Motor Vehicle Crash Injuries among Children

- In the U.S., more than 1,000 children 12 and younger die in passenger vehicle crashes every year, and more than 100,000 are injured.
- In 2011 in Oklahoma, 4,288 child passengers, infant to age eight, were occupants in motor vehicle crashes. Of these, 11 were killed and 1,178 were injured.
- In a collision of only 30 miles per hour, a 10-pound baby not in a car seat will be thrown into the dashboard or windshield with a force of 300 pounds. That's like throwing the baby off a 3-story building.
- A 100-pound mother who is not wearing her seat belt and is holding the baby in her lap becomes a 3,000-pound force – more than enough to crush the child in her arms against the dash. No man or woman can continue to hold a baby in their arms during a crash, even if the car is only traveling 15 miles per hour.
- Three out of four car seats are used incorrectly.

Prevention

- Buckle your kids up for every trip; it's the law! All children up to age 6 must be secured in a properly installed child safety seat and children ages 6 through 12 must be protected using a properly installed child safety seat or a seat belt. Offenses can result in fines of up to $200.
- Children whose parents are buckled up for every ride are more likely to also buckle up for every ride. This practice becomes a life-long habit that can reduce injuries and death.
- Check the label on your car seat to make sure it is not expired and is appropriate for your child's age, weight, and height.
- Consult both the car seat manual and the vehicle owner's manual for installation instructions to ensure you install the child restraint correctly.
- Keep your child in the back seat at least through age 12. Remember even passengers in the back seat have to be buckled in to reduce the risk of injury in a crash.

Internet Resources


Many injuries happen in predictable, preventable ways.

Placing children in a car seat that is the right size for their age, weight, and height reduces serious and fatal injuries by more than half.

Live Injury-Free!