



# CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY

## Issue

The best way to protect child passengers is to place them in the back seat, restrained by a properly installed child safety seat, booster seat or safety belt, as appropriate for their age, size and development.

## Impact

In 2021, 1,184 children, defined as age 14 and younger, were killed in traffic crashes, a 7.5% increase from 2020. Motor vehicle crashes are among the leading causes of death for children in the U.S.

## Solutions

Laws, Technology and Roadway Safety Infrastructure

### Comprehensive State Laws to Incentivize Proper Child Safety Seat and Seat Belt Use

### Safety Technologies and Improved Safety Standards Can Protect Children and Other Road Users

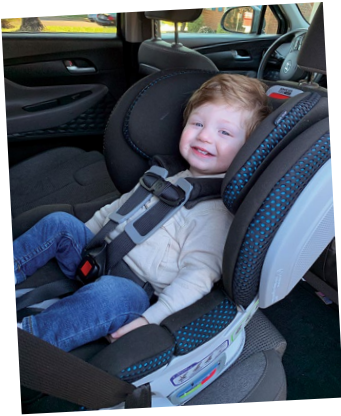
- Proven collision avoidance systems in vehicles including AEB, LDW, BSD, rear AEB, and rear-cross traffic alert should be required to detect and safely respond, as appropriate, to VRUs including children.
- Occupant detection and alert technology to prevent hot car incidents.
- Rear seat belt reminders.
- Technology to prevent frontovers, in which a driver cannot see a VRU including children and hits or drives over them at a low speed, as well as hood and bumper standards to make crashes with VRUs more survivable for those outside the vehicle.
- An update to the safety standard to prevent seatback collapse.
- Side impact protection for children.

### Road Safety Infrastructure Improvements and the Safe System Approach



# CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY

## The Facts



- Across all age groups, injury risk is lowest (less than two percent) when children are placed in an age-appropriate restraint in the rear seat.
- When used properly, child safety seats reduce fatal injury by 71% for infants and 54% for toddlers in passenger cars.
- Appropriate child safety seats and restraints are very effective in preventing fatalities and injuries:
  - > 47% effective in preventing fatalities for ages 1-3 in all crashes;
  - > 43% effective in preventing fatalities for ages 3-5 in all crashes; and,
  - > 67% effective in preventing serious to critical injuries for ages 5-8 in all crashes.
- According to the AAP, infants and toddlers are at a particularly high risk of head and spine injuries in motor vehicle crashes because of their relatively large heads and structural features of the neck and spine. By supporting the entire head and spine, a rear facing car seat provides optimal support during a crash.
- Using a booster seat with a seat belt instead of a seat belt alone reduces a child's risk of injury in a crash by 45%, according to the Center for Injury Research and Prevention (CIRP), CHOP, and the Center for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics, University of Pennsylvania.
- Once a child has outgrown a child safety seat and can properly use the vehicle's seat belt, they should remain buckled in the rear seat through age 12. This is consistent with recommendations from groups including AAP, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), IIHS, and NHTSA.
- A December 2022 poll commissioned by Advocates and conducted by ENGINE Insights found that 65% of respondents are "extremely" or "very concerned" about a lack of seat belt or child safety seat use on our roadways.

[Click here to learn more](#)



# Family Fights for Rule on Occupant Detection and Alert Technology to End Hot Car Fatalities and Injuries

## Courier & Press

“Evansville couple advocating to prevent hot car deaths after losing their son in 2019”

6/22/21



Ollie Dill

## TRAGEDY STRUCK WHILE A LOVING FATHER WORKED

On July 9, 2019, Dr. Andrew Dill drove to work with his son, Ollie, in the back seat, like many working parents and caregivers do each day. Andrew is an Assistant Professor at the University of Southern Indiana, and 3-year-old Ollie attended the Children’s Learning Center at the university. Later that day, Andrew and his wife, Jamie, had plans to take their two sons to a movie.

When it was time to go to the movie, Andrew left his office and went to his car before going to pick up Ollie. That is

when he saw the heartbreaking sight of his son who had tragically passed away due to heatstroke. Andrew thought he had dropped Ollie off at childcare before he went to work.

Channeling their grief into action, the Dill family works with [Kids and Cars Safety](#), which is on Advocates’ Board, and also created a nonprofit organization, [Be Kind for Ollie](#), to educate the public about the risk of hot cars and to advocate for proven solutions. Their priorities include advancing a requirement for vehicle-based technology as mandated in the IIJA and ensuring that the technology works as needed to detect and alert to a child unattended in a vehicle. The Dills’ advocacy helped ensure the hot cars provision received bipartisan support. They also are working to ensure proper communication between childcare facilities and parents and caregivers to prevent future incidents



Jamie Dill speaks alongside Advocates’ President Cathy Chase and Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) at a media event on November 22, 2022, lauding safety provisions in the IIJA (Pub. L. 117-58), including to prevent hot cars incidents.

## LOOKING TO 2024

The Dills, alongside [Kids and Car Safety](#), [Advocates](#) and other groups, will continue to urge the U.S. DOT to swiftly issue a rule requiring occupant detection and alert technology in new cars to prevent tragic hot cars incidents. Per the Congressional mandate, U.S. DOT has a deadline to issue a final rule by November 2023, but have also noted they do not anticipate issuing a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) until February 2024. The lives of precious children are at stake, systems are available, and the time to act is now.

