

NHTSA Releases 2004 Child Restraint Use Results

The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) released its 2004 child restraint use survey results. These results indicate that during 2004, 98% of infants and 93% of children ages 1 to 3 years old were restrained in some type of restraint. In contrast, only 73% of children ages 4 to 7 years old were restrained, down from 83% two years ago.

These results also show that drivers who use lap belts continue to be more likely to restrain their child passengers. In 2004, 86% of children ages 0 to 7 years old driven by belted drivers were restrained, compared with 50% for children with unbelted drivers. This suggests that getting adults to buckle up may also result in getting kids buckled up.

If your organization transports children, you should comply with recognized child restraint procedures, such as those provided by NHTSA:

1. Children under 1 year of age should be in a rear-facing safety seat. If a child is under 1 year of age but exceeds 20 pounds, consider using a convertible child seat that is both rear facing and forward facing. These seats typically provide more space to accommodate larger children.
2. Children older than 1 year who are between 20 and 40 pounds should be in a front-facing safety seat.
3. Children who have exceeded the weight limit for a forward-facing safety seat, are less than 8 years old, and less than 4' 9" tall should be in a booster seat.

Be sure to consult your state requirements regarding the use of child restraint systems.

You can learn more about child restraint safety at nhtsa.gov and safekids.org.