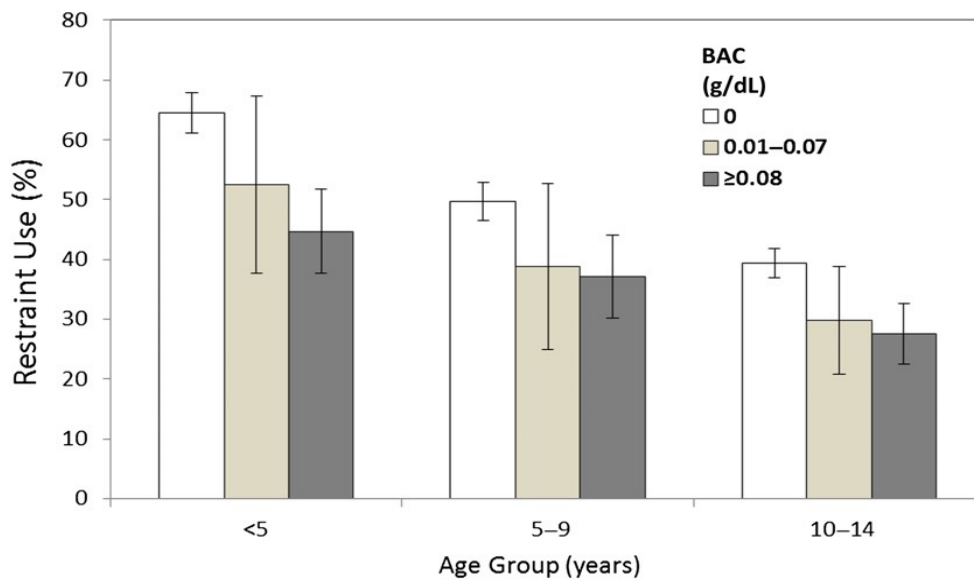


## Under the Radar: A Few Facts About Child Passengers and Impaired Drivers

- 22% of child passengers killed are caught up in crashes that involve impaired drivers.
- Of these children, most are riding **with the impaired driver** (between 51% and 68% depending on the data source and year).
- Of those for whom restraint data were available, 48% were unrestrained.
- Effective strategies are urgently needed to protect children at risk.



- Of 1038 children under 15 killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2018, 22% were in crashes with impaired drivers. Of those, 55% were riding with the impaired driver.
- Impaired drivers are less likely to buckle up or to buckle up children:



**Key:**

**Alcohol level:** white: BAC 0; tan: .01-.07; dark: .08+

**Ages:** under 5 - cols.1; ages 5-9 - cols.2; 10-14 - cols.3

**SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.** P.O. Box 553, Altadena, CA 91003 [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org)  
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## What do we know about DUI and children?

- Issue put on the map originally by Kyran Quinlan, MD, with paper in 2000 based on research done while a U.S. Centers for Disease Control Fellow; co-authors include David Sleet, PhD, well-known for automotive area research.
- Quinlan revisited the issue in 2014<sup>1</sup>, analyzing FARS\* data for 2001-2010 where at least 1 driver had .08 or more blood alcohol level.

### Findings:

- 1515 of 2344 of children under 15, or 65%, were riding with the impaired driver.
- In 10% of crashes, more than 1 child died.
- 61% of children were unrestrained.
- In cars in which children died, 71% of drivers LIVED, indicating the crashes were survivable.
- Median blood alcohol level: .15 (.08 is per se impaired.)
- Crashes are most likely to be in the evening or at night and single-vehicle.
- Driver profile: male, alcohol conviction within 3 years, no valid driver's license, unrestrained, BUT 1/3 of drivers were women. (See photo: Jan 18, 8 p.m., female driver, female adult passenger, children ages 1,2, & 7, deputy nearby, San Bernardino).
- State-specific data.
  - California: 135 fatalities; ranked 25<sup>th</sup> jurisdiction rated per 100,000 children.
  - South Dakota, New Mexico: highest rates per 100,000 children. Texas: most fatalities: 272.

### SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. recommends:

- 1) Joint action to develop public awareness campaign to inform all adults of our responsibility to intervene when an inebriated adult plans to put children into a vehicle.  
KIDS CAN'T GET OUT ON THEIR OWN.
- 2) Campaign to alert professionals and community advocates about this risk and to develop a basic plan to use in work with those found to have alcohol- and/or drug-impaired driving issues to keep kids out of the car, with specific remedies for separated or divorced parents to safeguard children on visitation.
- 3) New California law offers arrestee the option of installing Ignition Interlock Device (IID) from time of arrest instead of license suspension to allow for "driving to work" and "taking children to and from school". Could this be strongly encouraged to address problem of kids at risk? Data show IID program works better than suspension in other states and in 4-California-County pilot program.

<sup>1</sup> Quinlan, K, R A Schults & R A Rudd, Child Passenger Deaths Involving Alcohol-Impaired Drivers," *Pediatrics*, 5/5/14, 133; 966. \*Fatality Analysis Reporting System

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