

Traffic Safety Facts

2006 Data

Children

In 2006, there were nearly 61 million children age 14 and younger in the United States. This age group made up 20 percent of the total U.S. resident population in 2006.

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for the age group 2 to 14 years old (based on 2004 figures, which are the latest mortality data currently available from the National Center for Health Statistics).

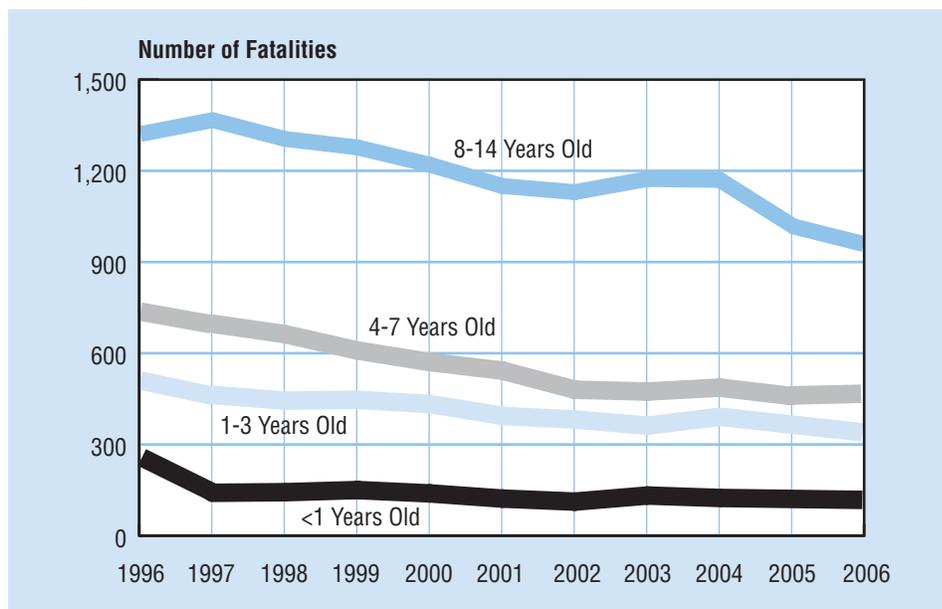
In 2006, there were a total of 42,642 traffic fatalities in the United States. The 14 and younger age group accounted for 4 percent (1,794) of those traffic fatalities. This age group accounted for 4 percent (1,335) of all vehicle occupant fatalities, 8 percent (208,000) of all the people injured in motor vehicle crashes, and 7 percent (184,000) of all the vehicle occupants injured in crashes.

“Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children from 2 to 14 years old.”

Every day in the United States, an average of 5 children age 14 and younger were killed and 568 were injured in motor vehicle crashes during 2006.

In the 14 and under age group, males accounted for 55 percent of the fatalities and 49 percent of those injured in motor vehicle crashes during 2006.

Figure 1
Total Traffic Fatalities Among Children Age 14 and Under by Age Group, 1996-2006



Alcohol-Related Crashes and Children

In 2006, a total of 419 (23%) of the fatalities among children age 14 and younger occurred in crashes involving alcohol. Of those 419 fatalities, 202 were passengers in vehicles with drivers who had been drinking with blood alcohol concentration (BAC) levels of .01 gram per deciliter (g/dL) or higher. An additional 108 children were killed as passengers in vehicles with drivers who had not been drinking.

Another 62 children age 14 and younger who were killed in traffic crashes in 2006 were pedestrians or pedalcyclists who were struck by drinking drivers (BAC .01 g/dL or higher).

Pedestrians

There were a total of 4,784 pedestrian fatalities in 2006. The 14 and under age group accounted for 331 (7%) of those fatalities. Almost one fifth (18%) of the traffic fatalities in the 14 and under age group were pedestrians.

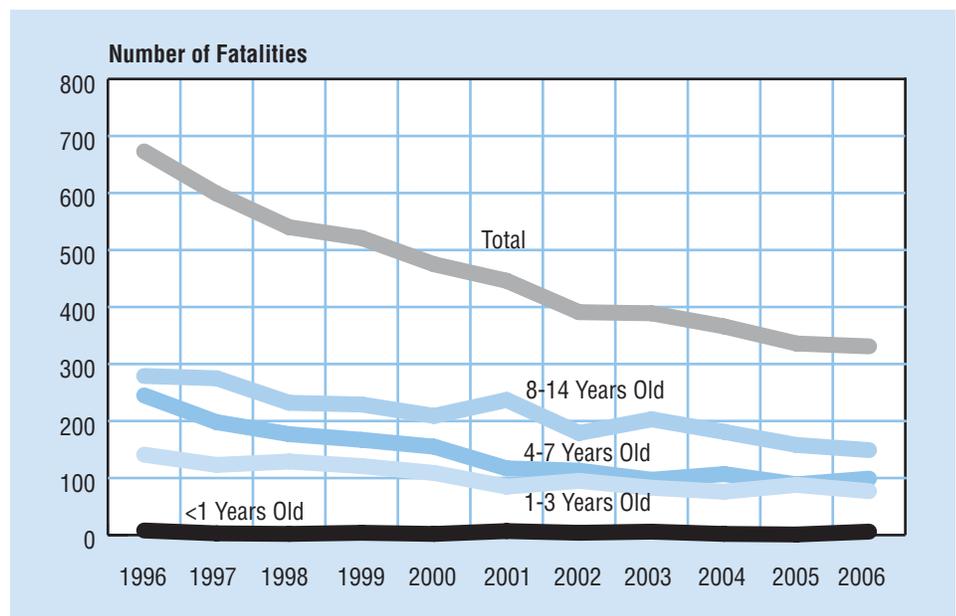
In 1996, there were 673 pedestrian fatalities in the 14 and under age group. From 1996 to 2006, the number of pedestrian fatalities in this age group decreased by 51 percent, with the 4-7 year age group showing the largest decrease (39%).

Of the total 331 pedestrian fatalities among children age 14 and younger in 2006, 219 (66%) of those killed were males.

In 2006, a total of 61,000 pedestrians were injured, 12,000 of those injured were age 14 and younger, and males accounted for 59 percent (7,000) of those 12,000 injured.

“In 2006, 23 percent of the children age 14 and younger killed in crashes were killed in alcohol-related crashes.”

Figure 2
Total Pedestrian Fatalities Among Children Age 14 and Under by Age Group, 1996-2006



During 2006, the highest percentage of fatalities among young pedestrians occurred between 4 p.m. and 7:59 p.m. (39%), which is an 8 percent decrease from 2005 during those same hours. The second highest percentage of fatalities among young pedestrians were between the hours of 8 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. (24%) which is an 8 percent increase from 2005 during those same hours.

Seventy seven percent of the pedestrian fatalities among those age 14 and younger occurred at non-intersection locations, which is a significant decrease from 2005 (82%).

Pedalcyclists

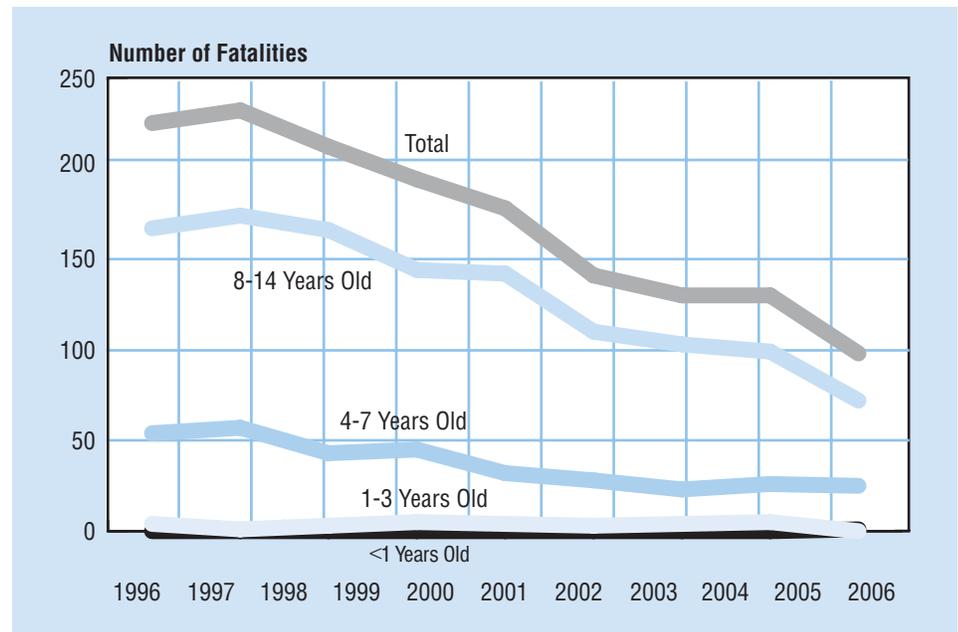
A total of 773 pedalcyclists were killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2006. The 14 and under age group accounted for 13 percent (98) of those fatalities, and males accounted for 83 percent (81) of the fatalities among pedalcyclists age 14 and younger.

The 98 pedalcyclist fatalities in 2006 for the 14 and under age group represent a decrease of 56 percent from the 225 killed in 1996.

In 2006, a total of 44,000 pedalcyclists were injured in motor vehicle traffic crashes. Twenty-four percent (or an estimated 11,000) of the pedalcyclists who were injured were age 14 and younger.

“In 2006, 24 percent of the pedalcyclists injured in motor vehicle crashes were 14 years old or younger.”

Figure 3
Total Pedalcyclist Fatalities Among Children Age 14 and Younger by Age Group, 1996-2006



Restraint Use and Their Effectiveness

Research has shown that lap/shoulder seat belts, when used, reduce the risk of fatal injury to front seat occupants (age 5 and older) of passenger cars by 45 percent and the risk of moderate-to-critical injury by 50 percent. For light-truck occupants, seat belts reduce the risk of fatal injury by 60 percent and the risk of moderate-to-critical injury by 65 percent.

During 2006, 6,983 passenger vehicle occupants age 14 and younger were involved in fatal crashes. For those children where restraint use was known, 25 percent were unrestrained; among those who were fatally injured, 45 percent were unrestrained.

Table 1
Restraint Use by Passenger Vehicle Occupants Involved in Fatal Crashes by Age Group, 2006

Percent Unrestrained	Age Group (Years)						Total
	<1	1-3	4-7	8-14	15-20	All Other	
Restraint Used	86	84	75	69	55	65	64
Restraint Not Used	14	16	25	31	45	35	36

Note: Excluding unknown age and restraint use.

“Child safety seats reduce the risk of fatal injury by 71 percent for infants and by 54 percent for toddlers in passenger cars.”

Research on the effectiveness of child safety seats has found them to reduce fatal injury by 71 percent for infants (less than 1 year old) and by 54 percent for toddlers (1-4 years old) in passenger cars. For infants and toddlers in light trucks, the corresponding reductions are 58 percent and 59 percent, respectively.

In 2006, there were 452 passenger vehicle occupant fatalities among children under 5 years of age. Of those 452 fatalities, where restraint use was known (427), 149 (35%) were totally unrestrained.

Table 2
Children Age 4 and Under Fatally Injured in Passenger Vehicle Crashes by Age Group and Type of Restraint, 2006

	Age Group (Years)		Total
	<1	1-4	
None Used	27	122	149
Adult Seat Belt	3	30	33
Child Seat	75	170	245
Restraint Used-Unknown	0	1	1
Unknown	7	17	24
Total	112	340	452

Among children under age 5, an estimated 425 lives were saved in 2006 by child restraint use. Of these 425 lives saved, 392 were associated with the use of child safety seats and 32 with the use of adult seat belts.

At 100 percent child safety seat use for children under age 5, an estimated 518 lives (that is, an additional 98) could have been saved in 2005.

Over the period 1975 through 2005, an estimated 8,325 lives were saved by child restraints (child safety seats or adults seat belts).

In 2006, NHTSA conducted the National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) (Research Note DOT-HS-810-737 dated Feb. 07). One of the studies in the survey was the Controlled Intersection Study, which provided more detailed information about child restraint use.

“Children in rear-facing child seats should not be placed in the front seat of vehicles with passenger air bags. The impact of a deploying air bag on a rear-facing child seat could injure the child.”

Table 3
Restraint Use by Children Age 7 and Under (from NOPUS)

Grouping	Restraint Use (%)	Grouping	Restraint Use (%)
Overall	84	Rush Hour	78
Infants (<1 year)	98	Non-Rush Hour	89
Toddlers (1-3 years)	89	Weekday	84
Booster Age (4-7 years)	78	Weekend	83
Passenger Cars	78	Urban	73
Vans and SUVs	91	Suburban	87
Pickups	86	Rural	84
Front Seat	86		
Back Seat	83		

Important Safety Reminders

Failure to read the child safety seat instructions, in addition to vehicle owner manual instructions regarding seat belts, could result in serious injury or death as a result of a failure of the child safety seat to be securely and/or properly restrained.

Children in rear-facing child seats should not be placed in the front seat of vehicles equipped with passenger-side air bags. The impact of a deploying air bag striking a rear-facing child seat could result in injury to the child. NHTSA also recommends that children 12 and under sit in the rear seat away from the force of a deploying air bag.

Children age 12 and under are safest when properly buckled in the back seat of a motor vehicle.

Always read the child restraint manufacturer instructions and the vehicle owner manual instructions.

For more information:

Information on traffic fatalities is available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, NVS-421, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590. NCSA can be contacted on 800-934-8517. Fax messages should be sent to 202-366-7078. General information on highway traffic safety can be accessed by Internet users at <http://www.nhtsa.gov/portal/site/nhtsa/ncsa>. To report a safety-related problem or to inquire about motor vehicle safety information, contact the Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236.

Other fact sheets available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis are *Overview, Alcohol, African American, Bicyclists and Other Cyclists* (formerly titled *Pedalcyclists*), *Hispanic, Large Trucks, Motorcycles, Occupant Protection, Older Population, Pedestrians, Race and Ethnicity, Rural/Urban Comparisons, School Transportation-Related Crashes, Speeding, State Alcohol Estimates, State Traffic Data, and Young Drivers*. Detailed data on motor vehicle traffic crashes are published annually in *Traffic Safety Facts: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Crash Data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System and the General Estimates System*. The fact sheets and annual Traffic Safety Facts report can be accessed online at <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/CMSWeb/index.aspx>.

Table 4
Total Traffic Fatalities Among Children Age 14 and Under by State and Age Group

State	Age (Years)				Total
	<1	1-3	4-7	8-14	
Alabama	5	12	9	33	59
Alaska	0	1	3	3	7
Arizona	0	16	18	22	56
Arkansas	6	8	7	14	35
California	13	42	52	91	198
Colorado	2	6	4	13	25
Connecticut	2	1	0	3	6
Delaware	1	1	1	1	4
Dist of Columbia	0	1	3	2	6
Florida	3	20	20	60	103
Georgia	7	16	22	27	72
Hawaii	0	0	2	3	5
Idaho	1	0	2	10	13
Illinois	8	7	18	22	55
Indiana	2	10	12	21	45
Iowa	1	5	3	4	13
Kansas	1	2	3	12	18
Kentucky	1	2	3	12	18
Louisiana	2	6	13	19	40
Maine	0	1	1	3	5
Maryland	0	5	5	9	19
Massachusetts	0	0	0	9	9
Michigan	2	6	10	22	40
Minnesota	3	0	2	10	15
Mississippi	1	8	16	18	43
Missouri	0	6	11	21	38
Montana	2	2	2	4	10
Nebraska	2	6	4	5	17
Nevada	3	4	4	15	26
New Hampshire	0	0	0	2	2
New Jersey	1	6	4	11	22
New Mexico	3	5	6	18	32
New York	2	7	11	26	46
North Carolina	6	15	25	40	76
North Dakota	0	2	1	8	11
Ohio	3	4	16	24	47
Oklahoma	6	10	11	19	46
Oregon	3	5	4	11	23
Pennsylvania	2	11	19	29	61
Rhode Island	0	0	0	1	1
South Carolina	0	6	9	21	36
South Dakota	2	0	1	2	5
Tennessee	4	8	13	33	58
Texas	13	30	51	102	196
Utah	0	4	5	6	15
Vermont	0	0	0	1	1
Virginia	4	8	6	17	35
Washington	2	6	4	8	20
West Virginia	1	3	6	4	14
Wisconsin	1	4	6	7	18
Wyoming	1	1	0	5	7
National	123	336	444	891	1,794
Puerto Rico	0	3	0	6	9