

Traffic Safety Facts

2007 Data

Children

In 2007, 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 2007.

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for ages 3 to 6 and 8 to 14 (based on 2005 figures, which are the latest mortality data currently available from the National Center for Health Statistics).

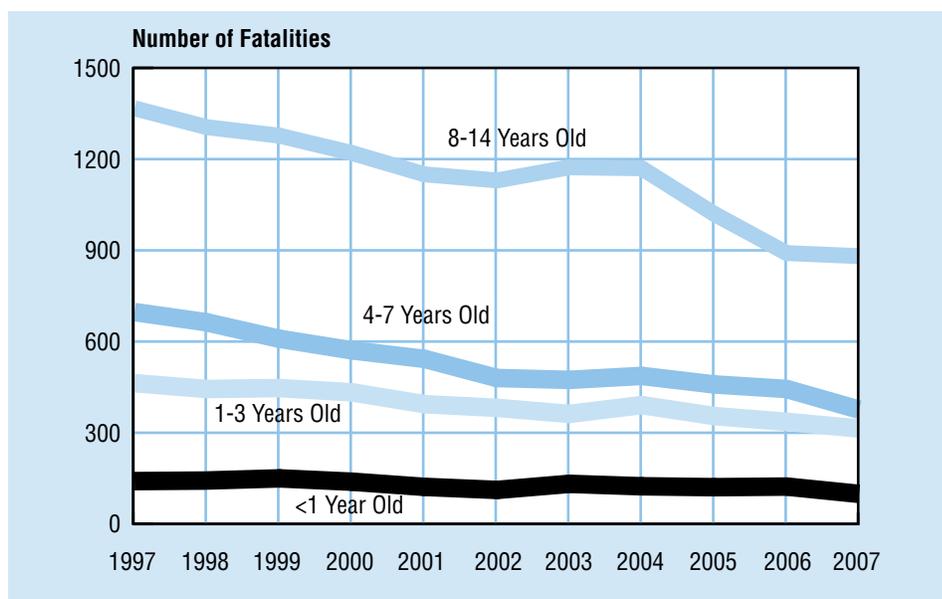
In 2007, there were a total of 41,059 traffic fatalities in the United States. The 14-and-younger age group accounted for 4 percent (1,670) of those traffic fatalities. This age group accounted for 4 percent (1,248) of all vehicle occupant fatalities, 8 percent (200,000) of all the people injured in motor vehicle crashes, and 7 percent (174,000) of all the vehicle occupants injured in crashes.

“Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children from 3 to 6 and 8 to 14 years old.”

Every day in the United States, an average of 5 children age 14 and younger were killed and 548 were injured in motor vehicle crashes during 2007.

In the 14-and-younger age group, males accounted for 56 percent of the fatalities and 48 percent of those injured in motor vehicle crashes during 2007.

Figure 1
Total Traffic Fatalities Among Children Age 14 and Younger by Age Group, 1997-2007



Alcohol-Impaired Driving Crashes and Children

In 2007, a total of 1,670 children age 14 and younger were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes. Of those 1,670 fatalities, 245 (15%) occurred in alcohol-impaired driving crashes. Out of those 245 deaths, more than half (130) were occupants of a vehicle with a driver who had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level of .08 or higher.

Another 29 children age 14 and younger who were killed in traffic crashes in 2007 were pedestrians or pedalcyclists who were struck by drivers with a BAC of .08 or higher.

Pedestrians

There were a total of 4,654 pedestrian fatalities in 2007, in which the 14-and-younger age group accounted for 306 (7%) of those fatalities. Almost one-fifth (18%) of the traffic fatalities in the 14-and-younger age group were pedestrians.

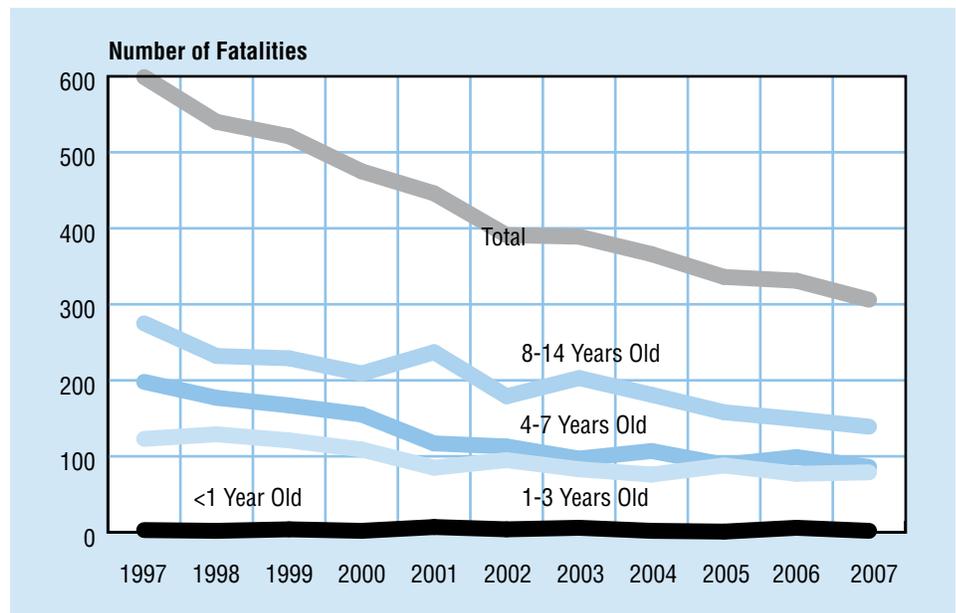
In 1997, there were 599 pedestrian fatalities in the 14-and-younger age group. From 1997 to 2007, the number of pedestrian fatalities in this age group decreased by 49 percent, with the 4- to 7-year-old age group showing the largest decrease (57%).

Of the total 306 pedestrian fatalities among children age 14 and younger in 2007, 187 (61%) of those killed were males.

In 2007, an estimated 70,000 pedestrians were injured, 14,000 of those injured were age 14 and younger, and males accounted for 54 percent (8,000) of those 14,000 injured.

“In 2007, 20 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 Younger by Age Group, 1997-2007



During 2007, the highest percentage of fatalities among young pedestrians occurred between 4 p.m. and 7:59 p.m. (39%). The second highest percentage of fatalities among young pedestrians were between the hours of noon and 3:59 p.m. (22%), which is a 2-percent increase from 2006 during those same hours. Between the hours of 8 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. the 14-and-younger age group accounted for 20 percent of the pedestrian fatalities as compared to 2006 which was higher during this same time at 24 percent.

Eighty percent of the pedestrian fatalities among the 14-and-younger age group occurred at non-intersection locations, which is a slight increase from 2006 (77%).

Pedalcyclists

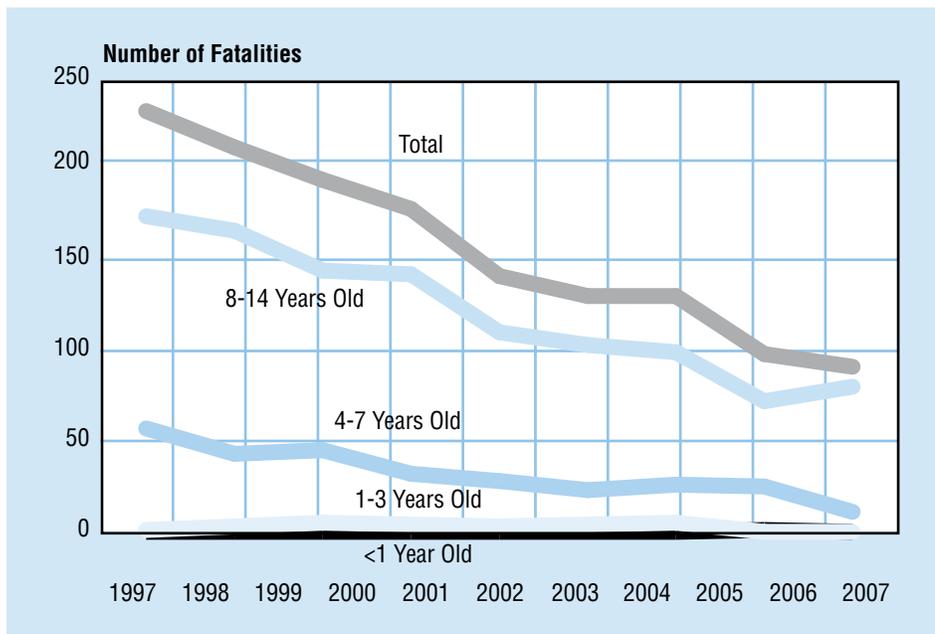
A total of 698 pedalcyclists were killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2007. The 14-and-younger age group accounted for 13 percent (91) of those fatalities, and males accounted for 80 percent (73) of the fatalities among pedalcyclists age 14 and younger.

The 91 pedalcyclist fatalities in 2007 for the 14-and-younger age group represent a decrease of 61 percent from the 232 killed in 1997.

In 2007, an estimated 43,000 pedalcyclists were injured in motor vehicle traffic crashes. Twenty-four percent (or an estimated 10,000) of the pedalcyclists who were injured were age 14 or younger.

“In 2007, 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 2007, 6,532 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, 2007

Percent Unrestrained	Age Group (Years)						Total
	<1	1-3	4-7	8-14	15-20	All Other	
Restraint Used	87	85	76	68	57	66	65
Restraint Not Used	13	15	24	32	43	34	35

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 (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 2007, there were 385 passenger vehicle occupant fatalities among children age 4 and younger. Of those 385 fatalities, where restraint use was known (363), 109 (30%) were totally unrestrained.

Table 2
Children Age 4 and Younger Fatally Injured in Passenger Vehicle Crashes by Age Group and Type of Restraint, 2007

	Age Group (Years)		Total
	<1	1-4	
None Used	22	87	109
Adult Seat Belt	1	23	24
Child Seat	63	165	228
Restraint Used-Unknown	0	2	2
Unknown	9	13	22
Total	95	290	385

Among children under age 5, an estimated 382 lives were saved in 2007 by child restraint use. Of these 382 lives saved, 358 were associated with the use of child safety seats and 24 with the use of adult seat belts. At 100 percent child safety seat use for children under age 5, an estimated 453 lives (that is, an additional 71) could have been saved.

Over the period 1975 through 2007, an estimated 8,709 lives were saved by child restraints (child safety seats or adults seat belts).

NHTSA conducted the National Survey of the Use of Booster Seats (NSUBS) and produced a Research Note (DOT HS 810 897) in January 2008 titled "Child Restraint Use in 2007 -- Demographic Results." Table 3 provides data on the use of child restraints by age and race/ethnicity in 2007.

Table 3
Child Restraint Use by Age and Race/Ethnicity in 2007

	Age Birth-12 Months	Age 1-3 Years	Age 4-7 Years	Age 8-12 Years
Hispanic	87%	91%	75%	78%
African American Non-Hispanic	98%	82%	73%	82%
White Non-Hispanic	100%	99%	90%	86%
Asian Non-Hispanic	na	na	94%	99%
Other	100%	95%	87%	78%

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

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-424, 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 www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov. 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/cats>.

Table 4
Total Traffic Fatalities Among Children Ag

