



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Are We There Yet?

National Child Passenger Safety Week, September 21–27, 2008

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

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the MMWR, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

"Are we there yet?" It's a question nearly all parents have heard repeatedly while traveling with children. But while kids are interested in getting there quickly, parents should be concerned about getting there safely. In 2006, more than forty five thousand infants and toddlers were treated for injuries suffered in a motor vehicle crash. Many were not restrained properly.

Dr. Arlene Greenspan is a senior scientist with CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. She's joining us today to discuss how to keep children safe in motor vehicles. Welcome to the show, Arlene.

[Dr. Greenspan] It's a pleasure to be here.

[Dr. Gaynes] Arlene, how many children are killed each year in motor vehicle crashes?

[Dr. Greenspan] Between four and five hundred children less than five years of age are killed each year in motor vehicle crashes.

[Dr. Gaynes] Do you know how many of these weren't buckled up properly?

[Dr. Greenspan] Among infants and toddlers who are killed in motor vehicle crashes, close to half are completely unrestrained or using adult seat belts. In addition, we know that, among all children who use child safety seats, almost three out of four of those seats are incorrectly installed or misused.

[Dr. Gaynes] Arlene, is the use of safety seats a requirement by law?

[Dr. Greenspan] All states require safety seats by law, but states vary in the type of laws they have. Some states only require safety seats 'til age five or six, while other states require safety seats or booster seats up through age eight or nine.

[Dr. Gaynes] How effective has the car seat requirement been in decreasing injuries or deaths among these children?

[Dr. Greenspan] Car seats are very effective. Car seats reduce deaths among infants one year of age and less by over seventy percent and reduce toddler deaths as much as fifty four percent.

[Dr. Gaynes] Since these car seats reduce deaths, it's important for them to be used properly, I'm sure. Can you give us some advice on the proper use of child safety seats?

[Dr. Greenspan] Yes. There are three points I would like to make about the proper use of child safety seats. First, make sure your child is in the correct seat for his or her age, weight, and height. Second, make sure the seat is tightly secured to the vehicle. And third, make sure your child is tightly secured in the harness. If you want to make sure your child's seat is fitted correctly and correctly installed, you can go to nhtsa.dot.gov and click on "Locate a Child Seat Fitting Station."

[Dr. Gaynes] Great. Where can listeners get more information about keeping their children safe in motor vehicles?

[Dr. Greenspan] For more information, go to www.cdc.gov and search on *child passenger safety*.

[Dr. Gaynes] Arlene, thanks for sharing this information with our listeners today.

[Dr. Gaynes] Well, that's it for this week's show. Be sure and join us again next week. Until then, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

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