

Protect the Ones You Love From Road Traffic Injuries

[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC—safer, healthier people.

Every hour, 150 children between ages 0 and 19 are treated in emergency departments for injuries sustained in motor vehicle crashes. More children ages 5 to 19 die from crash-related injuries than any other type of injury. Many of these injuries can be prevented, and you can play a key role in protecting the children you love.

One of the best protective measures you can take is to use seat belts, child safety seats, and booster seats as appropriate for your child's age and weight. Hundreds of children who die in vehicle crashes each year aren't buckled up.

How can you know what kind of car or booster seat is right for a child? Typically, babies should be placed in rear-facing seats until they're at least one year old *and* they weigh 20 pounds. When these young kids outgrow their rear-facing seats, they graduate into forward-facing seats. They should ride in these seats until at least age four, or 40 pounds.

Some front-facing car seats are made to safely *and* comfortably hold a child up to 50 or 60 pounds. So, parents don't necessarily have to move their child to a booster seat *right* at age four or 40 pounds—that's just a guideline.

Booster seats are designed for children from about age four to age eight or until they are four feet nine inches tall. When your child is properly fitted in a booster seat, the shoulder belt should cross his or her chest and rest snugly on the shoulder. The lap belt should rest low across the hip and upper thigh—never across the stomach area.

At all times, parents should make sure their passengers age 12 and younger ride in the back seat. As your child gets older and starts to drive, there are still things you can do to keep them safe. Sign an agreement with them to limit risky teen driving situations, such as transporting multiple teen passengers and driving at night.

Road traffic injuries don't always happen when you're traveling in a car. Children should wear helmets any time they are on a bike or motorcycle. Wearing a helmet can help prevent traumatic brain injury and its very serious consequences.

When it comes to a child you love, *of course* you want to protect them from harm. It's within your power to help them live to their full potential, without experiencing the pain and suffering that injuries can cause.

Protect the Ones You Love: Child Injuries Are Preventable is a CDC initiative to raise parents' awareness about the leading causes of child injury in the United States and how they can be prevented. For more information, please visit www.cdc.gov/safecild.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.