

WASHINGTON STATE BOOSTER SEAT COALITION

Project Office:

Box 359960
325 Ninth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104-2499
Phone: (206) 521-1552
FAX: (206) 521-1562
Coordinator: **Sue Duvall**

Quick Facts on Booster Seats

Why 4-8 Year-Old Children Need Booster Seats

- Motor vehicle collisions are the single largest killer for children age 4-8 years. In 2000, over 1,189 children ages 14 and under died in motor vehicle crashes. In 2001, nearly 300,000 children ages 14 and under were injured in vehicle crashes.¹
- Riding unrestrained is the greatest risk factor for death and injury among child passengers. Among children ages 14 and under killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2001, 55% were not using safety restraints.²
- Children age 4-8 years are particularly vulnerable. They make up 43% of child passengers, but sustain 55% of child passenger injuries.³
- The total annual cost of motor vehicle occupant-related death and injury exceeds \$25.8 billion for all children ages 14 and under. Every dollar spent on a child safety seat saves this country \$32.²

How Booster Seats Help Solve the Problem

- Using a booster seat protects kids from serious injury better than seatbelts alone. Booster seats reduce a child's risk of injury by 59% compared to using only a seat belt and effectively protect children up to 7 years old from serious injury and death.⁴
- Booster seats protect against head injury 4 times better than seatbelts.⁵
- If all child passengers ages 14 and under were restrained properly, an estimated 182,000 serious injuries could be prevented annually.²

Current Booster Seat Use – Not Enough Children are Adequately Protected

- Nationally, only 19% of children who should be restrained in booster seats use them.²
- In King County, WA, only 33% of children who needed to use booster seats were using them in Spring 2002 (before the state booster seat law took effect).⁶
- In Washington state during Spring 2002:
 - 14% of booster-size children in WA were completely unrestrained in the vehicle.
 - 29% were using only a seat belt.
 - 17% still remained in a forward-facing car seat with a harness, despite exceeding age and weight requirements.⁵

Booster Seat Use Can Increase with Parent and Community Involvement

- The Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center has found that community-based campaigns significantly increase children's use of booster seats.⁷
- Children are more likely to use booster seats if their parents buckle up in a seat belt every time.⁸

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2003

² National SAFE KIDS Coalition, 2003

³ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

⁴ *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, June 2003

⁵ *Pediatrics*, June 2000

⁶ Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center, 2002.

⁷ *JAMA*, February 2003

⁸ *Pediatrics*, April 2003



Safety Restraint Coalition