

# YOUNG CHILDREN IN MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES

Data are from the  
CRASH OUTCOME DATA EVALUATION SYSTEM (CODES): 1996 - 2001

- ➔ A study of motor vehicle crashes involving 1-11 year old Maine children<sup>1</sup> during 1996-2001 indicates that:
  - 1 in 25 children is involved in a motor vehicle traffic crash each year
  - 1 in 200 children is injured in a motor vehicle traffic crash each year
  - 1 in 36,600 children is killed in a motor vehicle traffic crash each year<sup>2</sup>

- ➔ Among 37,746 young children occupying passenger cars, vans, wagons, SUVs, and pickup trucks involved in crashes, 1,495 (4%) had a driver aged 16-19, 246 (1%) had a driver with OUI (operating under the influence) or who had been drinking, and 2,347 (6%) had a driver operating at illegal, unsafe speeds. Each of these factors increased the risk of crash injury for these children.

Maine Motor Vehicle Crashes Involving Children Maine CODES: 1996-2001*	
Children Involved	37,746
Children Injured	4,624
Transported, Hospitalized, or Died	1,853
Hospitalized	157
Rate of Injury per 100 Occupants	12.3
Average Inpatient Charge	\$10,594

- ➔ Children involved in crashes who were not using a child safety device (car seat, booster seat, or seat belt) were nearly twice as likely to be hospitalized for a traumatic brain injury as were children who were using a child safety device.
- ➔ For Maine children, traumatic brain injury accounted for \$750,000 (45%) of the \$1.7 million in inpatient charges.\*
- ➔ Among young Maine children in passenger cars during crashes, 28% were riding in the front seat. Risk of injury during a motor vehicle crash increased by 12% when the child was in the front seat compared with the rear seat.
- ➔ In a separate analysis, based on more current 2001-2004 hospital emergency department data, the rate of emergency department visits for young Maine children less than 12 years old in motor vehicle traffic crashes declined by 10% following the January 2003 change in child safety legislation. It is not known if this trend is the result of the change in law or other factors.
- ➔ These results support the value of rear seating position and safety device use for children to reduce the injury burden.

Notes: CODES is a data network comprised of information from traffic crash reports, hospital discharges, ambulance reports, and death certificates. The Office of Data, Research, and Vital Statistics, Emergency Medical Services, the Bureau of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, the Department of Transportation, and the Maine Health Information Center cooperated in this effort. Data are from "Young Children in Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes in Maine: The Injury Burden and Associated Crash Factors" published by the Maine Health Information Center, July 2006. A complete report can be found at <http://www.mhic.org/CODES/C0017CHILDREN6-7-2006.doc>.

\* Based on Maine CODES linked records. Includes children 1-11 years old, in passenger cars, wagons, SUVs, vans, and pickups.

<sup>1</sup> Children age less than one not included because they could not be distinguished from children with missing age in the police reported crash data.

<sup>2</sup> Maine Vital Statistics System, 1996-2001

For further data on this topic, please contact:  
the Office of Data, Research, and Vital Statistics, Maine CDC  
at 244 Water Street, #11 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0011  
(207) 287-5500 1-800-606-0215 (TTY)

For further information, please contact Karl Finison at 623-2555

Visit our website at: <http://www.maine.gov/dhs/bohodr/index.htm>

**For prevention information, please contact: Betty Mason at 287-4288**

John Elias Baldacci  
Governor



Brenda M. Harvey  
Commissioner

MH-FACTSMSCPUB p1  
MSC.007  
CODES-CHLD.XLS, 10/6/2006

Number 2

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Series 14

**FACT SHEET - MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES— Children 1-11 yrs**