

Using Evidence to Close Gaps In Laws

Good Policy Protects Child Passengers

Partners for
Child Passenger Safety
State Farm Insurance Companies
The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
Neighbors working together



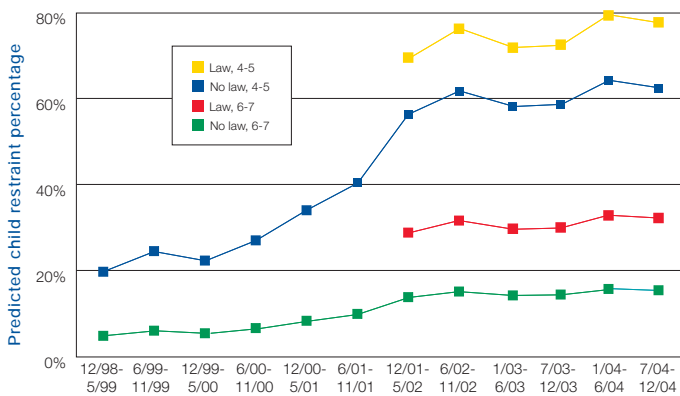
THREE STEPS to Optimizing Child-Passenger Safety Laws

Optimal occupant restraint laws need to include three provisions in order to be sure that all children are as well-protected as possible when riding in motor vehicles: child restraint use to at least age 8, seat belt use for all other passengers and rear seating for children to age 13.

STEP ONE:

Upgrade child restraint laws to include children through 8 years. These laws are proven effective at getting children into age- and size-appropriate restraints that are effective in reducing risk of injury and death over seat belts alone.

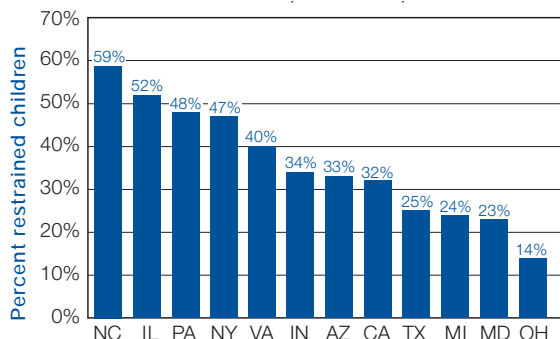
Effect of Booster Laws on Child Restraint Use Among 4- to 7-year-olds



- Children ages 4 through 7 years in states with booster seat laws are 39 percent more likely to be appropriately restrained in a booster seat or child safety seat than children in states without such laws.
- Six- to 7-year-olds were much more likely to be appropriately restrained if the law included 4- through 7-year-olds, rather than only 4- to 5-year-olds.

Source: Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, March 2007

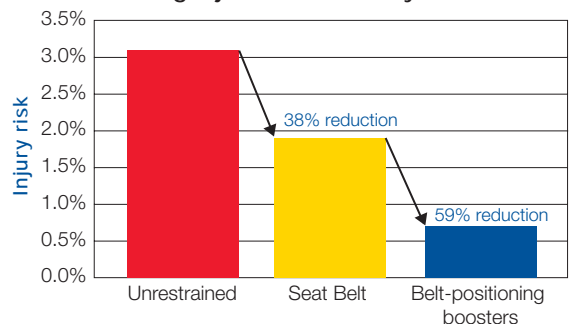
Booster Seat Use by State, 4 to 8 years: 2005



- Overall, 36 percent of children ages 4 to 8 are riding in booster seats.
- Three of the four states with the lowest booster seat use — Ohio, Michigan and Texas — do not have booster seat laws.
- The states with the higher booster seat use — North Carolina, Illinois and Pennsylvania — have booster laws through 7 years.

Source: PCPS data 2005

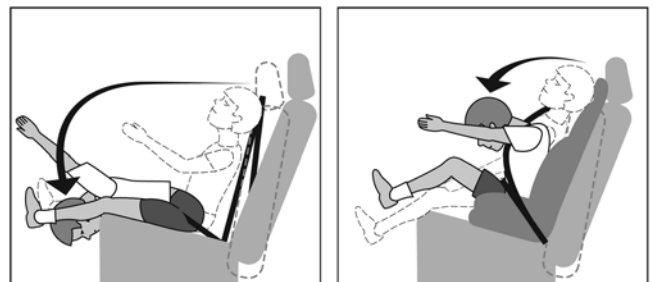
Effectiveness of Belt-positioning Booster Seats in Preventing Injuries to 4- to 8-year-olds



- Belt-positioning boosters are effective for children ages 4 through at least 7 years.
- Using a booster seat with a seat belt instead of using a seat belt alone for a child this age reduces the risk of injury by 59 percent.
- Child restraints, such as car seats and booster seats, reduce the risk of death by 28 percent for children ages 2 to 6 years, as compared with seat belts used alone.

Sources: JAMA, June 4, 2003; Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, June 2006

6-year-old in 35 mile per hour frontal crash



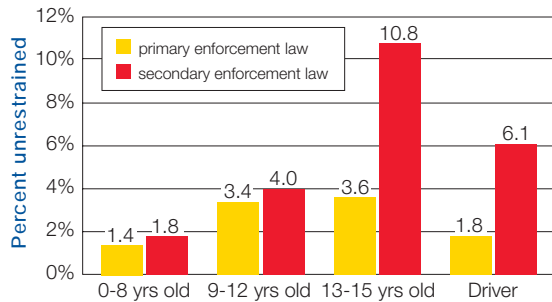
First figure: While any restraint is better than none, a seat belt that does not fit properly can cause severe head, spine and abdominal injuries in a crash. Second figure: The booster seat corrects the fit of the seat belt on the child, reducing the risk of these types of injuries.



STEP TWO

Upgrade laws to include primary seat belt laws in all seating positions. Research has shown that primary belt laws are more effective at getting adults and teens into seat belts than secondary laws. Children are more likely to be properly restrained for their age and size if the driver is buckled up.

Belt Use Among Children Ages 13-15 Years



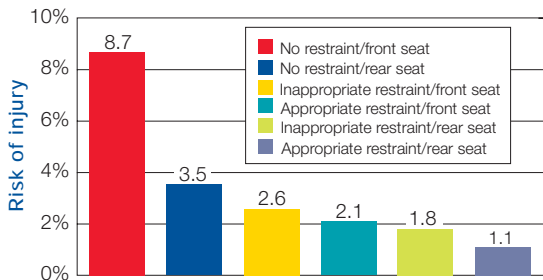
Children ages 13 through 15 years are more than twice as likely to be *unrestrained* in a secondary enforcement state as compared with a primary enforcement state.

Source: Accident Analysis and Prevention, March 2007

STEP THREE:

Include rear-seat requirements for children 12 years old and younger. Children are at a greater risk of injury in the front seat than in the rear seat. By restraining children (newborn to 12 years old) in the rear seat, you reduce their risk of injury in a crash by 38 percent.

Risk of Child Injury by Seat Row and Restraint Type



- Across all age groups, injury risk is lowest (less than 2 percent) when children are restrained in the age-appropriate restraint in the rear seat.
- For every restraint type, there was a higher risk of injury in the front seat than the rear seat.

Source: Pediatrics, March 2005

What is Partners for Child Passenger Safety (PCPS)?

PCPS is a research alliance between The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and State Farm. Created in 1998, PCPS is the world's largest study of newborns to children age 16 involved in motor vehicle crashes. Data is being collected in Ariz., Calif., Del., Ill., Ind., Md., Mich., Nev., N.Y., N.C., Ohio, Pa., Texas, Va., W.Va. and Washington, D.C. As of Dec. 31, 2005, more than 455,000 State Farm customers, transporting 669,000 children, had participated in the study. PCPS conducted 29,675 in-depth interviews and more than 800 crash investigations.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a booster seat law?

It is a state law to protect older children by requiring them to ride in a belt-positioning booster seat beyond age 4.

Do belt-positioning boosters really work?

Yes. Booster seats reduce a child's risk of injury in a crash to less than 1 percent by correcting the fit of an adult seat belt across a child who is less than 4 feet, 9 inches tall.

How much do booster seats cost?

Booster seats can cost less than \$20. Private- and state-funded free or low-cost distribution programs are available.

Where can you buy a booster seat?

Booster seats are available at department, discount and child specialty stores, as well as on the Internet.

Child Passenger Safety Internet Resources

Learn the basics of child passenger safety and watch videos showing correct installation of car seats at www.chop.edu/carseat.

For information on state child restraint and seat belt laws, visit www.saferoads.org.

