



DOT HS 811 641

July 2012

Children

In 2010, there were 61 million children age 14 and younger in the United States, 20 percent of the total U.S. resident population in 2010.

Motor vehicle crashes were the leading cause of death for children age 4 and ages 11 to 14 (based on 2009 figures, which are the latest mortality data currently available from the National Center for Health Statistics).

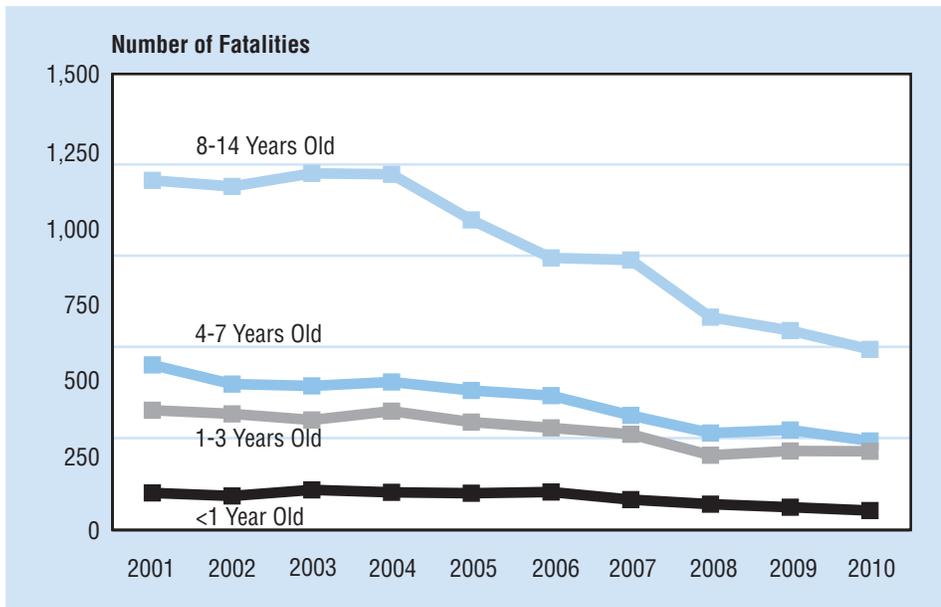
During 2010, there were a total of 32,885 traffic fatalities in the United States. The 14-and-younger age group accounted for 1,210 (4%) of those traffic fatalities, which is an 8-percent decrease from the 1,320 fatalities in 2009. In 2010, there were an additional 171,000 children age 14 and younger injured, which is a 4-percent decrease from the 179,000 children injured in 2009.

An average of 3 children age 14 and younger were killed and 469 were injured every day in the United States in motor vehicle crashes during 2010.

In the 14-and-younger age group, males accounted for 57 percent of the fatalities and 52 percent of those injured in motor vehicle crashes during 2010.

Motor vehicle crashes were the leading cause of death for children age 4 and ages 11 to 14 years old.

Figure 1
Traffic Fatalities Among Children Age 14 and Younger, by Age Group, 2001–2010



Restraint Use and Its 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 2010, 4,960 passenger vehicle occupants age 14 and younger were involved in fatal crashes. For those children for whom restraint use was known, 20 percent were unrestrained; among those who were fatally injured, 41 percent were unrestrained.

Table 1

Percent of Passenger Vehicle Occupants Involved in Fatal Crashes, by Restraint Use and Age Group, 2010

Restraint Use (%)	Age Group (Years)						Total
	<1	1-3	4-7	8-14	15-20	All Other	
Restraint Used	93	86	79	76	61	69	69
Restraint Not Used	7	14	21	24	39	31	31

Note: Excluding unknown age and unknown restraint use.

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

In 2010, there were 291 passenger vehicle occupant fatalities among children age 4 and younger. Of those 291 fatalities, where restraint use was known (274), 77 (28%) were totally unrestrained.

Table 2

Children Age 4 and Younger Killed in Passenger Vehicles, by Type of Restraint and Age Group, 2010

Type of Restraint	Age Group (Years)		Total
	<1	1-4	
None Used	7	70	77
Adult Seat Belt	0	19	19
Child Seat	48	129	177
Restraint Used-Unknown	0	1	1
Unknown	4	13	17
Total	59	232	291

Among children under age 5 in passenger vehicles, an estimated 303 lives were saved in 2010 by restraint use. Of these 303 lives saved, 285 were associated with the use of child safety seats and 18 with the use of adult seat belts. At 100-percent child safety seat use for children under age 5, an estimated 353 lives (that is, an additional 50) could have been saved in 2010.

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

Over the period 1975 through 2010 an estimated 9,611 lives were saved by child restraints (child safety seats or adult seat belts) for children under the age of 5 in passenger vehicles.

NHTSA conducted the National Survey of the Use of Booster Seats (NSUBS) and produced a Technical Report (DOT HS 811 377) in September 2010 titled “The 2009 National Survey of the Use of Booster Seats.” Table 3 provides data on the use of child restraints by age and race/ethnicity in 2009. Child restraints include child safety seats, seat belts, and booster seats.

Table 3

Child Restraint Use, by Age and Race/Ethnicity in 2009

Race/Ethnicity (Percent)	Age Birth–12 Months	Age 1–3 Years	Age 4–7 Years	Age 8–12 Years
Hispanic	94%	88%	74%	79%
African American Non-Hispanic	98%	92%	83%	75%
White Non-Hispanic	99%	99%	93%	91%
Asian Non-Hispanic	NA	100%	97%	80%
Other	NA	99%	94%	90%

NA: Data not sufficient to produce a reliable estimate

Source: The 2009 National Survey of the Use of Booster Seats, NCSA/NHTSA (DOT HS 811 377)

Pedestrians

There were a total of 4,280 pedestrian fatalities in 2010, the 14-and-younger age group accounted for 256 (6%) of those fatalities. More than one-fifth (21%) of the traffic fatalities in the 14-and-younger age group were pedestrians.

In 2001, there were 446 pedestrian fatalities in the 14-and-younger age group. From 2001 to 2010, the number of pedestrian fatalities in this age group decreased by about 43 percent, with the 8- to 14-year-old age group showing the largest decrease in number of fatalities (48%).

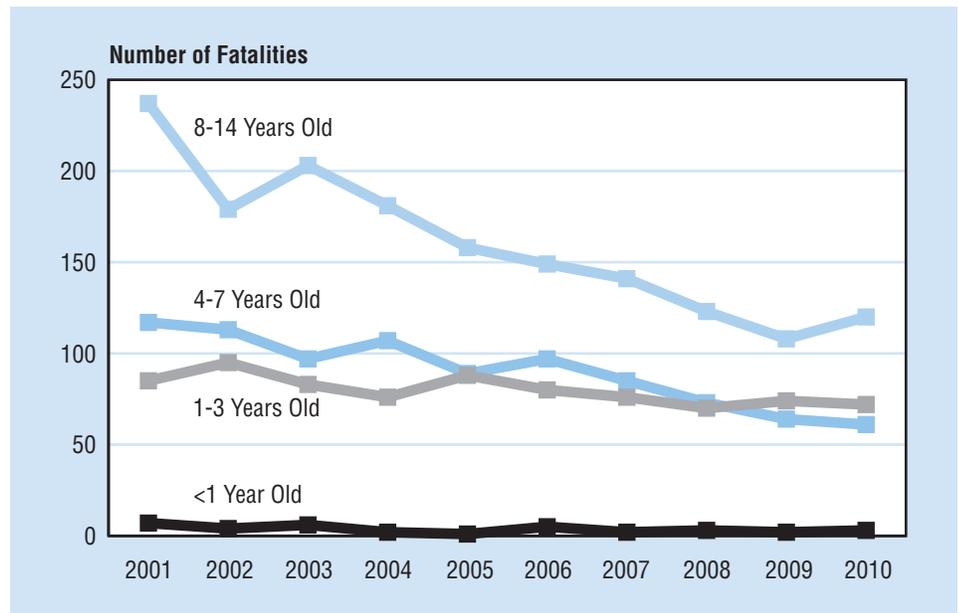
Of the 256 pedestrian fatalities among children age 14 and younger in 2010, 154 (60%) of those killed were males.

In 2010, an estimated 70,000 pedestrians were injured, 14,000 of those injured were age 14 and younger, and males accounted for 57 percent (8,000) of those 14,000 injured.

Important Safety Reminders

- Failure to read the child safety seat instructions, in addition to vehicle owner’s manual instructions regarding seat belts, could result in death or serious injury as a result of a failure of the child safety seat to be properly secured 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 younger sit in the rear seat away from the force of a deploying air bag.
- Children age 12 and younger 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.

Figure 2
Pedestrian Fatalities Among Children Age 14 and Younger, by Age Group, 2001–2010



In 2010, 18 percent of the pedalcyclists injured in motor vehicle crashes were 14 years old and younger.

During 2010, the highest percentage of fatalities among pedestrians 14 and younger occurred between 4 p.m. and 7:59 p.m. (41%). The second highest percentage of fatalities among young pedestrians were between the hours of noon and 3:59 p.m. (22%). Between the hours of 8 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. the 14-and-younger age group accounted for 18 percent of the pedestrian fatalities.

Eighty-three percent of the pedestrian fatalities among the 14-and-younger age group occurred at non-intersection locations, an increase from 73% in 2009.

Pedalcyclists

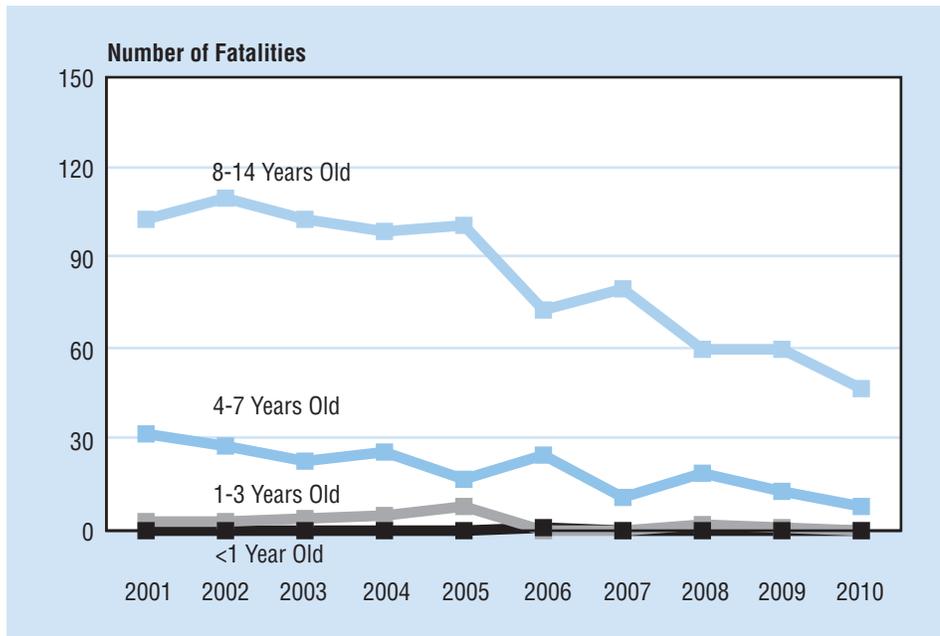
Pedalcyclists are riders of bicycles (two-wheel non-motorized cycles) and other cycles (tricycles and unicycles) powered solely by pedals.

A total of 618 pedalcyclists were killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2010. The 14-and-younger age group accounted for 9 percent (55) of those fatalities, and males accounted for 78 percent (43) of the fatalities among pedalcyclists age 14 and younger.

The 55 pedalcyclist fatalities in 2010 for the 14-and-younger age group represent a decrease of 60 percent from the 138 killed in 2001.

In 2010, an estimated 52,000 pedalcyclists were injured in motor vehicle traffic crashes. Eighteen percent (or an estimated 9,000) of the pedalcyclists who were injured were age 14 and younger.

Figure 3
Pedalcyclist Fatalities Among Children 14 and Younger, by Age Group, 2001–2010



In 2010, 17 percent of the children age 14 and younger killed in crashes were killed in alcohol-impaired driving crashes.

Alcohol-Impaired Driving Crashes and Children

In 2010, of the 1,210 children age 14 and younger killed, 211 (17%) were killed in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes. Out of those 211 deaths, 62 percent (131) were passengers of a vehicle with a driver who had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or higher.

Another 25 children age 14 and younger who were killed in traffic crashes in 2010 were pedestrians or pedalcyclists who were struck by drivers with a BAC of .08 g/dL or higher.

For more information:

Information on traffic fatalities is available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis (NCSA), NVS-424, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590. NCSA can be contacted on 800-934-8517 or via the following email address: ncsaweb@dot.gov. General information on highway traffic safety can be accessed by Internet users at 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 *Alcohol-Impaired Driving*, *Bicyclists and Other Cyclists*, *Large Trucks*, *Motorcycles*, *Occupant Protection*, *Older Population*, *Overview*, *Passenger Vehicles*, *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 www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/CATS/index.aspx.



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

Table 4
Fatalities Among Children Age 14 and Younger, by State and Age Group, 2010

State	Age Group (Years)				Total
	<1	1-3	4-7	8-14	
Alabama	4	6	8	21	39
Alaska	0	0	1	3	4
Arizona	1	10	5	16	32
Arkansas	0	3	4	6	13
California	7	12	24	38	81
Colorado	1	5	4	7	17
Connecticut	0	1	2	2	5
Delaware	0	0	0	4	4
Dist of Columbia	0	0	1	1	2
Florida	1	15	22	37	75
Georgia	1	18	16	33	68
Hawaii	0	0	0	3	3
Idaho	0	3	3	8	14
Illinois	1	5	8	14	28
Indiana	2	4	6	17	29
Iowa	2	1	5	9	17
Kansas	0	6	5	12	23
Kentucky	5	9	7	21	42
Louisiana	0	13	7	18	38
Maine	0	0	1	3	4
Maryland	0	2	3	7	12
Massachusetts	0	1	2	2	5
Michigan	3	5	6	16	30
Minnesota	2	2	4	12	20
Mississippi	0	10	7	11	28
Missouri	2	5	8	10	25
Montana	0	0	3	7	10
Nebraska	0	2	0	9	11
Nevada	0	2	1	4	7
New Hampshire	0	0	0	1	1
New Jersey	0	3	3	5	11
New Mexico	0	6	5	5	16
New York	3	6	9	30	48
North Carolina	4	16	13	20	53
North Dakota	0	1	1	1	3
Ohio	5	10	8	18	41
Oklahoma	0	6	10	13	29
Oregon	1	3	3	3	10
Pennsylvania	0	9	8	16	33
Rhode Island	0	0	0	3	3
South Carolina	0	8	3	11	22
South Dakota	0	1	0	6	7
Tennessee	4	5	9	11	29
Texas	9	28	33	63	133
Utah	2	3	7	8	20
Vermont	0	0	2	0	2
Virginia	0	4	1	9	14
Washington	2	5	4	7	18
West Virginia	2	3	4	2	11
Wisconsin	0	1	6	10	17
Wyoming	0	1	1	1	3
National	64	259	293	594	1,210
Puerto Rico	1	2	3	3	9