

MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES & CHILDREN

Did you know?

- For every Utah child killed in a motor vehicle crash (MVC), another 7 are hospitalized and 133 are seen in emergency departments for motor vehicle-related injuries.¹
- Males ages 15-19 have the highest number of deaths and injuries in motor vehicle-related crashes.¹



UTAH CHILD MOTOR VEHICLE CRASH INJURY* Ages 0-19, 2002-2003

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

WHO

- 161 children ages 0-19 were killed in motor vehicle crashes, for an average of one child death every 5 days. 104 were boys (65%), 57 were girls (35%).¹
- 736 boys and 423 girls were hospitalized for MVC-related injuries.¹
- 21,386 children (11,678 boys and 9,708 girls) were seen in emergency departments for MVC injuries.¹
- Of the fatalities, 47% were motor vehicle passengers, 31% were motor vehicle drivers, 13% were pedestrians, 5% were riding ATVs, 2% were on motorcycles and 2% were on bicycles.²
- 12 of the children killed were pedestrians struck in private driveways or parking lots.³



WHEN

- 23% of all MVC fatalities occurred on Saturdays, making it the deadliest day of the week.²
- July and August are the deadliest months, with a combined 29% of all MVC-related deaths.²

WHY

- Teen drivers. Teenage drivers are involved in more than one-fourth (28%) of all MVCs in Utah.⁴
- Children who are in the wrong safety restraint for their age and size. Children ages 4-7 have a 59% lower risk of injury if they are in booster seats rather than adult seat belts.⁵
- Drowsy, drunk and drugged drivers. One-fourth (22%) of all fatal MVCs in Utah involve alcohol and other drugs.⁴

KEEP KIDS ALIVE

Infant Seats

Infants should ride in a rear-facing car seat in the back seat until at least 1 year old AND at least 20 lbs.



Child Safety Seats

Children over 1 year old and between 20 and 40 lbs. should ride in forward-facing car seats in the back seat.



Booster Seats

Children ages 4 to 8 and between 40 and 80 lbs. should ride in booster seats restrained with lap and shoulder belts until they are 4'9" tall. Adult seat belts alone won't fully protect a child this size in a crash.



Seat Belts

All passengers over 80 lbs. and 4'9" should wear a seat belt on every ride.

Back Seat is Best

The safest place for children under 12 is the back seat. Never place a child in front of an air bag.

THE TROUBLE WITH TEENS

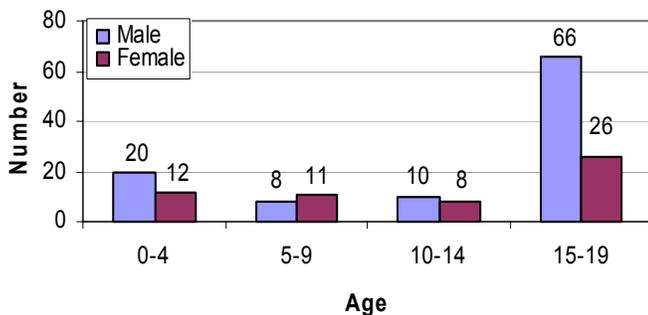
The charts below show the serious risks teens face when they get into a vehicle, whether as drivers or passengers.

Youths ages 15-19 sustained 57% of all child motor vehicle-related deaths and hospitalizations.¹

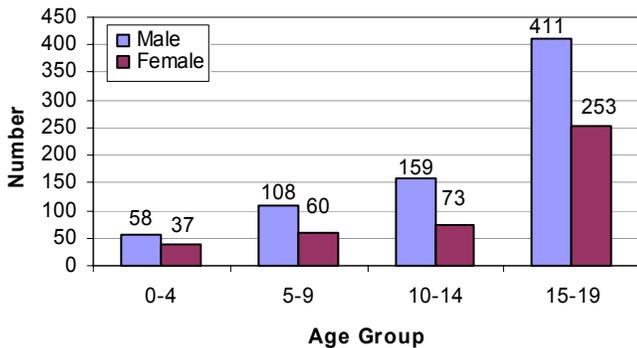
Crashes involving teen drivers with four or more passengers were nine times more likely to be fatal than crashes with fewer passengers.⁴



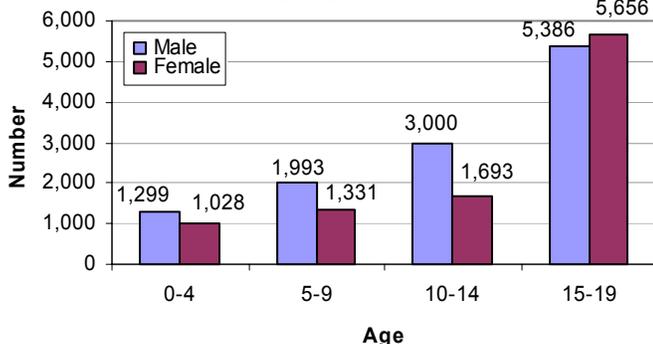
Utah Motor Vehicle-Related Deaths by Age and Sex, 2002-2003 (n=161)



Utah Motor Vehicle-Related Hospitalizations by Age and Sex, 2002-2003 (n=1,159)



Utah Motor Vehicle-Related ED Visits, 2002-2003, by Age and Sex (n=21,386)



CHILD MOTOR VEHICLE CRASH FATALITY EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE 1: A 5-year-old boy was killed when his mother fell asleep at the wheel. The boy was thrown from the car and run over.

PREVENTION: Drivers should never get behind the wheel when they are drowsy or impaired. Drivers who start to feel sleepy, should pull over and take a nap or change drivers.

EXAMPLE 2: Siblings ages 2 months and 5 years died of head injuries when the vehicle they were riding in hit a utility pole. The 5-year-old was in an adult seat belt and the infant was in a car seat but was not strapped into it.

PREVENTION: Children ages 4-8 should be in a booster seat, not a seat belt. Infants should be securely strapped into a rear-facing car seat.

EXAMPLE 3: A 16-year-old driver was speeding when he missed a turn, ran off the road and crashed. He and one passenger were not wearing seat belts and were ejected; the driver died and the passenger was critically injured. Two other passengers who were buckled survived.

PREVENTION: Obey speed limits and always wear a seat belt.

EXAMPLE 4: A one-year-old toddler was killed when his mother backed the family car out of the driveway and ran over him.

PREVENTION: Check around the vehicle for children every time you exit a garage or driveway. Don't let children play in the driveway or anywhere in or around a vehicle.



EXAMPLE 5: An 11-year-old boy was driving an ATV with his older brother when he crashed and was thrown off the vehicle. His helmet came off and he was killed.

PREVENTION: Young children should never drive large ATVs. Always strap helmets on securely and never put more than one person on an ATV, as it shifts the center of gravity and makes it more prone to rolling over.

*Motor vehicle crash injuries include drivers, passengers, pedestrians, motorcyclists, bicyclists and ATV riders.

Sources: 1. Utah Department of Health Indicator-based Information System (IBIS), 2005; 2. Utah Child Fatality Review Committee, 2005;

3. Utah Department of Health Violence and Injury Prevention Program;

4. Utah Crash Summary 2003; 5. JAMA 2003;289:2835-2840.