



# CHILD PASSENGER SEAT FACT SHEET

## Nationwide Statistics on Children, Crashes and Restraint Use

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children ages 2 and older.
- In 2006, 670 children under age 8 were killed as occupants of passenger motor vehicles. 452 of these fatalities were children under age 5.
- Of those fatalities among children under age 5 where restraint use was known (427), 35% were unrestrained.
- Best practice suggests children be restrained in car seats until they reach the upper weight limit of the harness, usually around 40 pounds. Children should then use a booster seat until the lap/shoulder belt fits them properly, usually around 80 pounds or 4'9".
- In 2006, 425 lives of children under the age of 5 were saved by child restraint use. Of those who were saved, 392 were in car seats and 32 were in adult seat belts. It is estimated that an additional 98 lives could have been saved if all children under age 5 were properly restrained in safety seats.
- Arizona ranks number four for child passenger fatalities in 2006. States in the top five include:
  - Texas (76 fatalities)
  - California (70 fatalities)
  - Georgia (31 fatalities)
  - **Arizona (28 fatalities)**
  - Florida (28 fatalities)

## Arizona Statistics on Children, Crashes and Restraint Use

- In 2006, 28 child passengers (under age 8) were killed in a motor vehicle crash in Arizona.
- Of the 28 fatalities, three occupants were 1-years-old; four were 2-years-old; six were 3-years-old; three were 4-years-olds; four were 5-years-old; three were 6-years-old and five were 7-years-old.
- There are currently 692,590 children under age 8 in Arizona. All of these children should be in a car or booster seat when riding in a motor vehicle.

## Safety Seat Usage

- Since 1975, nearly 8,700 lives have been saved by the proper use of child restraints.
- 98 percent of America's infants and 89 percent of children ages 1 to 3 are now regularly restrained, however, many children ages 4 through 7 remain improperly restrained for their size and age. Studies show that 72 percent of parents are not using car seats correctly.
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- Once a child outgrows their car seat, they are not yet ready for an adult seatbelt. If a child is under 4'9" and weighs 80 pounds or less, it is strongly recommended that they sit in a booster seat to maximize their safety in a vehicle.

## Car Seat Effectiveness

- Child safety seats reduce the risk of death by 71 percent for infants and 54 percent for toddlers.
- Using a booster seat with a lap and shoulder belt instead of a seat belt alone reduces a child's risk of injury by 59 percent.

## State Laws

- 50 states, including the District of Columbia, have laws that require child safety seats.
- 38 states, including the District of Columbia, have booster seat laws.
- 11 states, including Arizona, **only** have laws that cover children up to age 4 and/or 40 pounds.