

Buckle Up America There's Just Too Much to Lose!

Every 14 seconds someone is injured in a traffic crash and every 14 minutes someone is killed. Over 40,000 people die in crashes each year with over one third of the population does not buckle up. Crashes are the leading cause of death for children ages six to 14, claiming 17 of them daily! About half of all children under the age of five who die in crashes are not buckled up.

In a crash, when people wear seat belts and children are properly restrained, medical costs are reduced because injuries are reduced. When lap/shoulder belts are properly used, the risk of death to front seat passengers is reduced by 40%. When used correctly, child safety seats are 71% effective in reducing death to children under the age of 5 and are 69% effective in reducing the need for hospitalization.

Currently Iowa has a 97% misuse rate of child passenger safety seats. There are a number of simple things that could reduce that number drastically, such as:

- Don't place a child passenger safety seat in front of an airbag
- Children should remain rear facing in their car seat until they are 1 year old and 20 pounds
- Harness straps should be tight
- The harness clip should be at the armpit level
- The child passenger safety seat should not move more than one inch at the anchor Point
- Second hand seats that are obtained without instructions or knowing the seats history should not be used. Child passenger safety seats were designed for one collision only
- Child passenger safety seats greater than 6 years of age should not be used

Most of all parents and care givers need to read the child passenger safety seat instructions as well as their motor vehicle instructions for proper installation guidelines.

Personal pain-a child's grief from losing a parent or serious injury to a family member cannot easily be measured. But costs can be measured and motor vehicle crashes cost America over \$150 billion a year-that is an average of \$580.00 per person. Injuries and fatalities from motor vehicle collisions are not accidents they are *preventable* and *predictable*. So buckle up America-because there is just too much to lose!