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ABSTRACT

This document provides statistical information on the incidence of U.S. motor vehicle-related accidents and fatalities involving children. Data include: (1) total traffic fatalities among children 0-14 years old, by age group, 1990-2000; (2) total pedestrian fatalities among children 0-14 years old, by age group, 1990-2000; (3) total pedalcyclist fatalities among children 0-14 years old, by age group, 1990-2000; (4) restraint use by passenger vehicle occupants involved in fatal crashes by age group, 2000; (5) children under 5 years old fatally injured in passenger vehicle crashes, by age group and type of restraint, 2000; and (6) restraint use by children under 5 years old. According to the data, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children of every age from 4 to 14 years old, and the 0-14 age group accounted for 6 percent of traffic fatalities in 2000. (EV)

Children. Traffic Safety Facts 2000.

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

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Traffic Safety Facts 2000

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



Children

In 2000, there were 59 million children under 15 years old in the United States. This age group (0-14 years) made up 21 percent of the total U.S. resident population in 2000.

Motor vehicle crashes are the **leading cause of death** for children of every age from 4 to 14 years old (based on 1998 figures, which are the latest mortality data currently available from the National Center for Health Statistics).

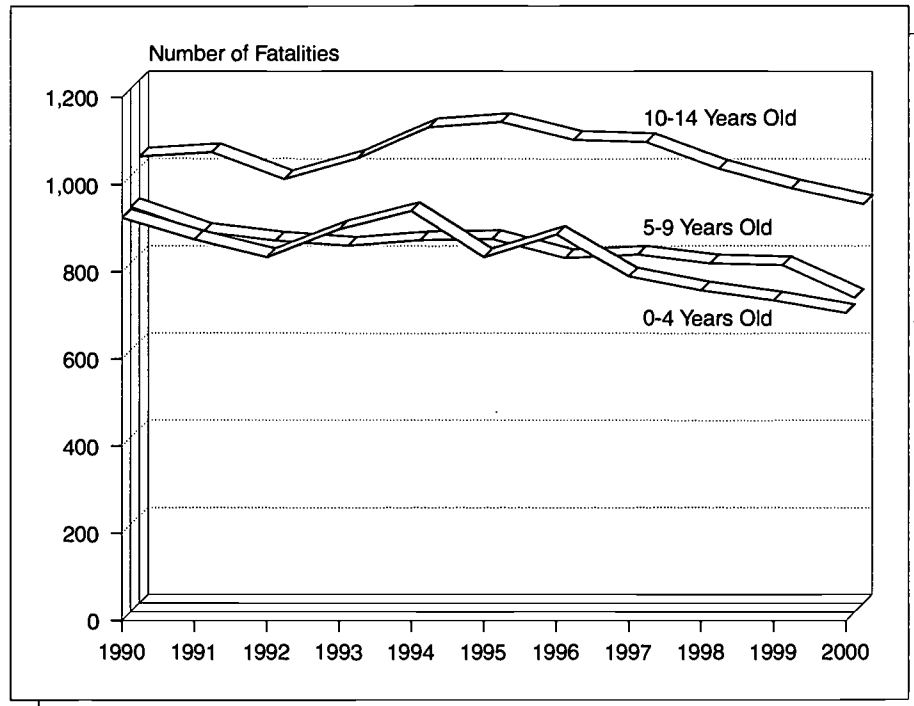
In 2000, there were a total of 41,821 traffic fatalities in the United States. The 0-14 age group accounted for 6 percent (2,343) of those traffic fatalities. In addition, children under 15 years old accounted for 5 percent (1,668) of all vehicle **occupant fatalities**, 9 percent (291,000) of all the **people injured** in motor vehicle crashes, and 8 percent (248,000) of all the vehicle occupants injured in crashes.

In the United States, an average of 6 children 0-14 years old were killed and 797 were injured every day in motor vehicle crashes during 2000.

In the 0-14 year age group, males accounted for 56 percent of the fatalities and 51 percent of those injured in motor vehicle crashes during 2000.

“Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children from 4 to 14 years old.”

Figure 1. Total Traffic Fatalities Among Children 0-14 Years Old by Age Group, 1990-2000



8
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9
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Child Endangerment

In 2000, 20 percent of the children under 15 years old who were killed in motor vehicle crashes were killed in alcohol-related crashes.

Of the children 0-14 years old who were killed in alcohol-related crashes during 2000, almost half (223) were passengers in vehicles with drivers who had been drinking, with blood alcohol concentration (BAC) levels of 0.01 gram per deciliter (g/dl) or higher. An additional 123 children were killed as passengers in vehicles with drivers who had not been drinking.

Another 80 children under 15 years old who were killed in traffic crashes in 2000 were pedestrians or pedalcyclists who were struck by drinking drivers (BAC ≥0.01 g/dl).

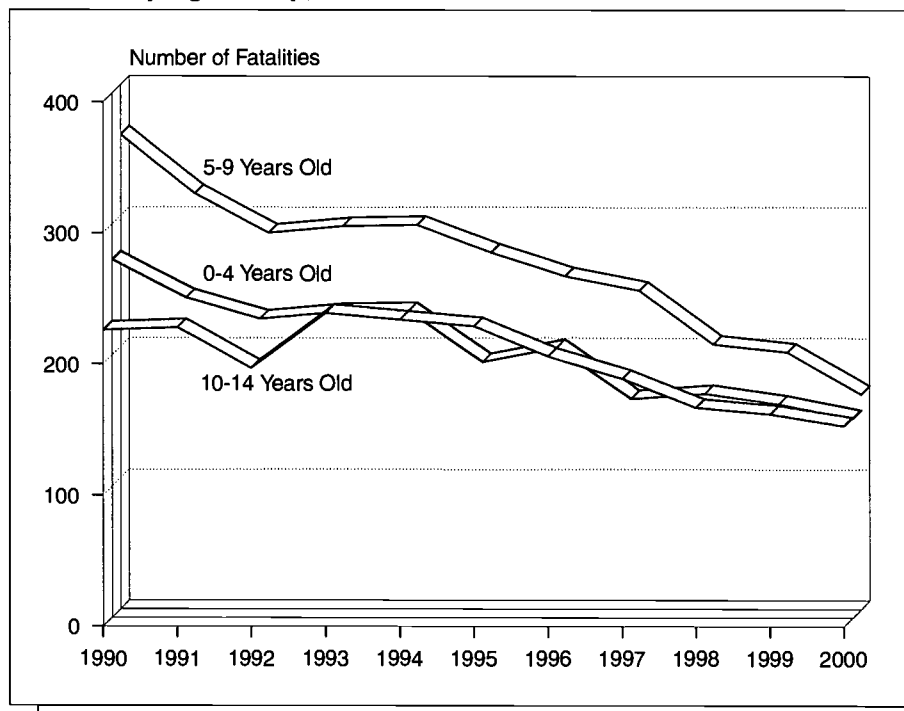
Pedestrians

In 1990, there were 861 pedestrian fatalities in the 0-14 year age group. From 1990 to 2000, the number of pedestrian fatalities in this age group decreased by 46 percent, with the 5-9 year age group showing the largest decrease.

There were 4,739 pedestrian fatalities in 2000. The 0-14 age group accounted for 469 (10 percent) of those fatalities, and 59 percent of the pedestrian fatalities in this age group were males.

“In 2000, 20 percent of the children under 15 years old killed in crashes were killed in alcohol-related crashes.”

Figure 2. Total Pedestrian Fatalities Among Children 0-14 Years Old by Age Group, 1990-2000



In 2000, NHTSA conducted the National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS). One of the studies in the survey was the Controlled Intersection Study, which provided more detailed information about child restraint use for children under 5 years old.

Table 3. Restraint Use by Children Under 5 Years Old

Grouping	Restraint Use (Percent)	Grouping	Restraint Use (Percent)
Overall	91	Rush Hour	95
Infants (<1 Year)	95	Non-Rush Hour	92
Toddlers (1 to 4 Years)	91	Weekday	94
Passenger Cars	92	Weekend	84
Light Trucks	98	City	96
Front Seat	94	Suburban	94
Back Seat	91	Rural	72

“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.”

Failure to read the child safety seat instructions, in addition to vehicle owner manual instructions regarding safety 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.

For more information:

Information on youth safety is available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, NRD-31, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590. NCSA information can also be obtained by telephone or by fax-on-demand at 1-800-934-8517. 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.dot.gov/people/nrsa>. To report a safety-related problem or to inquire about motor vehicle safety information, contact the Auto Safety Hotline at 1-800-424-9393.

U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

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