



# 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 2022, 1,129 children, defined as age 14 and younger, were killed in traffic crashes. 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

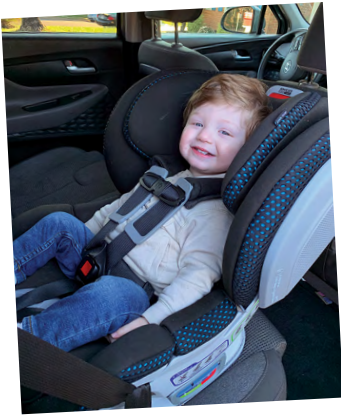
- Proven collision avoidance systems in vehicles including AEB, LDW, BSD, rear AEB and rear-cross traffic alert should be required to detect and safely respond, as appropriate, to VRUs including children.
- Occupant detection and alert technology to prevent hot car incidents.
- Rear seat belt reminders.
- Technology to prevent frontovers and vehicle changes to improve direct vision. A frontover can occur when a driver cannot see a VRU including children and hits or drives over them at a low speed. Updated hood and bumper standards to make crashes with VRUs more survivable for those outside the vehicle and changes to improve a driver's direct vision of the roadway environment are needed.
- An updated safety standard to prevent seatback collapse.
- Side impact protection for children.

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



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## The Facts



- Across all age groups, injury risk is lowest (less than 2%) 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 Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Center for Injury Research and Prevention, and the Center for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the 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 found that 65% of respondents are "extremely" or "very concerned" about a lack of seat belt or child safety seat use on our roadways.

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Advocacy

## Mother Fights to Keep All Children Safe



[Texas Family Warns of Driveway and Blindzone Dangers](#)

9/13/22



*Briley Kaye Beaudoin*



*Jenese Beaudoin with daughter Briley Kaye*



*The Beaudoin family celebrating Christmas shortly before the crash*

### MOTHER WARNS OF DANGERS, CALLS FOR SOLUTIONS

Briley Kaye, the second child of Jenese and Dustin Beaudoin, was a sweet and sassy two-year-old. In 2016, after celebrating Christmas with family, Jenese went to move her SUV to pack for the trip home. As Jenese moved the vehicle forward, it felt as if she had driven off a curb. The heartbreaking reality quickly set in—Briley Kaye had quietly followed her mother outside and was fatally struck after being hidden from view in the SUV’s blindzone.

Since that devastating day, Jenese has dedicated herself to sharing Briley Kaye’s story, including through media interviews to educate the public about the dangers of vehicle blindzones. Partnering with Kids and Car Safety, which is on Advocates’ Board, she has become a leading volunteer, working tirelessly to raise awareness and prevent similar tragedies from claiming more innocent lives.

### LOOKING TO 2025

Each year, hundreds of young children like Briley Kaye lose their lives in devastating “frontover” crashes and thousands more suffer injuries, according to data from Kids and Car Safety. As vehicles have grown larger with elevated hoods and bumpers, children, small adults and individuals using assistive devices like wheelchairs are increasingly concealed from a driver’s view. To prevent these tragedies, Jenese, Kids and Car Safety and Advocates are working to advance legislation that would require a perception zone in front of a vehicle enabling drivers to see, respond to and avoid striking vulnerable road users who otherwise might not be visible, as well as to require NHTSA to develop vehicle safety standards to protect those outside the vehicle.

