

# Safety Sounds

A Monthly Safety Bulletin From SPSG Safety Group

## First

Rank of unintentional injuries as killer of children 14 and under in the United States

**5,600**

Number of children killed each year by unintentional injuries

**15**

Average number of children killed each day by unintentional injuries

## More than 11.8 Million

Medical visits for unintentional injury among U.S. children in 2000

## Nearly 40%

Drop in unintentional injury death rate for children 14 and under from 1987 to 2000

**16%**

Decline in motor vehicle occupant death rate among children 14 and under from 1987 to 2000

**24%**

Drop in airway obstruction death rate for children 14 and under from 1987 to 2000

**32%**

Decline in unintentional childhood drowning death rate for children 14 and under from 1987 to 2000

## 1.5 times

The unintentional injury death rate for boys remains nearly 1.5 times higher than that for girls

**60%**

Decline in bicycle injury death rate among children ages 14 and under from 1987 to 2000

From the National Safe Kids Campaign  
[www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)

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## Unintentional Injuries

New research unveiled May 1st by the National SAFE KIDS Campaign and Johnson & Johnson shows that from 1987 to 2000, the unintentional injury death rate for children 14 and under has dropped by nearly 40 percent. This is one of the most dramatic declines ever seen in a children's health issue.

Despite this tremendous progress, unintentional injuries remain the number one killer of children 14 and under in the United States. In fact, unintentional injuries claim more than 5,600 children's lives each year – or an average of 15 children each day. And there were more than 11.8 million medical visits for unintentional injury among U.S. children ages 14 and under in 2000 – or one injury visit for every five children.

This year is the 15th anniversary of the National SAFE KIDS Campaign, the first and only national nonprofit organization dedicated solely to the prevention of unintentional childhood injury. To mark this milestone SAFE KIDS and its founding sponsor Johnson & Johnson undertook a comprehensive study on child safety in America, *A Report to the Nation: Trends in Unintentional Childhood Injury Mortality, 1987-2000*.

"Our findings underscore both the value of what we're doing, and the need for Americans to make child injury prevention a priority," says Dr. Martin Eichelberger, president of SAFE KIDS and director of Emergency Trauma and Burn Services at Children's National Medical Center in Washington, D.C. "We have made tremendous progress, but we can't lose sight of the fact that these injuries remain the leading killer of our nation's children."

The study unveiled many findings. The most startling trends were seen in motor vehicle occupant injuries, airway obstruction and drowning. Specifically:

- From 1987 to 2000 the motor vehicle occupant death rate among children ages 14 and under declined just 16 percent. The death rate among children ages 5 to 9 declined even less; just 1 percent. Motor vehicle occupant injury remains the leading cause of injury related death among children.
- While the airway obstruction death rate decreased 24 percent for children 14 and under, there has been no progress for airway obstruction injury among infants under age 1.

## National SAFE KIDS Week

**May 6th - 13th**



- The unintentional childhood drowning death rate declined 32 percent from 1987 to 2000. Despite this decline, drowning remains the second leading cause of unintentional injury related death among children ages 14 and under.

This landmark study measures the state of unintentional childhood injuries by examining some of the key factors of this epidemic. In particular, the study addresses important trends in unintentional injury mortality rates, differing progress made across a variety of risk areas, and which children – by race, gender, ethnicity and geographic location – have shown the greatest and least reductions in the injury death rate. For example, Native American/Alaskan Native children continue to have the highest unintentional death rate, and black children the second highest, with death rates twice that of white children. Additionally, the injury death rate for boys remains nearly 1.5 times higher than girls.

## National SAFE KIDS Week

The results released May 1st coincide with the kickoff of National SAFE KIDS Week which runs May 6-13. The theme this year is Wrap Your Arms Around Safety and throughout the week, hundreds of SAFE KIDS coalitions and chapters will conduct safety fairs and community events all across the nation to teach families how to prevent injuries and save lives.

*From [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)*

*For more information or for a copy of the SAFE KIDS/Johnson & Johnson *A Report to the Nation: Trends in Unintentional Childhood Injury Mortality, 1987-2000*, contact the National SAFE KIDS Campaign at (202) 662-0600*