

for Parents



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Booster Seat Law Will Help Keep Kids Safe

In October, children in Connecticut will start riding safer.

On October 1st, Connecticut's booster seat law will go into effect and children will need to be in an appropriate child restraint system until they are over 6 years old and over 60 pounds (they must meet both the age and weight requirements). For most child restraint systems this means that when the

children are between 40 and 60 pounds, this system will be either a booster seat or a forward facing seat with a weight limit for the harnesses of at least 60 pounds. Additionally, when children are in a booster seat, they must use a lap and shoulder belt, not just a lap belt.

Booster seats are an important step for children between the traditional child safety seat and the seat belt. Seat belts are made to fit an average size adult, not a child. When a small child wears a seat belt, it doesn't fit properly and can lead to serious injury or death. A seat belt should fit on the child's collarbone and hip bones, not on the child's neck and stomach.

Booster seats "boost" children up so that the seat belt can fit properly on the bones. The bones are the strongest part of the body and best able to take the force of the crash. The crash forces are, generally, weight multiplied by speed. For example, a 50 pound child in a 30 m.p.h. crash, has 1,500 pounds of force. The bones are best able to take those forces, rather than the more delicate neck and stomach. Children should ride in a booster seat until they can safely ride in a seat belt. •

Booster Seat Law for Connecticut

*As of October 1, 2005, Connecticut's child restraint law will change and children will need to be in an appropriate child restraint until they are over 6 years old **and** over 60 pounds. With most car seats, this means that at 40 pounds, a child will change from riding in a car seat with harness straps to riding in a booster seat. Children must use a lap and shoulder belt (not just a lap belt) with a booster seat. Additionally, the law states that infants will need to remain rear-facing until they are at least one year old **and** 20 pounds.*

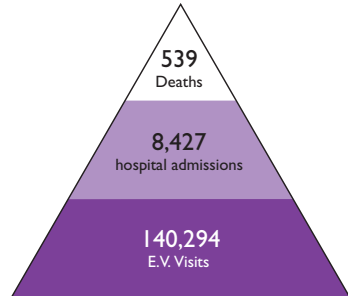
REPORTING ON CHILDHOOD INJURY

MV occupant injury among booster seat age children



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In 2001-02, motor vehicle crashes resulted in 539 deaths, 8,427 hospital admissions, and 140,294 emergency department visits among U.S. child occupants 4-8 years of age.



Among children 4-8 years of age

Source: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, WISQARS

Presented another way, for each occupant death there are 16 nonfatal injuries severe enough to result in a hospital admission and another 260 emergency department visits. Unfortunately, many children in this age group ride unstrained or restrained with adult seat belt. Inappropriate seat belt restraint for this age group results in a 3.5-fold increased risk of significant injury and a more than fourfold increased risk of significant head injury. Booster seat use for children in this age group will reduce injury and death. •

CORRECTION: In the previous issue, the numbers in the graph for the nonfatal bicycle injury rates for children under 15 were switched for the girls and the boys. The chart should have showed that the boys have a higher rate non-fatal bicycle injury than the girls. We apologize for our error. •

SAFE KIDS Day:

Follow the Leader – Safety Starts with You!

SAFE KIDS Day was a big success with the help of all of our volunteers. The theme for this year, Follow the Leader – Safety Starts with You!, was aimed at making sure that all members of the family were safe from injury. •



SAFE KIDS Day volunteers Pat Zainc and Reanne Criscio talk to the kids about how to keep safe from germs.

Cars Are Not Babysitters

With the temperatures getting hotter, it is important to be aware of children, heat and cars. Of children who died of heat in vehicles, 62% were in car seats. Some tips for keeping kids safe:

- Lock car doors when not in use.
- Teach kids that cars are not for playing or sleeping.
- Search the car when a child goes missing.
- Don't use keys to jingle in front of children. Plastic toy keys and real keys are similar and children may confuse the two.

For more information, click on www.lookbeforeyouleave.org •

For more information, please contact:

Connecticut SAFE KIDS 860-545-9988

or your local SAFE KIDS Chapter or Coalition

Greater Waterbury Chapter 203-709-3655

supported by St. Mary's Hospital and Waterbury Medical Association

Valley Parish Nurse Community Chapter 203-732-7584

supported by Griffin Hospital

Windham County Chapter 860-456-6978

supported by Windham Hospital

Fairfield County SAFE KIDS 203-853-7115

supported by Danbury Hospital and Greenwich Hospital

New London County SAFE KIDS 860-442-0733

supported by Lawrence & Memorial Hospital

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