

Trends in Unintentional Childhood Injury Deaths

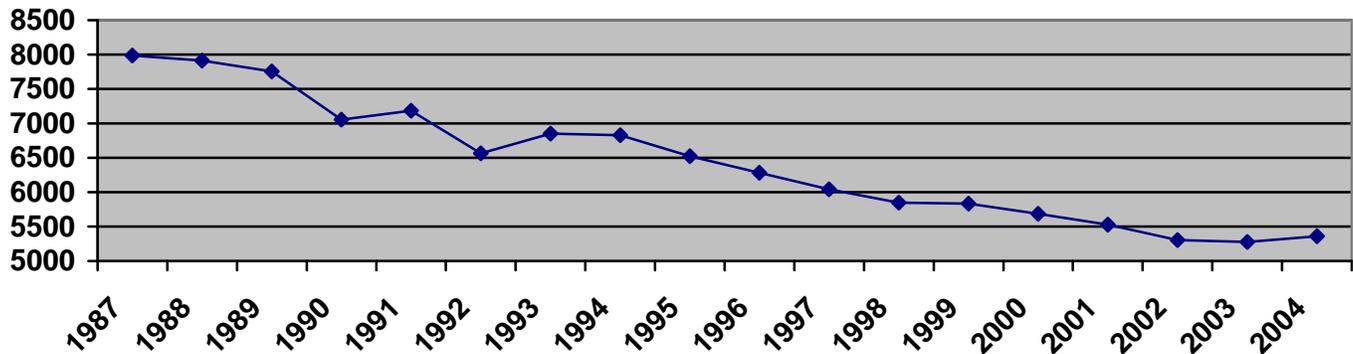
Safe Kids Worldwide is a national organization dedicated solely to the prevention of unintentional childhood injury, the leading killer of children ages 14 and under. The US has witnessed an overall reduction in unintentional injury-related mortality in the past two decades. Safe Kids Worldwide has supported research, development, and implementation of various preventative safety programs to meet these injury needs through a network of 300 coalitions and 16 member countries including the United States.

Unintentional Injury-Related Death Rates ¹

In 1987, there were 7,986 unintentional injury deaths among children less than 14 years of age.

In 2004, there were 5,359 unintentional injury deaths among children less than 14 years of age. ²

1987 – 2004 Unintentional Injury Deaths, Ages 0 to 14, United States³



- From 1987 – 2004 there has been a 43 percent decrease in unintentional injury deaths rate.

The number of unintentional injury deaths for leading causes among children less than 14 years of age has deteriorated from *1987 to 2004*:⁴

- Overall motor vehicle fatalities declined from 3,587 deaths to 2,431 deaths.
- Bicycle injury fatalities declined from 389 deaths to 132 deaths.
- Pedestrian injury fatalities declined from 1,283 deaths to 583 deaths.
- Drowning fatalities declined from 1,363 deaths to 761 deaths.
- Fire and/or burn injury fatalities declined from 1,233 deaths to 512 deaths.
- Suffocation and choking fatalities have risen from 690 deaths to 963 deaths.
- Unintentional firearm injury fatalities declined from 247 deaths to 63 deaths.
- Falls injury fatalities declined from 149 deaths to 107 deaths.
- Poisoning fatalities declined from 100 deaths to 86 deaths.

Type of Incident	Number of Deaths in Year 1987	Number of Deaths in Year 2004	Percent Decrease/Increase
Motor vehicle crash	3,587	2,431	↓32%
Drowning	1,363	761	↓44%
Pedestrian injury	1,283	583	↓55%
Fire and/or burn injury	1,233	512	↓58%
Suffocation	690	963	↑28%
Falls	149	107	↓28%
Poisoning	100	86	↓14%
Firearm	247	63	↓74%

Injury Prevention Efforts

Child Safety Seats

- All 50 states and the District of Columbia have child restraint laws. In 40 states and D.C., all children less than 16 years of age are covered by either safety belt laws or child restraint laws.⁵
- As of November 2006, 38 states and the District of Columbia have upgraded their child restraint laws requiring the use of booster seats or other appropriate child restraint device by children as old as 9 years of age.⁶

Bicycle Helmets

- Twenty-one states, the District of Columbia and over 140 localities have enacted some form of mandatory child bicycle helmet legislation; more than half of the laws cover children less than 15 years of age.⁷
- Eight states and Washington, D.C. now require children to wear a helmet while participating in other wheeled sports (e.g., scooters, inline skates, and skateboards) since the launch of Safe Kids.⁸

Fire and Burns

- All national and regional code-making bodies have amended their plumbing code language to require anti-scald technology and a maximum water heater temperature of 120 degrees Fahrenheit in all newly constructed residential units.⁹

Suggested Citation: Safe Kids Worldwide (SKW). Childhood Injury Trends Fact Sheet. Washington (DC): SKW, 2007.

¹ Safe Kids Worldwide, Program Department, 2005.

² National Center for Health Statistics. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Vital Statistics System. WISQARS Injury Mortality Reports, 1987 to 2004. Hyattsville (MD): National Center for Health Statistics, 2007.

³ National Center for Health Statistics. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Vital Statistics System. WISQARS Injury Mortality Reports, 1987 to 2004. Hyattsville (MD): National Center for Health Statistics, 2007.

⁴ National Center for Health Statistics. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Vital Statistics System. WISQARS Injury Mortality Reports, 1987 to 2004. Hyattsville (MD): National Center for Health Statistics, 2007.

⁵ Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, Children not covered by safety belt or child restraint laws as of April 2007.

⁶ Strengthening Child Passenger Safety Laws, NHTSA, 2007. <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/TSFLaws/PDFs/810728W.pdf>

⁷ Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute, Helmet Laws for Bicycle Riders, <http://www.helmets.org/mandator.htm>

⁸ Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute, Helmet Laws for Bicycle Riders, <http://www.helmets.org/mandator.htm>

⁹ Safe Kids Worldwide, Public Policy Department, 2005.