

Social
Development

**Behavioral Health:
Physical Health
and Safety**

Behavioral Health:
Smoking, Alcohol,
and Substance
Abuse

Behavioral Health:
Sexual Activity and
Fertility

SD 2.1 Physical Fighting

Physical fighting among youth is not only a behavioral problem but a public health concern. Youth who are involved in physical fights often engage in other high risk behaviors, such as using illegal drugs, binge drinking, carrying weapons, and unsafe sex.¹ In 2001, 43 percent of all male youth and one-quarter of female youth in grades 9 to 12 reported having been involved in a physical fight one or more times during the previous year. However, the percentage of all youth who reported involvement in a fight decreased significantly between 1993 and 2001, from 42 percent to 33 percent. For males, the percentage decreased from 51 percent in 1993 to 43 percent in 2001 (Table SD 2.1).

Differences by Age. For all the years included in Table SD 2.1, the percentage of youth who reported being involved in a fight decreased with age. In 2001, 40 percent of 9th grade youth reported being involved in a fight compared with 27 percent of 12th graders. It is unclear, however, whether this pattern reflects the effects of increasing maturity, a change in the propensity to report having been in a fight, or a tendency for violence-prone youth to drop out of school, leaving a less violent pool of youth in the higher grades (Figure SD 2.1).

Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin.² In 2001, 32 percent of White, non-Hispanic youth reported involvement in a physical fight within the past year, compared with 37 percent of Black, non-Hispanic youth and 36 percent of Hispanic youth (Table SD 2.1).

¹ Lindberg, D.L. (2000). *Multiple Threats: The Co-occurrence of Teen Health Risk Behaviors*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

² Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

SECTION 4. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Table SD 2.1

Percentage of youth in grades 9 to 12 who reported being in a physical fight within the past year, by sex, grade, and race and Hispanic origin: Selected years, 1993-2001

	1993			1995			1997			1999			2001		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
All youth	42	51	32	39	46	31	37	46	26	36	44	27	33	43	24
Grade															
9th	50	59	41	47	55	37	45	56	32	41	50	33	40	50	30
10th	42	52	32	40	46	34	40	48	30	38	46	29	35	45	25
11th	41	52	28	37	46	28	34	44	23	31	39	23	29	38	20
12th	35	43	27	31	38	24	29	37	19	30	39	22	27	37	17
Race and Hispanic origin^a															
White, non-Hispanic	40	50	30	36	44	27	34	43	21	33	43	22	32	43	22
Black, non-Hispanic	50	58	42	42	49	35	43	49	38	41	44	39	37	44	30
Hispanic	43	52	34	48	56	40	41	50	30	40	51	30	36	42	29

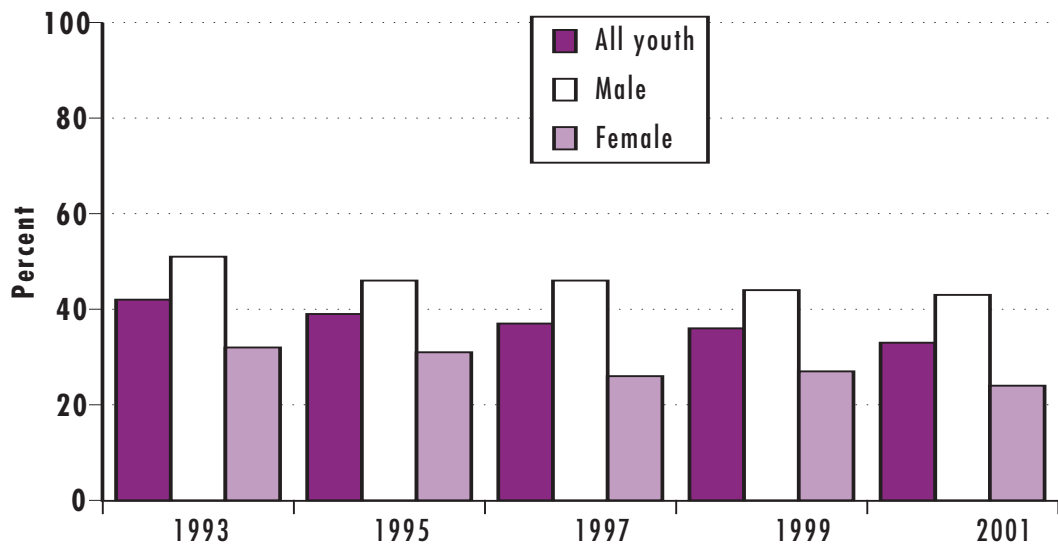
^a Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Note: Percentage of youth in grades 9 to 12 who reported being in a physical fight one or more times.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2002). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 2001. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 51(ss-4); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2000). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1999. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 49(ss-5); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1998). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1997. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 47(ss-3); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1996). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1995. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 45(ss-4); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1995). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1993. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 44(ss-1).

Figure SD 2.1

Percentage of youth in grades 9 to 12 who reported being in a physical fight within the past year, by sex: Selected years, 1993-2001



Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2002). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 2001. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 51(ss-4); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2000). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1999. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 49(ss-5); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1998). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1997. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 47(ss-3); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1996). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1995. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 45(ss-4); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1995). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1993. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 44(ss-1).

SECTION 4. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

SD 2.2 Weapon Carrying

Weapon carrying among youth is associated with the most serious injuries resulting from violence. Carrying a weapon significantly increases the risk that a violent argument will result in death, disability, or other serious injury.¹

In 1993, 22 percent of youth in grades 9 to 12 reported carrying a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club at least once in the past 30 days. By 1999, that number declined to 17 percent and remained constant in 2001 (Table SD 2.2.A).

The number of youth who reported carrying a gun at least once in the past 30 days declined between 1993 and 1999 to a low of 5 percent. In 2001, that number rose slightly to 6 percent, including 7 percent of Black, non-Hispanic youth, 5 percent of Hispanic youth, and 6 percent of White, non-Hispanic youth (Table SD 2.2.B and Figure SD 2.2.B).

Differences by Age. In general, youth in the lower grades are more likely than older youth to report carrying a weapon. In 2001, 20 percent of 9th-graders reported having carried a weapon in the past 30 days, compared with 17 percent of 10th- and 11th-graders and 15 percent of 12th graders.

Differences by Sex. Males are much more likely than females to carry a weapon. This is true across all grades and for all racial and ethnic groups (Figure SD 2.2.A). For example, in 2001, 29 percent of males in grades 9 to 12 reported carrying a weapon, compared with 6 percent of females.

Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin.² In 2001, 18 percent of White, non-Hispanic, 15 percent of Black, non-Hispanic, and 17 percent of Hispanic youth reported having carried a weapon. For White, non-Hispanic, Black, non-Hispanic, and Hispanic youth, these represent reductions from 1993 rates of 21, 29, and 24 percent, respectively.

¹ U.S. Public Health Service. (1993). *Public Health Reports* (Supp. 1). Rockville, MD: Public Health Service.

² Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

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Table SD 2.2.A

Percentage of youth in grades 9 to 12 who reported having carried a weapon at least once within the past 30 days, by sex, grade, and race and Hispanic origin: Selected years, 1993-2001

	1993			1995			1997			1999			2001		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
All youth	22	34	9	20	31	8	18	28	7	17	29	6	17	29	6
Grade															
9th	26	39	11	23	34	9	23	33	11	18	29	7	20	34	7
10th	21	33	10	21	32	9	17	27	6	19	31	7	17	28	5
11th	22	33	9	20	32	8	18	29	6	16	27	5	17	28	6
12th	20	33	7	16	26	6	15	23	5	16	27	5	15	26	5
Race and Hispanic origin^a															
White, non-Hispanic	21	33	7	19	31	6	17	27	4	16	29	4	18	31	5
Black, non-Hispanic	29	38	19	22	30	16	22	29	15	17	23	12	15	22	9
Hispanic	24	37	12	25	37	13	23	35	10	19	30	8	17	26	7

^a Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Note: Youth were asked whether they carried a weapon “such as a gun, knife, or club” within 30 days preceding the survey.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2002). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 2001. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 51(ss-4); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2000). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1999. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 49(ss-5); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1998). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1997. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 47(ss-3); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1996). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1995. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 45(ss-4); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1995). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1993. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 44(ss-1).

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Table SD 2.2.B

Percentage of youth in grades 9 to 12 who reported having carried a gun at least once within the past 30 days, by sex, grade, and race and Hispanic origin: Selected years, 1993-2001

	1993			1995			1997			1999			2001		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
All youth	8	14	2	8	12	3	6	10	2	5	9	1	6	10	1
Grade															
Ninth	9	16	2	9	14	3	8	13	3	5	10	1	7	13	1
Tenth	9	15	2	8	13	3	6	10	1	5	10	1	5	9	1
Eleventh	7	13	1	7	12	1	6	9	1	4	7	1	6	10	2
Twelfth	7	12	1	6	11	2	5	8	1	5	8	1	5	8	1
Race and Hispanic origin^a															
White, non-Hispanic	7	12	1	6	10	2	4	7	1	4	8	1	6	10	1
Black, non-Hispanic	12	21	4	11	19	4	9	16	3	8	15	2	7	12	1
Hispanic	10	17	3	11	17	5	10	17	2	5	8	2	5	8	2

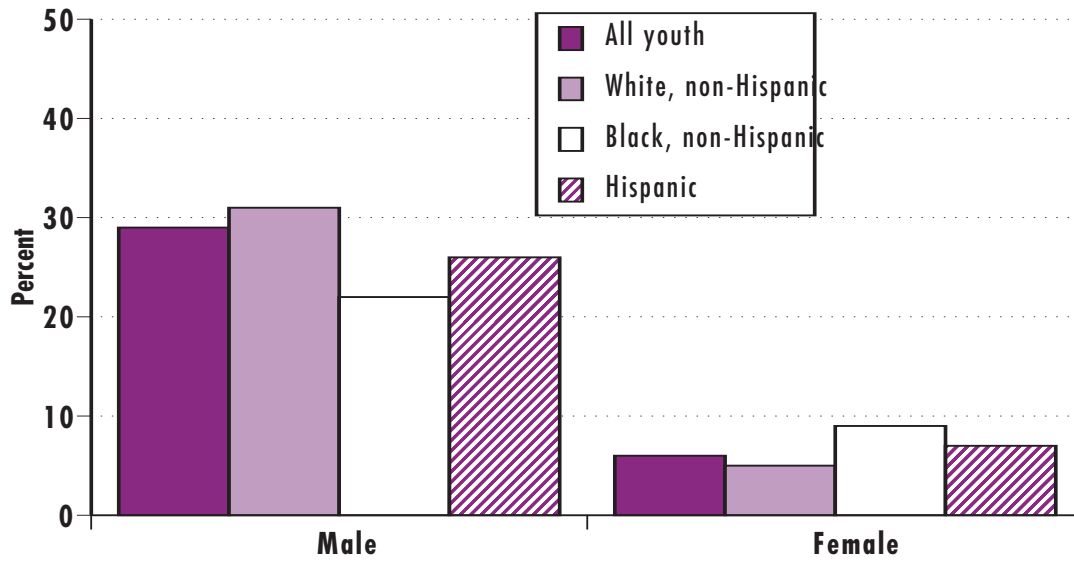
^a Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Note: Youth reported having carried a gun at least once in the past 30 days preceding the survey.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2002). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 2001. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 51(ss-4); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2000). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1999. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 49(ss-5); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1998). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1997. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 47(ss-3); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1996). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1995. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 45(ss-4); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1995). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 1993. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 44(ss-1).

Figure SD 2.2.A

Percentage of youth in grades 9 to 12 who reported having carried a weapon at least once within the past 30 days, by sex, and by race and Hispanic origin: 2001



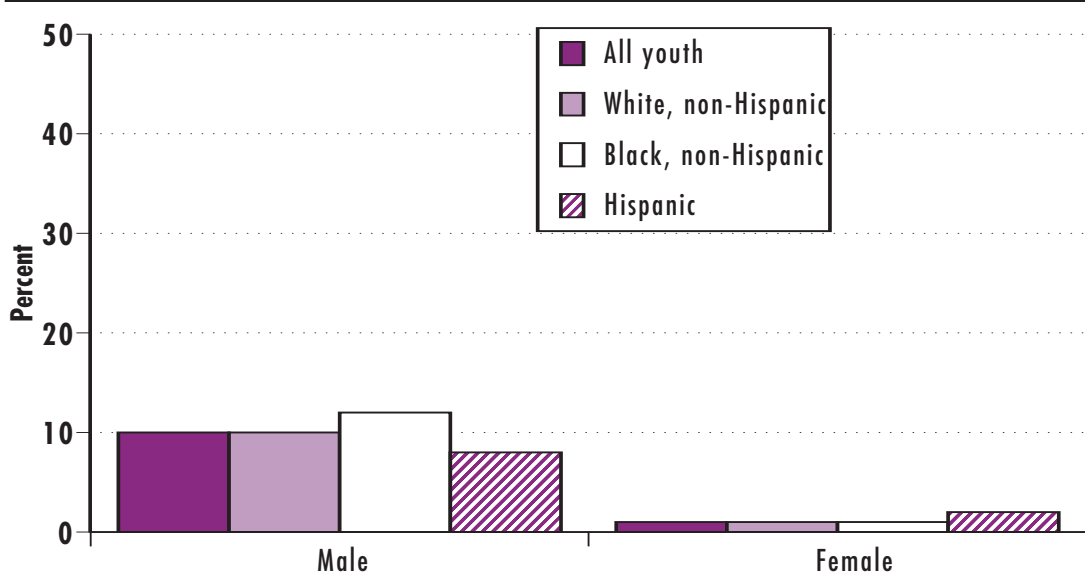
Note: Youth were asked whether they carried a weapon “such as a gun, knife, or club” within 30 days preceding the survey.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2002). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 2001. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 51(ss-4).

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Figure SD 2.2.B

Percentage of youth in grades 9 to 12 who reported having carried a gun at least once within the past 30 days, by sex, and by race and Hispanic origin: 2001



Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2002). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 2001. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 51(ss-4);

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SD 2.3 Seat Belt Use

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading causes of death for children from 2 to 14 years old.¹ In 2002, there were 459 passenger vehicle occupant fatalities among children under 5 years of age. Of those 459 fatalities, an estimated 185 (40 percent) were totally unrestrained. On average, six children under age 14 were killed and 721 were injured every day in motor vehicle crashes during 2002. Studies show that consistent use of seat belts and child safety seats dramatically lessens the risk of injury or death in a motor vehicle crash. When used properly, safety belts reduce the risk of fatal injury to front seat occupants (age 5 years and older) of passenger cars by 45 percent and the risk of moderate to critical injury by 50 percent.²

Table SD 2.3.A presents data from the National Occupant Protection Use Survey, which gathers data through observation at intersections.³ In 2002, child safety seat use among children under 1 year of age increased to 99 percent from 95 percent in 2000. While this is a promising trend, recent research indicates as many as 85 percent of parents and caregivers who do use car seats install and use car seats incorrectly.⁴

Differences by Age. The use of child safety seats or seat belts is substantially higher at younger ages. In 2002, 99 percent of children under 1 year of age were observed wearing a safety device. Toddlers were seen wearing a safety device 94 percent of the time and slightly older children (ages 4–7) were observed 83 percent of the time wearing a safety device (Figure SD 2.3). In 2002, children under the age of 8 were most likely to be restrained if they were in a van or SUV (91 percent) compared to 88 percent in passenger cars. In 2002, children between the ages of 0–7 were also most likely to be restrained during rush hour (90 percent) versus nonrush hour (87 percent) (Table SD 2.3.B).

¹ Minino, A. M., Arias, E., Kochanek, K. D., Murphy, S. L., & Smith, B. L. (2002) Deaths: Final Data for 2000. *National Vital Statistics Report*, 50(15).

² National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (2003). *Traffic Safety Facts 2002*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Transportation.

³ Previous editions of *Trends in the Well-Being of America's Children and Youth* presented seat belt data based on parent report rather than observation. Estimates based on parent report are higher than those based on observation.

⁴ The study identified several frequent misuses of rear-facing, forward-facing, and booster seats for observed children, including 63 percent in seats not held tightly by safety belts, 33 percent with loose harness straps, and 20 percent with harness straps incorrectly routed through the seats. Taft, C. H., Mickalide, A. D., & Taft, A. R. (1999). *Child Passengers at Risk in America*. Washington, DC: National SAFEKIDS Campaign.

Table SD 2.3.A

Percentage of children and youth who are observed to have worn a seat belt or been placed in a child safety seat, by age: Selected years, 1994-2002

	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002
Infant (Under 1 year)	88	85	97	95	99
Toddlers ^a	61	60	91	91	94
Ages 5-15	58	65	69	66	—
Ages 16-24	53	50	55	69	—

^a From 1994-2000, the age of a toddler was 1-3. In 2002, the age of a toddler is 1-4.

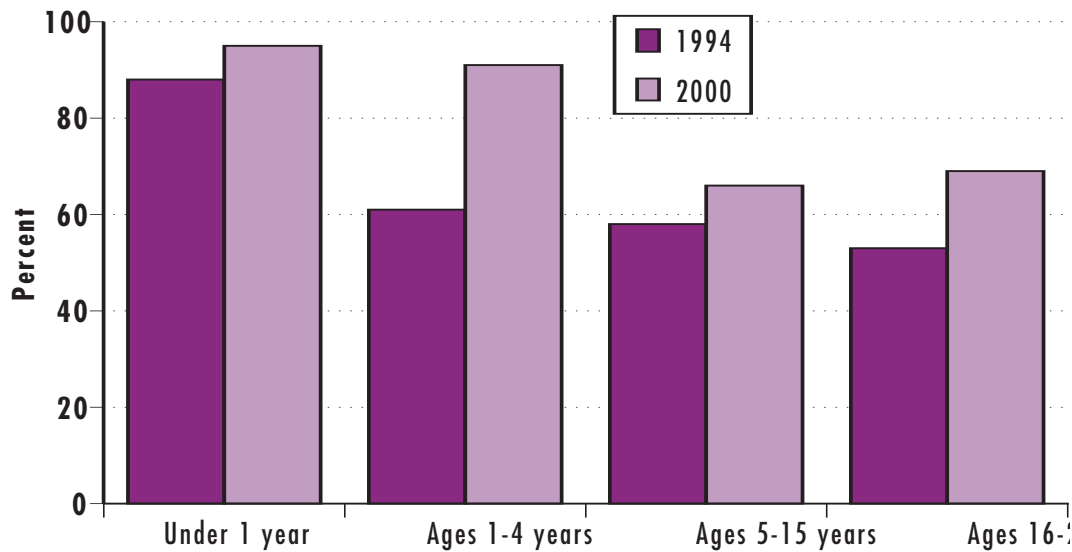
— Data not available.

Note: Use of restraints for children under 1 year refers to child safety seats. Use of restraints for all other ages refers to safety belts or child safety seats. Age is based on the best judgement of the observers in the National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) Controlled Intersection Study.

Sources: Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2003). *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2003*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office; National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2003). *Traffic Safety Facts, 2002*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Transportation; National Center for Statistics and Analysis, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2002). *National Occupant Protection Use Survey*.

Figure SD 2.3

Percentage of children and youth who are observed to have worn a seat belt or been placed in a child safety seat, by age: 1994 and 2000



Sources: Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2003). *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2003*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office; National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2003). *Traffic Safety Facts, 2002*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Transportation; National Center for Statistics and Analysis, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2002). *National Occupant Protection Use Survey*.

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Table SD 2.3.B

Percentage of children who are restrained for selected categories by year: Selected years, 1994-2002

	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002
Ages 0-5	66	61	92	91	—
Passanger Cars	68	57	90	92	—
Vans, SUVs, and Pickup Trucks	61	69	95	98	—
Front Seat	61	61	79	94	—
Back Seat	70	62	97	91	—
Rush Hour	56	55	75	95	—
Non-Rush Hour	69	62	95	92	—
Weekday	66	62	92	94	—
Weekend	66	53	89	84	—
City	69	69	94	96	—
Surburban	68	79	85	94	—
Rural	60	36	94	72	—
Ages 0-7	—	—	—	—	88
Passanger Cars	—	—	—	—	88
Vans and SUVs	—	—	—	—	91
Pickup Trucks	—	—	—	—	77
Front Seat	—	—	—	—	83
Back Seat	—	—	—	—	90
Rush Hour	—	—	—	—	90
Non-Rush Hour	—	—	—	—	87
Weekday	—	—	—	—	89
Weekend	—	—	—	—	85
City	—	—	—	—	84
Surburban	—	—	—	—	85
Rural	—	—	—	—	87

— Data not available.

Note: Age is based upon the best judgement of the observers in the National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) Controlled Intersection Study. Use of restraints for children under 1 year of age refers to child safety seats. Use of restraints for all other ages refers to safety belts or child safety seats. In the year 2002, the NHTSA changed their age group to 0-7.

Sources: Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2003). *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2003*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office; National Center for Statistics and Analysis, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2002). *National Occupant Protection Use Survey*.