

Pointers For Parents

Children Ages 4-8 More Likely To Be Injured In Vehicle Crashes

(NAPSA)—As children grow beyond their infancy and toddler phases, parents are unfortunately loosening up on their automobile safety restraint practices. The latest child passenger safety data reveals that children ages 4-8 are more likely than younger toddlers and infants to be injured in motor vehicle crashes.

This data was released in the second Partners for Child Passenger Safety (PCPS) Fact and Trend Report by The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and State Farm.

This increased risk is primarily due to parents prematurely moving children out of child seats into adult seat belts—making them three times more likely to be injured in a crash than younger infants and toddlers. In fact, 46 percent of children in the U.S. ages 4-8 are improperly restrained in adult seat belts rather than properly restrained in a car seat or booster seat.

“There is a crucial step many parents are missing: Kids need to use a booster seat from around age 4 until they're 4'9”, said Kristy Arbogast, Ph.D., director of field engineering, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. “As children get older, their risk of being injured in a vehicle crash increases, primarily because they're being moved from the protection of child seats with harnesses, directly into adult seat belts, and into the front seat. All children need to be seated in the backseat until age 13.”

Since child restraint laws vary from state to state, and some only require children to ride in car seats and booster seats up to age 4 or 6, parents need to be aware of their children's age—and size-



Experts say all children need to be seated in the back of a car until age 13.

appropriate restraint needs. For children under the age of 8 years, following the guidelines for appropriate restraints can reduce the risk of serious injury in a vehicle crash to less than 1 percent.

“PCPS Fact and Trend Report serves as a reminder that we need to continue taking steps to ensure all children are protected on the road,” said Susan Hood, Claims Vice President for State Farm. “Motor vehicle crashes are the number-one killer of children over the age of one, and many of these tragedies could have been prevented with the proper use of vehicle safety restraints.”

Through in-depth interviews and on-site crash investigations, State Farm customers provided the confidential data to The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia from crashes involving more than 650,000 children—the PCPS Fact and Trend Report is the world's largest study of children in automobile crashes.

For more information on the risks to child passengers and how to properly restrain children in motor vehicles, please visit www.chop.edu/carseat or www.statefarm.com/KidSafety.htm.