



Unintentional Injury Risk for Children



Key Facts

Unintentional injury is the number one killer of children ages 1 to 14 in the U.S.

- In 2008, 4,643 children ages 14 and under died from unintentional injury.
- In 2009, 6,178,000 children ages 14 and under sustained unintentional nonfatal injuries treated in emergency departments.
- Almost one-third of deaths among children ages 1 to 14 are due to unintentional injury.
- The leading causes of injury-related death among children ages 14 and under are motor vehicle crashes, suffocation, drowning and fires and/or burns.
- The leading cause of nonfatal injury for children ages 14 and under is unintentional falls.
- Younger children, males, some minorities and poor children tend to suffer disproportionately; poverty is often a predictor of injury.
- Families that live in rental housing, are supported by young parents, single mothers or that are minorities, generally use safety equipment less often and tend to suffer disproportionately high rates of injury.

- For infants, suffocation led to more than 80 percent of injury-related deaths, with motor vehicle crashes being the next leading cause of injury-related death in 2008. For children ages 1 to 4, the leading cause of injury-related death was drowning. For children ages 5 to 14, motor vehicle-related injuries were the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death.
- In 2008, unintentional injuries were responsible for over 30 percent of all deaths among children ages 1 to 4. Unintentional injuries most frequently occur in the home.

Gender:

- For all ages, males have a higher risk of unintentional death and injury than females.
- In 2008, males accounted for more than 60 percent of all unintentional injury-related deaths among children ages 14 and under in the U.S.

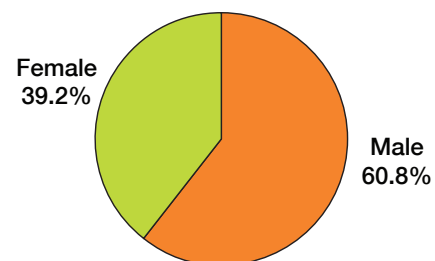
Burden of Unintentional Childhood Injury

Age:

- As of 2008, children under 1 year of age are at greatest risk of unintentional injury-related death; among children ages 14 and under, children ages 4 and under account for 60 percent of all unintentional injury-related deaths.

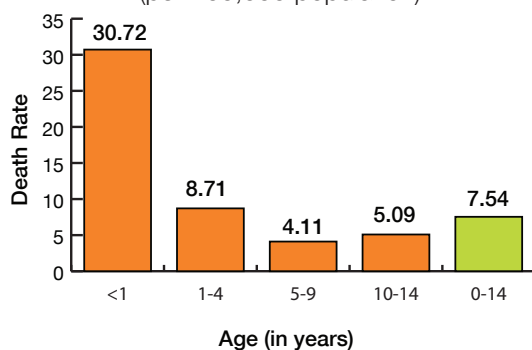
2008 Unintentional Injury-Related Death Percentages by Gender

(United States, All races, Ages 14 and Under)



2008 Unintentional Injury Death Rates by Age Group

(per 100,000 population)

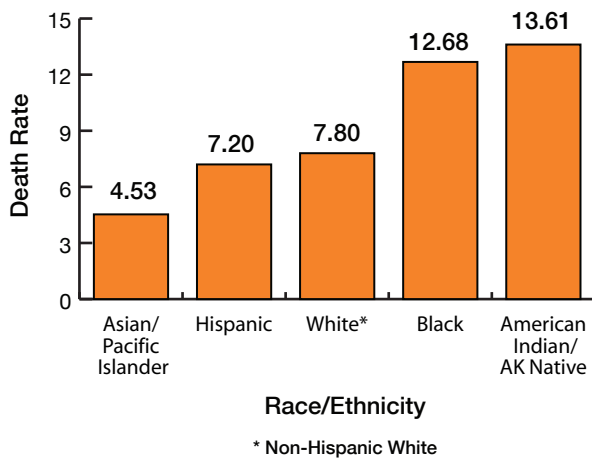


Race:

- Among children ages 14 and under, black and Native American/Alaska Native children experience the highest rates of unintentional death and injury.
- Native American children are nearly twice as likely to die from an unintentional injury as white children.
- The unintentional injury death rate for black children is more than one and a half times that of white children.

2005-2007 Unintentional Injury Death Rates by Race and Ethnicity

(per 100,000 population, Ages 14 and Under)



Low-Income Children:

- Injuries to low-income children result in more fatalities than injuries to children with greater economic resources.
- Children from low-income families are twice as likely to die in a motor vehicle crash, four times more likely to drown and five times more likely to die in a fire.
- Lower-income families have more difficulty obtaining necessary medical care in hospital emergency rooms and are often less likely to receive lifesaving preventive services.
- Children from low-income families may live in more hazardous environments that can increase their risk of injury. Risk factors include substandard and overcrowded housing, lack of safe playing facilities, the distances setting apart houses from busy streets, inadequate childcare and/or supervision, increased exposure to physical hazards and limited access to health care.

- Low-income families are less likely to use safety devices due to a lack of money, lack of access to obtaining safety devices and/or a perceived lack of control over housing conditions.

Rural and Urban Regions:

- Children living in rural areas are at significantly greater risk from unintentional injury-related death than children living in urban areas.
- Rural children are at high risk of drowning, motor vehicle crashes, residential fires and agricultural work-related injury.
- Urban children are at an increased risk of sustaining severe nonfatal injuries as compared to suburban and rural children. This is possibly due to closer access to hospitals and trauma centers.

Costs

- The total annual cost of unintentional injuries among children ages 14 and under was over \$5 billion in 2005.
- Installing and maintaining a smoke alarm in a home can save society \$770.
- The average child car seat saves \$330 in insurance (auto and car) and tax payments. A \$52 child seat saves \$2,181 in medical, work loss, resource and quality of life costs.
- A Poison Control Center call costs approximately \$43 and saves \$320 in medical care costs.
- Pediatric counseling for children ages 4 and under costs \$11 per visit and generates \$97 in benefits to society per visit.

Prevention Strategies

- Reducing or eliminating the financial barriers to attaining and installing safety devices (e.g., smoke alarms, stair gates, bicycle helmets, car seats and booster seats)
- Increasing educational efforts directed toward children who are at high risk for injury
- Improving the overall safety of the child's surrounding environment