

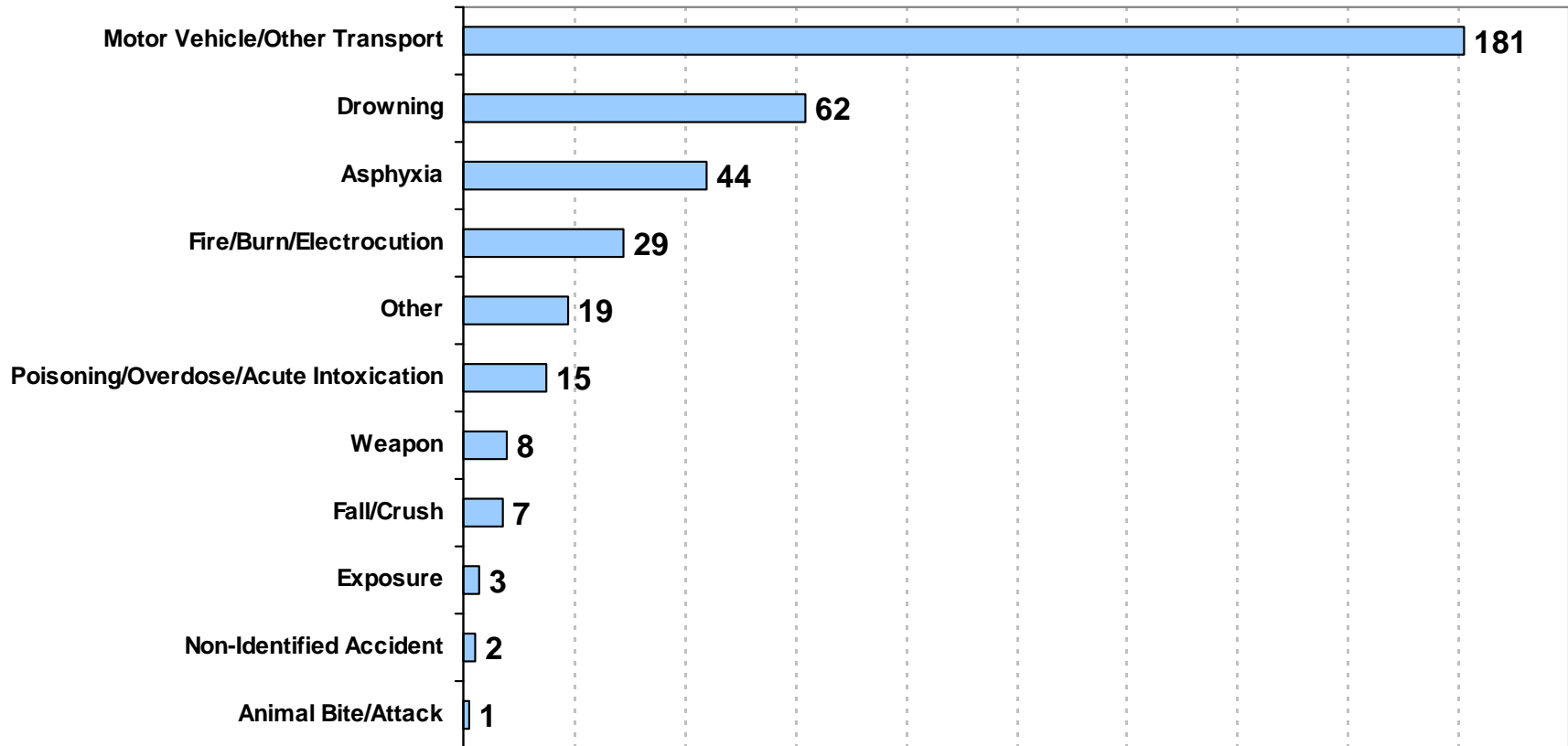
Protecting our Children and Youth

The Life Saving Benefits of
Child Safety Seats, Boosters,
and Seat Belts

The Problem

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among children ages 3 and over.
- Nationally, over half of the children who died in crashes were unrestrained.

Cause of Death where Manner of Death is Accident, 2006 (N=371)

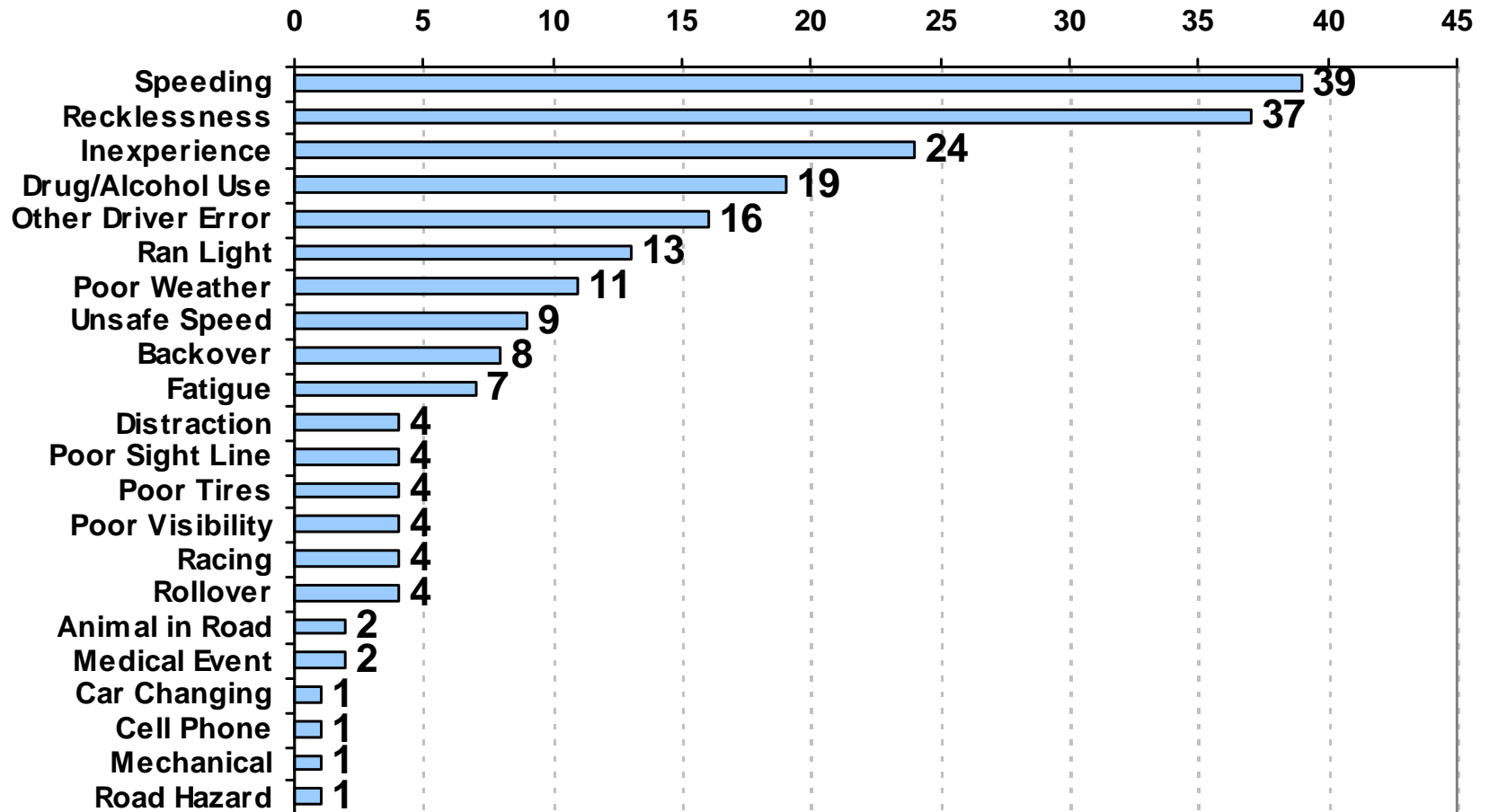


Leading causes of Accidental Child Deaths:

1. Motor Vehicle Crashes (48.8 percent);
2. Drowning (16.7 percent)
3. Asphyxia (11.9 percent)

Source: 2008 Texas Child Fatality Review Team Annual Report

Causes Listed for Motor Vehicle Crash, 2006



Source: 2008 Texas Child Fatality Review Team Annual Report

The Problem

Misuse rates for Child Restraints are high
and vary from 73% to over 90%

Texas Law - Children

Effective September 1st, 2009, all children under age 8, **UNLESS** taller than 4'9", need to be in a child safety seat system (including boosters), *according to the manufacturer's instructions.*

Use Best Practices!

Citations for the new law will be issued June 1, 2010 –

Citations for unrestrained children who are younger than 5 years old and less than 36" tall may be issued *prior* to June 1, 2010

Texas Law - Adults

Seat Belt on

Everyone in the vehicle

Everywhere in the vehicle

When we travel in a car, we are moving at the same speed as the car

In a crash, the car is stopped by:

- Another vehicle
- A tree
- Another object

In a crash, **properly restrained** occupants will be stopped by:

- Seat belt
- Harnesses of a Child Safety Seat

In a crash, **unrestrained** occupants will be stopped by:

- Windshield
- Hard surface in the vehicle
- Another person
- Pavement (if ejected)

There Are Three Collisions When A Crash Occurs

1. The vehicle collision
2. The human collision
3. The internal organs collision

How Seat Belts, Air Bags, and Child Restraints Protect

1. They prevent people from being thrown from the vehicle
2. Prevent people from hitting the hard interior surfaces of the vehicle and colliding with other people
3. Spread crash forces over a wide area of the body, putting less stress on any one part
4. Help the body slow down, minimizing internal organs collision
5. Protect the brain and spinal cord

Premature Use of Seat Belts

If used too soon or incorrectly, a seat belt can cause harm to a child –

- If the seat belt is too loose, the child can slide out or out of position
- Shoulder belt under child's arm – applies forces to rib cage & can cause serious injuries
- Shoulder belt behind child's back – no upper body protection
- 2 Children in one belt – they will collide with each other
- Lap Belt too high, spinal and stomach injuries can occur

Correct vs. Incorrect Restraint of a 6-year-old Child in a Motor Vehicle Crash



Key Safety Message

Children who weigh 40 to 80 pounds should be properly restrained in a belt-positioning booster seat.

Correct Restraint—This simulation (below) shows how a 6-year-old child properly restrained in a belt-positioning booster seat barely moves during a 35 m.p.h. crash.



Incorrect Restraint—The same child, improperly restrained in an adult seat belt with the shoulder belt behind the back*, is thrown forward dramatically in the same crash. The inappropriate fit of the seat belt and lack of upper body restraint puts the child at risk for severe head, spinal, abdominal and brain injury.



* Placing the shoulder belt behind the back is a common and dangerous mistake children make when the shoulder belt doesn't fit properly.

Common Misconceptions about Seat Belt Use

“It is better to be thrown out of a car. I don’t want to be trapped in my belt if the car catches fire or is in water.”

- You are four times more likely to be killed if you are thrown from a vehicle.
- Being buckled up during a crash makes it more likely that you will be conscious, uninjured, and able to escape.
- Less than one-half of one percent of all crashes involve fire or water.

Common Misconceptions about Seat Belt Use

“I won’t get into a crash because I’m a good driver.”

- You can never predict or control what other drivers might do, or how the weather might change the safety of a roadway.

Common Misconceptions about Seat Belt Use

“We only need to be buckled up when driving on the highway.”

- **Most crashes happen close to home. Local roads and streets are more hazardous than highways because traffic is usually going two ways, there are many intersections, and there are likely to be more distractions.**

Effectiveness of Child Restraints

When used correctly:

- 71% effective in reducing infant deaths
- 54% effective in reducing toddler deaths
- 69% effective in reducing hospitalization need
- Children 37% less likely to be fatally injured riding in the rear seat

Source: Traffic Safety Facts: 2006 Data: NHTSA National Center for Statistics and Analysis

GROWING UP SAFE: It's a four-step process.

As children grow, how they sit in your car, truck or SUV should change.

Save your child from injury or death by observing all four steps:

1

REAR-FACING SEATS



For the best possible protection keep infants in the back seat, in rear-facing child safety seats, as long as possible up to the height or weight limit of the particular seat. At a minimum, keep infants rear-facing until a minimum of age 1 **and** at least 20 pounds.

2

FORWARD-FACING SEATS



When children outgrow their rear-facing seats (at a minimum age 1 **and** at least 20 pounds) they should ride in forward-facing child safety seats, in the back seat, until they reach the upper weight or height limit of the particular seat (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds).

3

BOOSTER SEATS



Once children outgrow their forward-facing seats (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds), they should ride in booster seats, in the back seat, until the vehicle seat belts fit properly. Seat belts fit properly when the lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest (usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall).

4

SEAT BELTS



When children outgrow their booster seats, (usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall) they can use the adult seat belt in the back seat, if it fits properly (lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest).

Examples of Child Restraint Systems



Rear facing convertible seat:
installed with child



Forward facing convertible
seat: installed with child
(LATCH)



Backless booster seat: belt
positioning strap with child



High back booster
seat with child



Correct restraint: 11-year-old



Vest type restraint:
installed with child

What is the Best Child Safety Seat?

- **One that fits your child** – choose a seat that best fits your child's weight, height and physical tolerances.
- **One that fits your vehicle** – make sure you can get a proper installation of the seat in your vehicle(s).
- **One that is convenient to use** – if it is not easy to use, parents may skip steps – and this puts your child's safety at risk.

What about “used” car seats?

- Free of recalls?
- Do you know the complete history?
- Does it meet Federal safety standards?
- Is the manufacturer still in business?
- Is it free from cracks, loose rivets, etc?
- Is it less than 6 years old?
- Are all the parts present & do they work?
- Do you have the manual?
- Has it been altered?
- Has it been in a crash?

Helping Children Become Lifelong Seat Belt Users

SAFETY

- “It’s my job to keep you safe.”
- “Wearing my seat belt keeps me safe.”
- “I may be a good driver, but there are plenty of people who are not.”

IT’S THE LAW

- “It’s the law in our State that everyone must wear a seat belt or be in a safety seat.”
- “I am responsible for the people in my car. I do not want to get a ticket because someone is not obeying the law.”

FAMILY RULES

- “It’s a family rule. I will not discuss it.”
- “I will not start the car until everyone is wearing a seat belt or is in their safety seat.”
- “If you take your belt off or get out of your seat, I will stop the car.”

KEEP IN MIND... Children’s use of seat belts drops by 36 percentage points when adults don’t wear seat belts.

Keeping Kids Safe – Inside and Out

- Backovers
- Hyperthermia
- Injuries from power windows
- Vehicle rollaways
- Trunk entrapment
- Seat belt entanglement

Resources

Child Restraint Recall List

<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>

Locate a technician

<http://www.safekids.org>

<http://buckleup.tamu.edu>

Car Seats for low income families

Safe Riders

(800) 252-8255

Texas Department of Transportation –

Traffic Safety Specialists

Lubbock area – Karen Peoples

Amarillo area – Tracy Tellman

Thank you!

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