



Traffic Safety Outlook

Youth Traffic Safety: The High Risk Years



How big is the problem?

- ✚ Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for youth and young adults, accounting for about 29 percent of all deaths between 15-24 years of age, based on 1991 multiple cause of death data.
- ✚ Youths between 16 and 20 years of age are killed in traffic crashes at about twice the rate of the general population.
- ✚ Males of this age group are killed at more than twice the rate of females.
- ✚ Over 500,000 youth, 16 to 20 years, were injured in traffic crashes in 1994. Over 5,000 were killed.

What types of crashes are they involved in?

- ✚ The great majority (94 percent) of youth (16 to 20 years) traffic deaths occur to vehicle occupants. Pedestrian fatalities account for about five percent, bicyclists over one percent.
- ✚ Most youth traffic injuries (over 96 percent) also occur to vehicle occupants. About two percent occur to pedestrians, and over one percent to bicyclists.
- ✚ Nearly two-thirds (62 percent) of youth (16 to 20 years) killed in motor vehicles during 1994 were drivers. Over one-third were passengers.
- ✚ Almost 39 percent of youth (16 to 20 years) traffic fatalities in 1994 occurred in alcohol-related crashes.

What are the most effective solutions?

- ✚ Increasing safety belt use and decreasing alcohol involvement will have the greatest effect on youth traffic fatalities.
- ✚ About three-quarters of youth (16 to 20 years) passenger vehicle occupant fatalities (of known restraint use) in 1994 were unrestrained. If these youth had been wearing safety belts, about 45 percent of unrestrained fatalities, or over 1,400 in passenger vehicles, would have been saved.
- ✚ Front seat lap and shoulder belts are about 45 percent effective in preventing occupant fatalities.
- ✚ Safety belt use among youth passenger vehicle occupants with known restraint use was much lower in alcohol-related crashes than in crashes where alcohol was not involved. Only 21 percent of youth (16 to 20 years) drivers and 16 percent of youth passengers who were killed in alcohol-related crashes were buckled up.
- ✚ Speed is a contributing factor in a large number of youth traffic fatalities. In 1994, approximately 45 percent of all young driver fatalities (16 to 20 years) were speed-related. Over 49 percent of the young males were speeding, as were about 33 percent of the females.

Pre-School		Elementary/Jr. High School										Sr. High			College/Workplace												
<1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24			
165	185	180	207	203	180	178	176	167	152	165	162	181	228	354	509	972	1129	1209	1218	1189	1144	1093	1028	964			
Program Areas																											
Impaired Driving																											
45	48	47	37	42	37	37	25	31	34	27	40	38	43	86	121	247	385	438	566	587	624	592	591	544			
Occupant Protection																											
87	71	69	67	76	52	42	58	54	43	66	51	65	97	199	321	587	672	744	774	721	684	655	604	546			
Pedestrian Safety																											
1	44	60	70	59	76	64	57	41	54	45	52	35	48	54	46	51	49	52	54	64	74	57	66	85			
Pedalcyclist Safety																											
1	0	1	4	11	14	16	24	27	26	20	26	40	33	33	23	12	22	11	15	9	8	10	17	6			
Motorcycle Safety																											
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	5	2	2	8	10	14	25	36	67	82	109	99	111	111	90			
Enforcement (Speed)																											
43	41	42	42	52	40	25	31	35	40	36	35	30	71	115	231	461	513	528	564	566	518	505	437	416			
<1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24			
Pre-School												Elementary/Jr. High School												Sr. High		College/Workplace	

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Impaired Driving: Fatalities in which at least one driver or non-occupant had a positive blood alcohol content (BAC >= .01)

Occupant Protection: Unrestrained occupant fatalities for all vehicles (i.e., includes unhelmeted bicyclists and motorcyclists)

Pedestrian Safety: Fatalities of pedestrians

Pedalcyclist Safety: Fatalities of bicycles, tricycles, and other non-motored cycles (not including mopeds)

Motorcycle Safety: Fatalities of motored cycles

Enforcement (Speed): Fatalities in crashes in which a driver was driving too fast for conditions or in excess of posted maximum speed limit

Note: The fatalities described by program areas may be duplicated if more than one factor was involved in a crash. For example, a 17-year-old driver with a positive BAC, not wearing a safety belt, and exceeding the speed limit would appear under Impaired Driving, Occupant Protection, and Enforcement.