
myths & facts

about child car safety



myth: A child riding in a car is safest in its mother's arms.

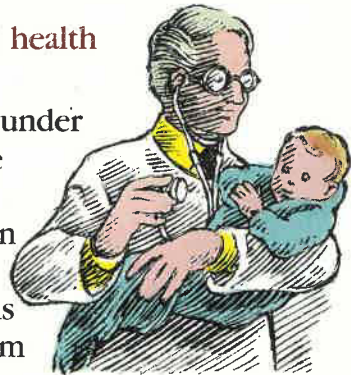
fact: In a sudden stop or crash, momentum will cause a 20 pound baby to weigh 400 pounds or more. You can't hold back that much weight. And if you're not wearing a seat belt, your body could crush a child against the dashboard.

myth: It is safer for your child to be thrown clear from a car in an accident.

fact: Your child's chances of being killed are at least 25 times greater if thrown from the car. The forces in a collision can be great enough to throw your child 150 feet or more. Impact with another car, a tree, or the pavement could further injure your child. Protect your child with a safety belt or car seat.

myth: Childhood diseases pose a greater threat to my child's health than car accidents.

fact: Car accidents are the leading cause of death for children under five. Almost 1,000 children die each year and thousands more are seriously injured, some permanently. One survey showed that a large majority of those killed or injured in crashes could have been saved if they had been properly secured in a safety seat. It's ironic that so many parents who protect their children with inoculations and worry about every little sniffle or fever, still fail to protect them from the greatest threat to children's health – car accidents.



myth: In a serious car accident nothing will really protect a child.

fact: Elana Nailor of Falls Church, Virginia, was hit by another driver and rolled her car over three times. She was hospitalized and the car totaled. But her younger passenger, secured in a child safety seat, did not receive a scratch. Hundreds of incidents like this have demonstrated the effectiveness of child safety seats in serious car accidents. These reports are evidence that car seats really work to protect children in crashes – but they must be used, and used correctly.

myth: I cannot get my child to ride in a safety seat.

fact: Since safety seats elevate children from the car's regular seat, children in safety seats have a better view of their surroundings. One study showed that children riding in safety seats were better behaved and more contented than children who were allowed to roam around the car.

But it may take some persistence. You're best able to understand the risks involved when a child is not properly belted in. Your child's safety and your own peace of mind are at stake. You can set an example by always wearing your own seatbelt.

myth: I don't need to put my child in a safety seat for short trips.

fact: Most accidents happen within 25 miles of home. Even at low speeds a sudden stop or "fender-bender" can cause severe injury to a child who is not properly belted in. Placing your child in a safety seat every time can save a lot of heartbreak.



the only secure place

for a child in a car is in a crash-tested
safety seat...and that's a fact!

Where you can buy
child safety seats:

■ Regular or discount department stores ■ Juvenile furniture or baby needs shops ■ Some



new car dealers ■
Some hospital gift shops ■ Automobile parts and accessory dealers ■ Catalog sales through major retailers ■



U.S. Department of Transportation
**National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration**

DOT HS 806 046(c)