

Are Sport Utility Vehicles Safer Than Cars?

Some parents believe that Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVs) keep their family safer. However, a recent study shows that the SUV alone does not keep children safe. Children are at risk for injury whether they ride in an SUV or car.

SUVs have a much higher rate of roll-over crashes than regular cars. Thirty-six percent of fatal SUV crashes last year were rollovers. A child's risk of injury is 25 times greater if he is not properly restrained.

What else do studies show?

- Children who are properly restrained **in cars and SUVs** are less likely to be injured.
- Side impact crashes are the second most common fatal crash. Frontal crashes are the most fatal.
- Side impact crashes kill 42% of children 0–8 who ride in the rear seat.
- Side-impact crashes kill 300 American children under eight each year.
- High back booster seats prevent injury. Children 4–8 years old were more likely to get hurt if they were in seat belts alone or in backless booster seats.
- Vehicle weight, whether in cars or SUVs, provides added protection.

Car makers put passenger air bags (PABs) in cars to protect riders. PABs are

safer for adults. However, they can injure and kill kids in front impact crashes if they ride in the front seat. Over the years, car makers have improved PAB systems. Still, kids who ride in older cars with PABs are at the greatest risk.

Parents can protect their kids from injury and/or death from vehicle accidents.

- Place children in age-appropriate car restraints in the **back seat**.
- Have kids **less than 13** years sit in the back seat of a vehicle with a PAB.
- Use belt-positioning booster seats and high back booster seats for 4–8 year olds. These seats help protect kids from head, stomach and spine injuries.
- Place children **in the center**, rear seat of a vehicle.
- Include another seat belted passenger in the rear seat along with the child.

 For more information on child safety seats, log onto www.chop.edu/carseat



Call the Parent Help Line. We listen. We can find you help.

1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week.