
CHILD RESTRAINT FACT SHEET

March 2011

- Iowa has had a child passenger safety restraint law in effect since January 1, 1985 requiring that all vehicle occupants under age six be restrained regardless of seating position. In July of 2004, the law was strengthened by requiring children under age six be restrained in either a child safety seat or booster seat. Children age six to eleven were required to ride in either a booster seat or adult belt. In 2010, it was strengthened again to require safety belt use up to age 18 regardless of seating position.
- All 50 states have some type of child restraint law.
- During 2010, persons killed in vehicles due to Iowa traffic crashes included 8 children under age 11, up from 2009 when 6 children under age 11 died.
- Nationwide, 1,314 children under the age of 14 were killed in crashes in 2009, which is 2.5% less than the 2008 total of 1,347.
- In addition to the fatalities, 40-60 young children are seriously injured in Iowa vehicle crashes each year.
- In 1982, an Iowa observational survey of child restraint use indicated only 20% of young children were being restrained.
- With the implementation of the first child passenger safety law in 1985, child restraint use grew to 43% and gradual increases have been made since.
- Surveys conducted by the University of Iowa for the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau during 2010 measured Iowa's average child restraint usage at 93% for ages 0-11.
- Information collected from the child passenger restraint survey and Iowa's child passenger safety events, identify the following frequently observed types of misuse or non-use of child safety restraints in Iowa:
 - children ages 2-5 not restrained by a child safety seat,
 - children ages 6-8 graduated prematurely to an adult safety belt,
 - almost 7% of children not restrained by any means, and
 - 10% of children under age 11 riding inappropriately in the front seat of vehicle.

