effectiveness of a child restraint or safety belt is compromised by incorrect use, such as improper installation or use of a child safety seat, or placing a child in an adult belt.

Occupants in the youngest age group, 4 and under, and oldest age group, 65 and older, are more fragile. Therefore, they are more vulnerable to death or serious injury during a crash.

In many States, there is no law requiring the use of appropriate occupant restraints (booster seats) for children who have outgrown their child safety seats but who do not yet fit properly in adult belt systems. As a result, many young children are inappropriately placed in adult belts.

Chart 6 Occupant Fatalities in 2003
By Age and Restraint Use, in Passenger Vehicles

| Age Group | Restrained | Percent <br> Restrained | Unrestrained | Percent <br> Unrestrained | Total | Total <br> Percent |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $0-4$ | 305 | 65 | 166 | 35 | 471 | 100 |
| $5-9$ | 178 | 45 | 213 | 55 | 391 | 100 |
| $10-15$ | 303 | 32 | 629 | 68 | 932 | 100 |
| $16-20$ | 1,945 | 37 | 3,295 | 63 | 5,240 | 100 |
| $21-24$ | 1,205 | 34 | 2,334 | 66 | 3,539 | 100 |
| $25-44$ | 3,440 | 36 | 6,104 | 64 | 9,544 | 100 |
| $45-64$ | 3,050 | 47 | 3,387 | 53 | 6,437 | 100 |
| $65-74$ | 1,285 | 62 | 803 | 38 | 2,088 | 100 |
| $75+$ | 2,136 | 67 | 1,070 | 33 | 3,206 | 100 |
| Total | 13,885 | 44 | 18,019 | 56 | 31,904 | 100 |

## Facts About Motor-Vehicle-Related Deaths and Injuries

Based on the 10-year period between 1994 and 2003, an average of 1,983 children from birth to age 15 died and 294,000 were injured in passenger vehicle crashes each year.

In 2003, an average of almost 5 children ( 4.92 children) from birth to 15 were killed and 663 were injured every day in motor vehicle crashes.

In 2003, a total of 1,794 children 15 and younger were killed and 242,000 were injured in passenger vehicle crashes. Nine percent of the injured occupants had incapacitating injuries.

In 2003, there were 471 crash fatalities and 59,000 injured among children 4 and under.

In 2003, there were 1,323 crash fatalities and 183,000 occupants injured among children 5 to 15.

Cbart 7 highlights facts about injury severity. In 2003, more than 80,000 children, youth, and young adults from birth to 20 suffered incapacitating injuries in passenger vehicle crashes.

Chart 7 Occupants Injured in Passenger Vehicles 2003
By Age and Injury Severity

| Age Group | Injury Severity |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Incapacitating |  | NonIncapacitating |  | Possible Injury |  | Injured Severity Unknown |  | Total |  |
|  | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent |
| <5 | 4,675 | 8 | 12,884 | 22 | 40,657 | 69 | 606 | 1 | 58,822 | 100 |
| 5-9 | 5,892 | 8 | 17,868 | 25 | 46,281 | 66 | 485 | 1 | 70,525 | 100 |
| 10-15 | 10,414 | 9 | 32,009 | 29 | 67,904 | 61 | 1,638 | 1 | 111,965 | 100 |
| 16-20 | 48,842 | 11 | 145,279 | 32 | 258,771 | 57 | 4,155 | 1 | 457,047 | 100 |
| 21-24 | 30,548 | 10 | 83,666 | 29 | 174,589 | 60 | 3,693 | 1 | 292,496 | 100 |
| 25-44 | 86,514 | 9 | 235,390 | 26 | 588,512 | 64 | 10,192 | 1 | 920,608 | 100 |
| 45-64 | 54,856 | 10 | 128,354 | 24 | 342,685 | 65 | 5,348 | 1 | 531,244 | 100 |
| 65-74 | 11,879 | 11 | 25,968 | 24 | 69,744 | 64 | 601 | 1 | 108,192 | 100 |
| 75+ | 11,426 | 13 | 26,590 | 30 | 50,511 | 56 | 1,206 | 1 | 89,734 | 100 |
| TOTAL | 265,045 | 10 | 708,009 | 27 | 1,639,655 | 62 | 27,924 | 1 | 2,640,634 | 100 |

Note: Totals may not equal sum of components due to independent rounding.

## FACTS ABOUT YOUNG ADULTS 16 TO 20

## Stavy-divree percent of the 5,240 young people 16 1020 killed when riding inpassenger vebicles in <br> I

 2003 were not wearing safety belts. n 2003, young drivers 16 to 20 made up about 6.3 percent ( 12.4 million) of the 196.2 million licensed drivers in the United States. These 12.4 million young drivers represent a 6 percent increase compared to the number of young drivers in 1993 (11.7 million). ${ }^{11}$The estimated economic cost of police-reported crashes involving drivers 15 to 20 was $\$ 40.8$ billion in 2002. ${ }^{12}$ This cost represents approximately 18 percent of the $\$ 230$ billion a year these crashes cost society. In short, 6.4 percent of the drivers are responsible for 18 percent of the costs of traffic crashes.

In addition to the disproportionate "harm" that 16- to 20-year-old drivers experience from motor vehicle crashes, consider the following additional "costs" for young drivers and passengers:
$>$ Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for young adults 16 to 20 .

Chart 8 Percentage of All Occupants Killed or Injured in 2003
By Age, in Passenger Vehicles


[^5]$>$ Young adults 16 to 20 are more likely to be killed or injured in motor vehicle crashes than children 15 and under. In 2003 , of the 7,034 children up to age 20 who were killed in crashes, 74 percent were 16 to 20 ; of the 700,000 injured from birth to age 20,65 percent were 16 - to 20 -year-olds.
$>$ Although young drivers make up about 7 percent of the total licensed driving population, 15 percent $(8,463)$ of all drivers involved in fatal crashes were young drivers 15 to 20 years old, and 17 percent $(597,000)$ of all drivers involved in police-reported injury crashes were young drivers.

During 2003, a young person died in a traffic crash an average of once an hour on weekends ( 6 p.m. Friday to 5:59 a.m. Monday) and nearly once every 2 hours during the week.

In 2003, a total of 1,84516 - to 20 -year-olds died when they were totally or partially ejected from a passenger vehicle.

- In 2003, the fatality rate (per 100,000 population) in motor vehicle crashes for 16 - to 20 -year-olds was approximately twice the rate for all ages. See Cbart 9 .

Chart 9 Occupant Fatality Rates Per 100,000 Population in 2003
By Age, in Passenger Vehicles


## Facts About Safety Belt Use

Sixty-three percent of the 5,240 young people 16 to 20 killed when riding in passenger vehicles in 2003 were not wearing safety belts.

In 2003, almost 60 percent of the 3,237 drivers in the 16- to 20 -year-old age group who were killed in passenger vehicle crashes were not wearing safety belts.
> Young drivers are less likely to use restraints if they have been drinking alcohol. In 2003, of the young drivers of passenger vehicles who had been drinking and were killed in crashes, 74 percent were unrestrained.

## Facts About Motor-Vehicle-Related Deaths and Injuries

$>$ In 2003, 16- to 20-year-old drivers had the highest fatality and injury rates per 100,000 licensed drivers. In fact, the fatality rate for young drivers was about three times the rate for drivers 25 to 64 years old.
$>$ In 2003, about 53,000 young adults experienced incapacitating injuries. This number represents about 17 percent of all $(313,000)$ incapacitating injuries.

In 2003, about 157,000 young adults experienced nonincapacitating injuries. This number represents almost 20 percent of all $(812,000)$ people with nonincapacitating injuries.

Despite a small improvement in safety belt use for 16 - to 20 -year-old drivers, the percentage of fatalities in which the driver was not wearing a safety belt has been 60 percent or higher for the past 10 years. Only in 2003 did it drop below this, to 58 percent. See Cbart 10.
$>$ Drivers 16 to 20 have the highest involvement rates for fatalities and injuries (per 100,000 licensed drivers) in passenger vehicle crashes. This is especially true for male drivers in this age group. See Cbarts 11 and $12 .{ }^{13}$

## Self-Reported Behavior, Attitudes, and Opinions on Safety Belt Use

The following information was reported in NHTSA's 2003 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey. This telephone survey was administered to a randomly selected national sample of 6,000 people 16 and older (with younger ages over-sampled).

## Safety Belt Use Behavior Among 16- to 20-Year-Olds

$>$ Most drivers $(79 \%)$ reported that they wear their safety belts all the time. About 11 percent reported that they wear their safety belts most of the time.
$>$ Most ( $87 \%$ ) 16-19-year-olds reported that when they were riding as passengers, they usually rode in the front seat. However, only 49 percent said they always wore safety belts when riding in the back seat, while 14 percent said they never wore their safety belts when riding in the back seat.
$>$ One-fourth reported their use of safety belts when driving had increased in the past 12 months. (An estimated 2 percent indicated a decrease, while 73 percent indicated that use had stayed the same.)

[^6]Chart 10 Percentage of Driver Fatalities Among 16- to 20 -Year-Olds, in Which Driver Was Unrestrained, 1994-2003
In Passenger Vehicles


Chart 11 Driver Fatality Rates per 100,000 Licensed Drivers in 2003
By Age and Gender, in Passenger Vehicles


Chart 12 Driver Injury Rates per 100,000 Licensed Drivers in 2003
By Age and Gender, in Passenger Vehicles


## Attitudes Toward Safety Belt Use

$>$ Among people 16 to 24,69 percent either strongly ( $51 \%$ ) or somewhat (18\%) agreed with the statement, "I have a habit of wearing a seat belt because my parents insisted I wear them when I was a child."
> The number dropped to 44 percent among people 25 to 34 and to 26 percent among people 35 to 44 , reflecting the lower usage rates during their childhood years.

- The vast majority of the public 16 and older either strongly agreed ( $88 \%$ ) or somewhat agreed ( $7 \%$ ) with the statement, "If I were in an accident, I would want to have my seat belt on." However, about one-half ( $47 \%$ ) of 16- to 20-year-olds also agreed with the statement, "Seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you."
$>$ About one in five people (19\%) either strongly ( $13 \%$ ) or somewhat ( $6 \%$ ) agreed with the statement, "I would feel selfconscious around my friends if I wore a seat belt and they did not." However, more than one in four ( $30 \%$ ) of 16 - to $20-$ year-olds strongly or somewhat agreed with this statement.
Injury avoidance was the most frequent reason given for wearing a safety belt.
> The most common reasons given by drivers in the 16-20 age group for not wearing safety belts were that they forgot or were driving a short distance.
$>$ Thirty percent of 16 - to 20 -year-olds agreed with the statement that a crash close to home was usually not as serious, and 27 percent agreed that putting on a safety belt makes them worry more about being in a crash.


## Opinions About Safety Belt Use Laws

- When asked whether they favor front safety belt laws, 66 percent of 16 - to 20 -year-olds said they favor them "a lot" and 26 percent said they favor them "some."
$>$ Many ( $64 \%$ ) 16- to 20 -year-olds answered "yes" when asked whether police should be allowed to stop a vehicle if they observe a safety belt violation when no other traffic laws are being broken.
$>$ Many ( $65 \%$ ) 16- to 20 -year-olds favored fines for drivers who do not wear safety belts.
$>$ Almost half ( $42 \%$ ) of 16- to 20-year-olds favored points against a license as a penalty for safety belt violations.


## APPENDICES

In 2003; a total of 17,986 (56\%) passenger vebicler ocoupants who were killed in a crash were reported not to bave used as safety belt or cbild safety seat.

Appendix A
Fatalities in Passenger Vehicles By State and
Age Group, 2003
Appendix B
Passenger Vehicle Occupants Killed in Motor Vehicle Crashes, by State and Restraint Use, 2003

## Appendix C

Fatalities in Passenger Vehicles By State and Age Group, 2003

Fatalities in Passenger Vehicles By State and Age Group, 2003

| AGE | <5 | 5 to 9 | 10 to 15 | 16-20 | 21-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65-74 | 75+ | TOTAL |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Alabama | 7 | 9 | 23 | 136 | 93 | 125 | 134 | 132 | 63 | 49 | 63 | 834 |
| Alaska | 0 | 1 | 3 | 12 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 16 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 64 |
| Arizona | 14 | 15 | 33 | 113 | 90 | 126 | 140 | 89 | 63 | 54 | 63 | 800 |
| Arkansas | 13 | 9 | 17 | 69 | 66 | 70 | 69 | 70 | 49 | 24 | 45 | 501 |
| California | 50 | 47 | 91 | 482 | 371 | 492 | 416 | 334 | 232 | 165 | 250 | 2,930 |
| Colorado | 8 | 7 | 31 | 85 | 50 | 80 | 68 | 51 | 42 | 26 | 40 | 488 |
| Connecticut | 0 | 3 | 1 | 46 | 43 | 36 | 25 | 24 | 12 | 11 | 19 | 220 |
| Delaware | 0 | 0 | 0 | 26 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 17 | 6 |  | 7 | 110 |
| Dist of Columbia | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 10 | 9 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 41 |
| Florida | 26 | 20 | 59 | 299 | 209 | 338 | 295 | 248 | 177 | 176 | 253 | 2,100 |
| Georgia | 24 | 11 | 34 | 198 | 122 | 202 | 191 | 159 | 109 | 82 | 111 | 1,243 |
| Hawaii | 0 | 0 | 3 | 20 | 17 | 14 | 12 | 8 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 85 |
| Idaho | 8 | 3 | 8 | 39 | 30 | 31 | 37 | 30 | 17 | 18 | 23 | 244 |
| Illinois | 11 | 13 | 32 | 200 | 125 | 153 | 140 | 104 | 83 | 74 | 127 | 1,062 |
| Indiana | 11 | 7 | 12 | 116 | 84 | 76 | 97 | 75 | 59 | 43 | 64 | 644 |
| lowa | 4 | 3 | 16 | 57 | 36 | 52 | 39 | 34 | 26 | 23 | 56 | 346 |
| Kansas | 6 | 4 | 18 | 73 | 45 | 59 | 53 | 42 | 31 | 21 | 41 | 393 |
| Kentucky | 10 | 7 | 23 | 93 | 75 | 125 | 117 | 95 | 77 | 56 | 82 | 760 |
| Louisiana | 13 | 9 | 13 | 119 | 96 | 109 | 105 | 88 | 49 | 33 | 49 | 683 |
| Maine | 0 | 3 | 4 | 17 | 16 | 26 | 27 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 34 | 168 |
| Maryland | 4 | 7 | 11 | 78 | 51 | 84 | 56 | 40 | 38 | 31 | 52 | 452 |
| Massachusetts | 2 | 5 | 7 | 64 | 31 | 47 | 46 | 26 | 19 | 20 | 56 | 323 |
| Michigan | 13 | 14 | 31 | 144 | 103 | 126 | 124 | 111 | 90 | 77 | 126 | 959 |
| Minnesota | 6 | 6 | 12 | 100 | 50 | 79 | 73 | 77 | 33 | 34 | 51 | 521 |
| Mississippi | 17 | 11 | 32 | 88 | 69 | 117 | 124 | 113 | 63 | 52 | 68 | 754 |
| Missouri | 12 | 11 | 34 | 171 | 107 | 133 | 143 | 118 | 87 | 71 | 106 | 993 |
| Montana | 4 | 1 | 13 | 34 | 25 | 33 | 29 | 33 | 22 | 14 | 20 | 228 |
| Nebraska | 5 | 4 | 7 | 45 | 32 | 29 | 34 | 35 | 17 | 14 | 28 | 250 |
| Nevada | 5 | 2 | 13 | 44 | 21 | 47 | 38 | 34 | 23 |  | 17 | 253 |
| New Hampshire | 0 | 0 | 1 | 19 | 6 | 10 | 16 | 9 | 17 | 4 | 9 | 91 |
| New Jersey | 5 | 4 | 11 | 42 | 42 | 50 | 44 | 39 | 29 | 23 | 52 | 341 |
| New Mexico | 8 | 7 | 17 | 48 | 36 | 50 | 59 | 29 | 26 | 22 | 21 | 323 |
| New York | 16 | 5 | 11 | 162 | 107 | 130 | 114 | 107 | 73 | 73 | 120 | 918 |
| North Carolina | 17 | 10 | 28 | 191 | 128 | 219 | 169 | 126 | 100 | 81 | 142 | 1,211 |
| North Dakota | 1 | 0 | 5 | 14 | 8 | 9 | 11 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 12 | 82 |
| Ohio | 12 | 11 | 33 | 178 | 97 | 144 | 140 | 127 | 86 | 61 | 97 | 986 |
| Oklahoma | 9 | 6 | 10 | 80 | 52 | 95 | 93 | 61 | 45 | 37 | 58 | 546 |
| Oregon | 6 | 5 | 17 | 63 | 45 | 54 | 60 | 47 | 30 | 28 | 44 | 399 |
| Pennsylvania | 15 | 7 | 17 | 239 | 124 | 158 | 151 | 144 | 90 | 79 | 145 | 1,169 |
| Rhode Island | 1 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 11 | 12 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 13 | 74 |
| South Carolina | 12 | 8 | 13 | 110 | 88 | 130 | 125 | 96 | 53 | 51 | 72 | 758 |
| South Dakota | 5 | 3 | 9 | 25 | 26 | 32 | 17 | 20 | 10 | 9 | 13 | 169 |
| Tennessee | 11 | 10 | 19 | 154 | 89 | 159 | 165 | 118 | 86 | 69 | 86 | 966 |
| Texas | 53 | 49 | 90 | 476 | 317 | 487 | 386 | 355 | 238 | 142 | 186 | 2,779 |
| Utah | 7 | 6 | 10 | 49 | 15 | 41 | 25 | 19 | 24 | 27 | 14 | 237 |
| Vermont | 0 | 1 | 3 | 11 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 12 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 55 |
| Virginia | 3 | 10 | 19 | 117 | 77 | 120 | 111 | 84 | 72 | 54 | 88 | 755 |
| Washington | 3 | 7 | 12 | 84 | 42 | 73 | 60 | 52 | 24 | 36 | 52 | 445 |
| West Virginia | 3 | 3 | 8 | 47 | 33 | 52 | 44 | 43 | 22 | 28 | 30 | 313 |
| Wisconsin | 6 | 6 | 12 | 124 | 84 | 93 | 86 | 81 | 48 | 32 | 81 | 653 |
| Wyoming | 5 | 1 | 5 | 16 | 14 | 18 | 20 | 25 | 10 | 4 | 11 | 129 |
| TOTAL | 471 | 391 | 932 | 5,240 | 3,539 | 4,982 | 4,562 | 3,829 | 2,608 | 2,088 | 3,206 | 31,848 |

Passenger Vehicle Occupants Killed in Motor Vehicle Crashes, by State and Restraint Use, 2003

| State | Restrained Used |  | No Restraint Used |  | Restraint Use Unknown |  | Total Occupants Killed |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Alabama | 334 | 40 | 459 | 55 | 41 | 4.9 | 834 | 100 |
| Alaska | 24 | 37.5 | 28 | 43.8 | 12 | 18.8 | 64 | 100 |
| Arizona | 285 | 35.5 | 414 | 51.6 | 103 | 12.8 | 802 | 100 |
| Arkansas | 136 | 27.1 | 312 | 62.3 | 53 | 10.6 | 501 | 100 |
| California | 1,446 | 49.3 | 1,032 | 35.2 | 454 | 15.5 | 2,932 | 100 |
| Colorado | 199 | 40.8 | 287 | 58.8 | 2 | 0.4 | 488 | 100 |
| Connecticut | 83 | 37.7 | 100 | 45.5 | 37 | 16.8 | 220 | 100 |
| Delaware | 51 | 46.4 | 57 | 51.8 | 2 | 1.8 | 110 | 100 |
| Dist of Columbia | 13 | 31.7 | 17 | 41.5 | 11 | 26.8 | 41 | 100 |
| Florida | 840 | 39.9 | 1,245 | 59.1 | 20 | 1 | 2,105 | 100 |
| Georgia | 493 | 39.5 | 592 | 47.5 | 162 | 13 | 1,247 | 100 |
| Hawaii | 41 | 48.2 | 39 | 45.9 | 5 | 5.9 | 85 | 100 |
| Idaho | 94 | 38.5 | 142 | 58.2 | 8 | 3.3 | 244 | 100 |
| Illinois | 373 | 35.1 | 509 | 47.9 | 180 | 16.9 | 1,062 | 100 |
| Indiana | 286 | 44.4 | 296 | 46 | 62 | 9.6 | 644 | 100 |
| lowa | 138 | 39.8 | 147 | 42.4 | 62 | 17.9 | 347 | 100 |
| Kansas | 118 | 30 | 251 | 63.9 | 24 | 6.1 | 393 | 100 |
| Kentucky | 240 | 31.6 | 515 | 67.8 | 5 | 0.7 | 760 | 100 |
| Louisiana | 205 | 30 | 410 | 60 | 68 | 10 | 683 | 100 |
| Maine | 62 | 36.9 | 87 | 51.8 | 19 | 11.3 | 168 | 100 |
| Maryland | 227 | 49.9 | 212 | 46.6 | 16 | 3.5 | 455 | 100 |
| Massachusetts | 92 | 28.5 | 176 | 54.5 | 55 | 17 | 323 | 100 |
| Michigan | 479 | 49.9 | 348 | 36.3 | 133 | 13.9 | 960 | 100 |
| Minnesota | 215 | 41.2 | 285 | 54.6 | 22 | 4.2 | 522 | 100 |
| Mississippi | 243 | 32.2 | 507 | 67.2 | 5 | 0.7 | 755 | 100 |
| Missouri | 282 | 28.4 | 621 | 62.5 | 91 | 9.2 | 994 | 100 |
| Montana | 69 | 30.3 | 152 | 66.7 | 7 | 3.1 | 228 | 100 |
| Nebraska | 71 | 28.4 | 151 | 60.4 | 28 | 11.2 | 250 | 100 |
| Nevada | 99 | 38.8 | 145 | 56.9 | 11 | 4.3 | 255 | 100 |
| New Hampshire | 26 | 28.6 | 63 | 69.2 | 2 | 2.2 | 91 | 100 |
| New Jersey | 160 | 46.6 | 161 | 46.9 | 22 | 6.4 | 343 | 100 |
| New Mexico | 98 | 30.2 | 218 | 67.1 | 9 | 2.8 | 325 | 100 |
| New York | 453 | 49.2 | 362 | 39.3 | 106 | 11.5 | 921 | 100 |
| North Carolina | 601 | 49.5 | 526 | 43.3 | 87 | 7.2 | 1,214 | 100 |
| North Dakota | 16 | 19.5 | 61 | 74.4 | 5 | 6.1 | 82 | 100 |
| Ohio | 372 | 37.6 | 588 | 59.5 | 29 | 2.9 | 989 | 100 |
| Oklahoma | 193 | 35.3 | 350 | 64 | 4 | 0.7 | 547 | 100 |
| Oregon | 233 | 58.4 | 132 | 33.1 | 34 | 8.5 | 399 | 100 |
| Pennsylvania | 385 | 32.9 | 614 | 52.5 | 170 | 14.5 | 1,169 | 100 |
| Rhode Island | 23 | 31.1 | 47 | 63.5 | 4 | 5.4 | 74 | 100 |
| South Carolina | 238 | 31.2 | 496 | 65.1 | 28 | 3.7 | 762 | 100 |
| South Dakota | 34 | 20.1 | 120 | 71 | 15 | 8.9 | 169 | 100 |
| Tennessee | 316 | 32.7 | 597 | 61.8 | 53 | 5.5 | 966 | 100 |
| Texas | 1,368 | 49 | 1,348 | 48.3 | 74 | 2.7 | 2,790 | 100 |
| Utah | 102 | 42.3 | 137 | 56.8 | 2 | 0.8 | 241 | 100 |
| Vermont | 28 | 50.9 | 21 | 38.2 | 6 | 10.9 | 55 | 100 |
| Virginia | 256 | 33.9 | 429 | 56.8 | 70 | 9.3 | 755 | 100 |
| Washington | 245 | 55.1 | 177 | 39.8 | 23 | 5.2 | 445 | 100 |
| West Virginia | 116 | 37.1 | 178 | 56.9 | 19 | 6.1 | 313 | 100 |
| Wisconsin | 237 | 36.3 | 355 | 54.4 | 61 | 9.3 | 653 | 100 |
| Wyoming | 49 | 38 | 78 | 60.5 | 2 | 1.6 | 129 | 100 |
| TOTAL | 12,787 | 40.1 | 16,594 | 52 | 2,523 | 7.9 | 31,904 | 100 |

## State Child Restraint Laws ${ }^{1}$

| State | Rear Safety Belts Required ${ }^{2}$ | Child Safety Seat Required | May Use Child Safety Seat or Safety Belt | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Max } \\ & \text { Fine }^{4} \end{aligned}$ | Points | Major Exemptions to Child Passenger Laws ${ }^{6}$ | Children Allowed in Cargo Area of Pickups? |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| AL | $<15$ yrs | $<6 \mathrm{yrs}$ | Ages 6-14 yrs | \$25 | 1 pt for 1st offense \& 2 pts for 2nd offense | Tow trucks or buses weighing $>1$ ton | Yes |
| AK | $<16$ yrs | <4 yrs |  | \$50 | 2 | None | No |
| AZ | $<16$ yrs | $<5$ yrs | Ages 5-15 yrs | \$10 |  | All vehicle belts in use |  |
| AR | <15 yrs | Age 6 yrs \& > 60 lbs | Age 6 yrs or $>60 \mathrm{lbs}$ | \$100 |  | None | No |
| CA | $<16$ yrs | $<6 \mathrm{yrs}$ or $<60 \mathrm{lbs}$ | Ages 6-17 yrs | $\begin{gathered} \text { Up to } \\ \$ 295 \\ \text { per } \\ \text { child } \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | 1 | None |  |
| CO | $<16$ yrs | $<1$ yr \& <20 lbs rear facing; 1-4 yrs \& 20-40 lbs forward facing; ages 4 \& 5 \& <55" tall booster seat | Ages 6-16 or 55" tall. Booster seat or safety belt required. | \$59 |  | Transported in motor vehicle as a result of a medical emergency. Booster seat exempted if only lap belt available. | Yes, if sitting \& tailgate closed |
| CT | $<16$ yrs | $<6$ yrs and <60 lbs | $60 \mathrm{lbs} \& 7-<16$ years | \$199 | 2 | None | No |
| DE | <16 $\mathrm{yrs}^{3}$ | $<6 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $60 \mathrm{lbs} \&$ over | \$20 | 2 | No major exemptions | No |
| DC | $<16$ yrs | $<8$ yrs | Ages 8-16 yrs | \$150 | 3 | All vehicle belts in use ${ }^{7}$ | No |
| FL | $<18 \mathrm{yrs}$ | <4 yrs | Ages 4-5 yrs | \$60 | 3 | A truck of net weight of more than 5,000 lbs | No |
| GA | $<17 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<5 \mathrm{yrs}$ | A 40 lb child may be secured by lap belt if vehicle not equipped with lap and shoulder belt, or if all belts being used to properly restrain other children | \$50 | 1 | May use belt if age 6 and over | No |
| HI | $<18$ yrs | <4 yrs | Ages 3-17 yrs | \$100 |  | All vehicle belts in use ${ }^{7}$ | $\mathrm{No}^{6}$ |
| ID | $>6 \mathrm{yrs}$ | <7 | $>6 \mathrm{yrs}$ | \$69 |  | All vehicle belts in use7, | Yes |
| IL | $<16 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<8 \mathrm{yrs}$ | Ages 4-15 yrs, all seating positions | \$50 |  | None | Yes |
| IN | $<12 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<8 \mathrm{yrs}$ | Ages 8 -15 yrs, all seating positions \& vehicles | \$25 | 4 | Vehicle registered out of State | <16 yrs not allowed |
| IA | $<11$ yrs | $<6 \mathrm{yrs}$ | Ages 6-10 yrs | \$25 |  | Motorcycles, school buses, emergency vehicles \& medical reasons per physician | Yes |
| KS | <14 yrs | $\begin{gathered} <8 \text { yrs unless } 4^{\prime \prime} 9^{\prime \prime} \text { or } \\ 80 \mathrm{lbs}^{21} \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | Age 8 or 80 lbs or $4^{\prime} 9^{\prime \prime}$ | \$60 |  | All vehicle belts in use | If $>13 \mathrm{yrs}$ |
| KY | $<16$ yrs | 40" \& Under |  | \$50 |  | None | Yes |
| LA | $<13 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<6 \mathrm{yrs}$ or 60 lbs | Ages 3-13 yrs | \$100 |  | Ambulances, school buses, church buses, commercial vehicles | If $>11 \mathrm{yrs}$ |
| ME | $\begin{gathered} <12 \mathrm{yrs},<100 \\ \text { lbs } \end{gathered}$ | $<8$ yrs and between 40-80 lbs | <12 \& 100 lbs | \$60 |  | All vehicle belts in use ${ }^{9}$ | <16 yrs not allowed |
| MD | $<16 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<6 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $>40 \mathrm{lbs}$ | \$25 |  | All vehicle belts in use, vehicle registered out of State exempt | No |
| MA | $<13 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<5$ yrs and $<40 \mathrm{lbs}$ | $5-12$ yrs | \$25 |  | Child physically unable to use conventional child restraint or one designed for special needs, certified in writing by a physician | If $>16 \mathrm{yrs}$ |

State Child Restraint Laws ${ }^{1}$ (continued)

| State | Rear Safety Belts Required ${ }^{2}$ | Child Safety Seat Required | May Use Child Safety Seat or Safety Belt | Max Fine ${ }^{4}$ | Points | Major Exemptions to Child Passenger Laws ${ }^{6}$ | Children Allowed in Cargo Area of Pickups? |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| MI | $<16$ yrs | <4 yrs |  | \$15 |  | All vehicle belts in use ${ }^{7}$ | No ${ }^{12,13}$ |
| MN | $<11 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<4$ yrs |  | \$50 |  | Child being nursed | No ${ }^{12,14}$ |
| MS | $<8$ yrs | <4 yrs |  | \$25 |  | See footnote ${ }^{20}$ | Yes |
| MO | $<16$ yrs | $<4 \mathrm{yrs}$ | Ages 4-15 may use safety belts | \$25 |  |  | No |
| MT | $<19 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<6 \mathrm{yrs}$ | Age 6 and <60 lbs | $\begin{aligned} & \hline \text { Up to } \\ & \$ 100 \\ & \hline \end{aligned}$ |  | Physical or medical reasons per physician | No ${ }^{13,14}$ |
| NE | $<16$ yrs | $<6 \mathrm{yrs}$ |  | \$25 |  | Medical reasons per physician, emergency vehicles, taxi cabs | No |
| NV | <18 yrs | $<6 \mathrm{yrs} \& 60 \mathrm{lbs}$ | Ages 6-17 yrs | \$500 |  | Public transportation | No |
| NH | $<18$ yrs | $<6$ yrs and 55" |  | \$25 |  | None | No |
| NJ | $<18 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<8$ yrs or 80 lbs |  | \$25 |  | Children $<8$ yrs but more than 80 lbs may be placed in safety belt; All vehicle belts in use ${ }^{7}$ | No |
| NM | $<16$ yrs | $<1-4$ rrs $^{18}$ | Ages 5-12 yrs | \$25 |  | All vehicle belts in use ${ }^{19}$ | No, if <18 |
| NY | $<16$ yrs | $<7 \mathrm{yrs}$ |  | \$100 | 3 | Booster seat exempted for children $4-6$ yrs if only lap belt available | Yes ${ }^{15}$ |


| NC | $<16$ yrs | $<8 \mathrm{yrs}$ and 80 lbs | 8 yrs or 80 lbs or 40 lbs if no lap \& shoulder belt available | \$25 | Driver license =2 <br> Insurance $=0$ | Child's personal needs being attended to, or all available belts being used | If $>11$ yrs ${ }^{12,14,16}$ If the vehicle is being operated in a county that has no incorporated area with a population in excess of 3,500 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| ND | $<18$ yrs (front and back seat) | <7 yrs | Ages 7-17 yrs | \$25 | 1 | Child restraint and safety belts not required in vehicles that were not equipped with safety belts when manufactured; transported in an emergency situation | Yes |
| OH | $\begin{gathered} <4 \text { yrs or }<60 \\ \text { lbs } \end{gathered}$ | <4 yrs or < 60 lbs |  | \$100 |  | Vehicle registered out of State | If traveling <25 mph ${ }^{12}$ |
| OK | No | $<6 \mathrm{yrs}$ | 6-12 yrs | \$50 <br> plus <br> court <br> cost |  | Children who weigh $>40 \mathrm{lbs}$ in the back seat of a vehicle with only a safety belt if all lap/shoulder belts are in use by another | Yes |
| OR | $<16 \mathrm{yrs}^{20}$ | $<4 \mathrm{yrs}$ or $<40 \mathrm{lbs}$ | Age 6 yrs \& > $\times 60 \mathrm{lbs}$ | \$97 |  | None unless all belted positions taken or <18 yrs and in scope of employment or licensed hunter between hunting camps | Yes |
| PA | $<16 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<4 \mathrm{yrs}$ |  | $\begin{aligned} & \hline \text { Up to } \\ & \$ 150 \\ & \hline \end{aligned}$ |  | None | Yes |
| RI | $<17 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<7$ yrs \& 54" \& 80 lbs in Federally Approved Child Restraint System in back seat | Age 7 yrs or older | \$75 |  | All vehicle belts in use | No, up to age 16 |
| SC | $<17 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<6 \mathrm{yrs}$ or $<80 \mathrm{lbs}$ | >1 but <6 years | \$150 |  | If all vehicle belts in use | Yes, if on a hayride, traveling less than 35 mph , or on a farm, or in a parade or an adult is with them |


| State | Rear Safety Belts Required ${ }^{2}$ | Child <br> Safety Seat Required | May Use Child Safety Seat or Safety Belt | Max Fine ${ }^{4}$ | Points | Major Exemptions to Child Passenger Laws ${ }^{6}$ | Children Allowed in Cargo Area of Pickups? |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| SD | $<18 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<5$ yrs \& <40 lbs | Ages 5-17, \& > 40 lbs | \$20 |  | None | Yes |
| TN | $<18 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<4 \mathrm{yrs}^{25}$ |  | \$505 |  | All vehicle belts in use ${ }^{8,10}$ | If $>5$ yrs or moving $<20 \mathrm{mph}$ |
| TX | $<17 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<4$ yrs or <36" | Ages 4-16 $\mathrm{yrs}^{17}$ | \$200 |  | All vehicle belts in use | $<17 \mathrm{yrs}$ not allowed |
| UT | $<19 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<5 \mathrm{yrs}$ | Ages 5-18 yrs | \$45 |  | All vehicle belts in use, physical or medical reasons per physician | Yes, If all seats are in use in the vehicle cab |
| VT | $<16$ yrs | $\begin{gathered} >1 \mathrm{yr} \text { but }<8 \text { and }> \\ 20 \mathrm{lbs} \end{gathered}$ | $<16 \mathrm{yrs}$ | \$25 |  | All vehicle belts in use ${ }^{11}$ | Yes |
| VA | $<16$ yrs | <5 yrs | Ages 6-15 | \$50 | 3 | No major exemptions | Yes |
| WA | $<16$ yrs | $<8$ unless 4'9"127 | Ages 6-16 $\mathrm{yrs}^{23}$ | \$101 |  | No major exemptions ${ }^{24}$ | Yes |
| WV | $<16$ yrs | $<8$ yrs | Ages 3-8 yrs | \$20 |  | All vehicle belts in use | No |
| WI | $<8 \mathrm{yrs}^{28}$ | $<8 \mathrm{yrs}^{28}$ | Age 8 or 80 lbs or $4^{\prime \prime} 9^{\prime \prime}$ | \$75 |  | Attending to child's personal needs | No ${ }^{14}$ |
| WY | $<12 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<9$ yrs properly secured in CRS in back seat ${ }^{22}$ | Ages 5-11 yrs ${ }^{26}$ | \$50 |  | Physician provides medical exemptions, rendering aid and or assistance to child by parent/guardian | Yes |
| AS | <5 yrs | >4 yrs | Ages 0-12 yrs | \$30 |  |  | Yes, < 13 must be accompanied by adult |
| CNMI | $<12 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<5 \mathrm{yrs}$ | Ages 0-12 yrs | \$250 |  | A child who, for medical or physical reasons is unable to utilize a child passenger restraint system. | Yes, < 13 must be accompanied by adult |
| GU | <12 yrs | <4 yrs | Ages 2-12 yrs | \$50 |  | Yes > 13 yrs | Yes, < 13 must be accompanied by adult |
| PR | All persons, all ages, unless in a safety seat must wear a safety belt | $<5 \mathrm{yrs}$ | $<12$ must ride in back seat | \$100 |  | None | No |
| ${ }^{1}$ This chart applies to children younger than age 19. <br> ${ }^{2}$ Front seat restraints are required for all children younger than 16. <br> ${ }^{3}$ Children < 12 years old and < 66 inches may not occupy front seat if equipped with passenger-side air bag. |  |  |  | ${ }^{16}$ Unless supervised by an adult. <br> ${ }^{17}$ Booster seats are considered child safety seat systems as long as the seat is appropriate for that child (child should fit within the weight range stated on the seat). |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ${ }^{4}$ Maximum fine for first offense of child safety seat laws. Fines may be increased on subsequent violations and different for older children. |  |  |  | ${ }^{18}$ < 1 yr rear-facing CSS; age $1-4$ child passenger restraint device or < 40 lbs . <br> ${ }^{19}$ Or riding in an emergency vehicle, public transportation, or school bus. <br> ${ }^{20}$ If there are more passengers than available safety belts, the driver/passengers are not in violation; public carriers for hire are exempted. |  |  |  |
| ${ }^{6}$ Major exemptions are considered to be exemptions in private passenger vehicles (cars, vans, or pickups). Many States have exemptions for buses, taxis, or other public transportation, children with medical conditions, and emergency situations. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ${ }^{7}$ Unrestrained children must be in the rear. |  |  |  | ${ }^{22}$ Unless the vehicle has only one row of seats, then the child can be placed in the front, as of $7 / 1 / 03$, or if all safety belts are in use by other child passengers, as of $2 / 17 / 05$. |  |  |  |
| ${ }^{8}$ Law does not apply if the child's personal or physiological needs are being met.${ }^{9}$ Only for children > 1 year old. |  |  |  | ${ }^{23}$ May use safety belt only if properly adjusted and fastened. |  |  |  |
| ${ }^{10}$ Only for ages 4 through 11. |  |  |  | ${ }^{24}$ The CPS law does not apply if the child is booster seat age/size and the vehicle has lap-only safety belts. |  |  |  |
| ${ }^{12}$ Unless properly restrained in a safety belt or child safety seat. |  |  |  | ${ }^{25}$ Beginning 7/1/04, child < 1 or < 20 pounds in rear-facing safety seat. |  |  |  |
| ${ }^{13}$ Unless number of children exceeds number of safety belts available. <br> ${ }^{14}$ Unless used in farm work or farm activity. |  |  |  | ${ }^{26}$ Child within age requirement if the lap and shoulder belt fit properly across the collarbone, chest and hips of child and does not pose danger to neck, face or abdominal area in crash or sudden stop. |  |  |  |
| ${ }^{15}$ Unless there are more than five children younger than age 18 not accompanied by a person older than 18 . |  |  |  | ${ }^{27}$ Change in CPS Law goes into effect June 1, 2007. <br> ${ }^{28}$ Child safety seat must be in the back seat if the vehicle is equipped with a back seat. |  |  |  |

## Organizations to Contact for Additional Information About Occupant Restraints

This page contains a number of organizations that can be contacted for additional information on occupant restraint use and other occupant protection issues.

## Federal Resources

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street SW.
Washington, DC 20590
Tel: 888-327-4236 (Vehicle Safety Hotline)
Web site: www.nhtsa.dot.gov
Another Federal agency that is a good source of information is

## National Transportation Safety Board

490 L'Enfant Plaza SW.
Washington, DC 20594
Tel: 202-314-6000
Web site: www.ntsb.gov

## State Resources

## Governors' Highway Safety Association

750 First Street NE., Suite 720
Washington, DC 20002
Tel: 202-789-0942
Fax: 202-789-0946
Web site: www.ghsa.org

## Private Sector

## National Safety Council

Web site: www.nsc.org
Headquarters:
1121 Spring Lake Drive
Itasca, IL 60143-3201
Tel: 708-285-1121
Washington, $D C$, office:
1025 Connecticut Avenue NW., Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20036-5405
Tel: 202-293-2270
Fax: 202-293-0032

In addition, two special National Safety Council projects may be of interest:

## National Safety Belt Coalition

1025 Connecticut Avenue NW., Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20036-5405
Tel: 202-296-6263
Fax: 202-293-0032
Web site: www.nsc.org/traf/sbc.htm
Air Bag \& Seat Belt Safety Campaign
1025 Connecticut Avenue NW., Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20036-5405
Tel: 202-625-2570
Fax: 202-822-1399
E-mail: airbag@nsc.org
Web site: www.nsc.org/airbag.htm
Other private sector organizations:

## AAA

1000 AAA Drive
Heathrow, FL 32746-5063
Tel: 407-444-7000
Web site: www.aaa.com

## American Coalition for Traffic Safety

1110 North Glebe Road, Suite 1020
Arlington, VA 22201
Tel: 703-243-7501
Insurance Institute for Highway Safety
1005 North Glebe Road, Suite 800
Arlington, Virginia 22201
Tel: 703-247-1500
Web site: www.iihs.org

## National SAFE KIDS Campaign

1301 Pennsylvania Avenue NW., Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20004
Tel: 202-662-0600
Web site: www.safekids.org

## Advocates for Highway Safety

750 First Street NE., Suite 901
Washington, DC 20002
Tel: 202-408-1711
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## National Highway

 Traficic Safety Administration
[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ Data on the number of licensed drivers include 15 -year-olds.
    ${ }^{2}$ Blincoe, L., Seay, A., Zaloshnja, E., Miller, T., Romano.E., Luchter, S., and Spicer, R. The Economic Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2000. DOT HS 809 446, May 2002.
    ${ }^{3}$ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Estimate, 2003. Office of Planning and Financial Management.
    ${ }^{4}$ Johnson, S., Walker J., Utter, D. Crash Outcome Data Evaluation System (CODES) Project-Safety Belt and Helmet Analysis, February 1996.

[^1]:    ${ }^{5}$ The majority of the data in this report are presented after unknown categories were distributed proportionally to the known use categories.

[^2]:    ${ }^{6}$ Passenger cars are one of the vehicle types included in the passenger vehicle category.
    ${ }^{7}$ Durbin, D., Elliott, M., and Winston, F. Belt-Positioning Booster Seats and Reduction in Risk of Injury Among Children in Vehicle Crashes. Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol 289 (21), 2835-2840, June 2003.
    ${ }^{8}$ Traffic Safety Facts 2003, Occupant Protection, the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, DOT 809765.

[^3]:    ${ }^{9}$ Durbin, D., Elliott, M., and Winston, F. Belt-Positioning Booster Seats and Reduction in Risk of Injury Among Children in Vehicle Crashes. Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol 289 (21), 2835-2840, June 2003.

[^4]:    ${ }^{10}$ Subramanian, R. Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes as Leading Cause of Death in the United States, 2001. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT 809 695, December 2003.

[^5]:    ${ }^{11}$ Highway Statistics 2003. Section III: Driver Licensing. Department of Transportation/Federal Highway Administration (http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policy/ohim/hs03/dl.htm).
    ${ }^{12}$ Traffic Safety Facts 2002. Young Drivers, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT HS 809767 . [Note: When available, data on 15 -year-olds are included in this section because in some States 15 -year-olds are licensed to drive. However, 15 -year-olds constitute only 0.2 percent of licensed drivers.]

[^6]:    ${ }^{13}$ Rates shown in Chart 10 are obtained by dividing the number of involved drivers by the number of licensed drivers.

