



Why Kids Are at Risk

The bottom line is that *how* your child rides in your car may be just as important as external factors such as vehicle speed and road conditions.

Riding unrestrained is the single greatest risk factor for death and injury among child motor vehicle occupants. Among children ages 14 and under killed as occupants in motor vehicle crashes in 2002, 50 percent were not using safety restraints at the time of the collision.

Misuse is common. An estimated 85 percent of children who are placed in child safety seats and booster seats are improperly restrained. Misuse includes but is not limited to: using an inappropriate seat for the child's age and size, placing an infant who is either under 1 year or under 20 pounds in a forward-facing seat, not securing the seat tightly in the vehicle and not securing the child correctly in the seat.

The back seat is safest. It is estimated that children ages 12 and under are up to 36 percent less likely to die in a crash if they are in the rear seat of a passenger vehicle.

Other risk factors:

- As of January 1, 2004, 141 children have been killed by passenger air bags. Almost all children killed by passenger air bags were either unrestrained or improperly restrained at the time of the crash.
- Most crashes (75 percent) occur within 25 miles of home. The majority also occur on roads with posted speed limits of 40 mph or less.
- In 2002, 22 percent of all traffic deaths among children ages 14 and under involve alcohol. Of the children killed in alcohol-related crashes, more than half were passengers in vehicles with drunk drivers. .
- Rural areas have higher motor vehicle crash incidence rates and death rates; crashes in these areas also tend to be more severe.

Does this sound familiar?

"I've tried to install this seat four times and I still can't get it tight."

"But I've read the instructions five times, spent an hour installing my child's seat, I'm still not sure if it's installed correctly".

"There are so many seats to choose from, how do I know which is best for my child?"

"Do I need to use the metal piece that came with my seat?"

These are all common challenges parents and caregivers struggle with while trying to correctly install their child's safety seat. There are more than 100,000 possible combinations to consider between all the many different models of vehicles and child safety seats. It is no wonder that 4 out of 5 child safety seats are installed wrong and motor vehicle crashes remain the number one killer of children under the age of 14.

Most parents understand the importance of correctly using child safety seats on each and every ride. However, installing child safety seats correctly can be challenging.

Technicians will offer the following assistance to parents and caregivers:

- Ensure that the seat brought by the family has not been recalled
- Tips on how to choose an age, height and weight appropriate child safety seat
- Hands on instruction on how to install and use the appropriate child safety seat in the vehicle
- Hands on instruction on how to correctly place a child in the appropriate child safety seat
- Answer any questions parents or caregivers may have

Make an appointment today with one of the following Officers:

Sergeant David Scrivanic 732-542-3400 ext. 291

Patrolman Joseph LoPresti 732-542-3400 ext. 621

Patrolwoman Elena Mazzeo-Ignaczak 732-542-3400 ext. 458