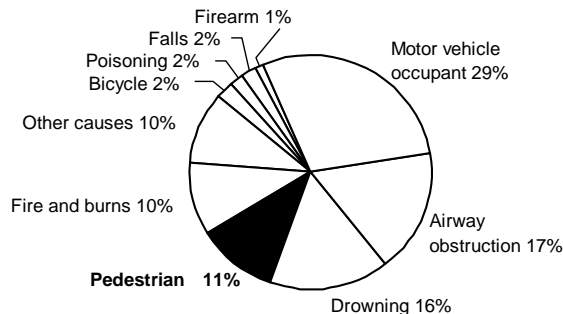




FACTS ABOUT INJURIES TO CHILD PEDESTRIANS

Leading Causes of Accidental Injury-Related Death for Children 14 and Under 2004



Pedestrian injury remains the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children ages 5 to 14.

- In 2002, 599 children ages 14 and under died from pedestrian injuries. Of these, 460 died in motor vehicle-related traffic crashes. The pedestrian injury death rate among children ages 14 and under declined 59 percent from 1987 to 2002.
- In 2003, nearly 38,400 children ages 14 and under were treated in hospital emergency rooms for pedestrian-related injuries.
- The number of child pedestrian deaths is four times higher on Halloween evening than on any other night of the year.
- The total annual cost of traffic-related pedestrian death and injury among children ages 14 and under is \$5.2 billion.

The majority of child pedestrian deaths and injuries are traffic-related. Although pedestrian injuries are not as common as motor vehicle occupant injuries, a disproportionate number of the injuries sustained by child pedestrians are severe.

- Children ages 14 and under are more likely to suffer pedestrian injuries in areas with high traffic volume, a higher number of parked vehicles on the street, higher posted speed limits, no divided highways, few pedestrian-control devices and few alternative play areas.
- Child pedestrian injuries occur more often in residential areas and on local roads that are straight, paved and dry.
- A national observational survey found that 9 out of 10 crosswalks within the vicinity of an elementary or middle school had at least one of four common hazards: crosswalks in poor condition or not present; drivers failed to stop, or stopped and made illegal turns; posted speed limits during school hours were 35 mph or more; and curb ramps were either outside the crosswalk or missing.

- A national survey of speeding in school zones found that two-thirds of drivers exceeded the posted speed limit during the 30-minute period before and after school.
- A national observational survey of motorist behavior at stop signs found that 45 percent did not coming to a complete stop, 37 percent rolled through the stop sign and 7 percent did not even slow down.
- A national survey found that nearly 60 percent of parents and children walking to school encountered at least one serious hazard. Commonly cited hazards included lack of sidewalks or crosswalks, wide roads and speeding drivers.

Children ages 4 and under are at the greatest risk from child pedestrian death. In 2002, children ages 4 and under accounted for more than 40 percent of pedestrian injury-related deaths.

- Nearly 10 percent of all child pedestrian-related injuries occur in driveways. Children ages 4 and under account for 80 percent of these driveway-related pedestrian injuries. A fenced play area, physically separated from residential driveways, could reduce the risk of driveway-related incidents by 50 percent.
- Toddlers (ages 1 to 2) sustain the highest number of pedestrian injuries. More than half of all toddler pedestrian injuries occur when a vehicle is backing up. Children from birth to age 2 are also more likely to suffer pedestrian injuries in parking lots and on sidewalks.

Certain groups of children are at higher risk for pedestrian-related injuries.

- Nearly two-thirds of child pedestrian deaths are among males.
- African-American children have a pedestrian injury death rate almost twice that of white children.
- For all ages, traffic-related pedestrian death rates are twice as high in urban areas as in rural areas, and non-traffic-related pedestrian death rates are twice as high in rural areas as in urban areas. Children living in areas that have a high population density of children, household crowding, a high housing density, low socioeconomic status, poor supervision and no safe play environments are more likely to suffer pedestrian injury.

There are a multitude of laws and policies that affect child pedestrian injuries, including low speed limits in residential areas, providing for pedestrian walkways, providing for crossing guards and requiring that pedestrians not cross streets at locations other than designated crosswalks.

- Enforcement of traffic laws, including apprehension of hit-and-run drivers, is effective in reducing traffic-related pedestrian death and injury.
- Traffic-calming measures such as speed humps are associated with an estimated reduction of 53 to 60 percent in the risk of injury or death among children struck by an automobile in their neighborhood.
- Practical, skills-based pedestrian safety training efforts have demonstrated improvements in children's traffic behavior.