

School Transportation-Related Crashes

A school transportation-related crash is a crash which involves, either directly or indirectly, a school bus body vehicle, or a non-school bus functioning as a school bus, transporting children to or from school or school-related activities.

Since 1996 there have been about 417,705 fatal motor vehicle traffic crashes. Of those, 0.33 percent (1,387) were classified as school transportation-related.

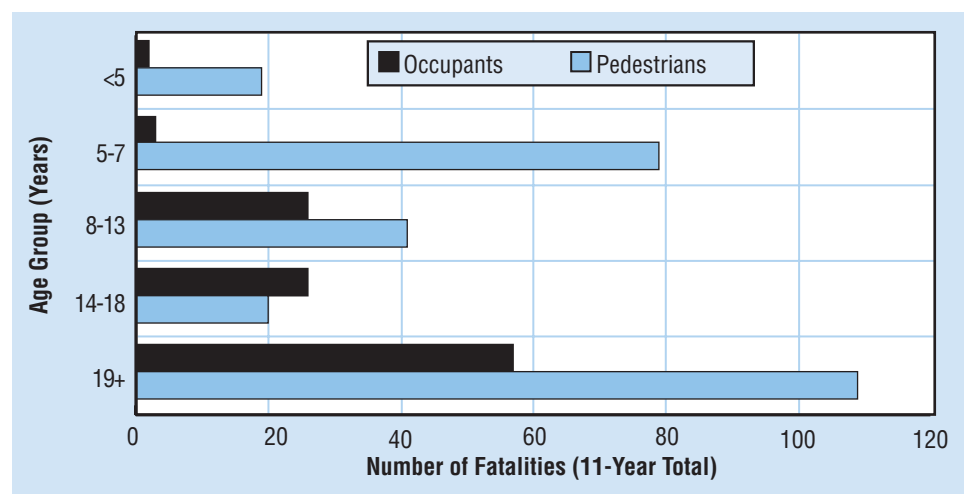
Since 1996, 1,536 people have died in school transportation-related crashes — an average of 140 fatalities per year. Most of the people who lost their lives in those crashes (72%) were occupants of other vehicles involved. Non occupants (pedestrians, bicyclists, etc.) accounted for 20 percent of the deaths, and occupants of school transportation vehicles accounted for 7 percent.

Since 1996, 159 school-age pedestrians (younger than 19) have died in school transportation-related crashes. Over two-thirds (67%) were killed by school buses, 6 percent by vehicles functioning as school buses, and 28 percent by other vehicles involved in the crashes. One-half (50%) of all school-age pedestrians killed in school transportation-related crashes were between the ages of 5 and 7.

“An average of 20 school-age children die in school transportation-related traffic crashes each year — 5 occupants of school transportation vehicles and 14 pedestrians.”

Figure 1

Total Occupant and Pedestrian Fatalities in School Transportation-Related Crashes, by Age Group, 1996-2006



Note: Occupant fatalities shown are for occupants of school buses and non-school buses used as school buses.

On average, 10 school-age pedestrians are killed by school transportation vehicles (school buses and non-school bus vehicles used as school buses) each year, and 4 are killed by other vehicles involved in school bus-related crashes.

More school-age pedestrians are killed in the afternoon than in the morning, with 32 percent of the fatalities occurring in crashes between 3 and 4 p.m.

Table 1
Total Fatalities in School Transportation-Related Crashes by Time of Day, 1996-2006

Time of Day	Occupants*	Pedestrians	Total
Midnight-6:59 a.m.	9	10	19
7-7:59 a.m.	20	32	52
8-8:59 a.m.	14	14	28
9-9:59 a.m.	4	2	6
10-10:59 a.m.	8	0	8
11-11:59 a.m.	0	5	5
Noon-12:59 p.m.	2	1	3
1-1:59 p.m.	1	7	8
2-2:59 p.m.	15	22	37
3-3:59 p.m.	23	51	74
4-4:59 p.m.	10	12	22
5-11:59 p.m.	8	3	11
11-Year Total	114	159	273

*Does not include occupants of other vehicles in school transportation-related crashes.

Between 1996 and 2006, 96 crashes occurred in which at least one occupant of a school transportation vehicle died. More than half of those crashes (57%) involved at least one other vehicle. In the 41 single-vehicle crashes, 48 occupants — 14 drivers and 34 passengers — were killed. In the 55 multiple-vehicle crashes, 34 drivers and 32 passengers died. In the 41 single-vehicle crashes, the first harmful events were as follows: striking a fixed object (23 crashes), a person falling from the vehicle (6 crashes), the vehicle overturning (4 crashes), the vehicle colliding with a train (2 crashes), other non-collision (2 crashes), and collision with a non-fixed object (2 crashes).

In 53 percent of all crashes involving fatalities to occupants of a school transportation vehicle, the principal point of impact was the front of the vehicle.

Since 1996, 6 drivers and 7 passengers have died in school bus body vehicles providing transportation for purposes other than school or school-related activities (churches, civic organizations, etc.). In 1987, one such multi-vehicle crash resulted in the deaths of 27 occupants, including the driver.

“From 1996 to 2006, one-half of the school-age pedestrians killed in school transportation-related crashes were between 5 and 7 years old.”

Table 2

Total Occupant Fatalities in School Transportation-Related Crashes by Principal Impact Point on School Transportation Vehicle, 1996-2006

Principal Impact Point on School Transportation Vehicle	Type of Crash				Total	
	Single-Vehicle		Multiple Vehicle			
	Crashes	Fatalities	Crashes	Fatalities	Crashes	Fatalities
Front	17	21	34	43	51	64
Right Side	6	8	9	11	15	19
Left Side	3	4	10	10	13	14
Rear	3	3	1	1	4	4
Top	0	0	0	0	0	0
Undercarriage	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Collision	11	11	0	0	11	11
Other/Unknown	1	1	1	1	2	2
11-Year Total	41	48	55	66	96	114

“Impacts to the front of the school transportation vehicle occur in 53 percent of fatal school transportation-related crashes.”

Table 3

School-Age Pedestrians Killed in School Transportation-Related Crashes by Vehicle Maneuver, 1996-2006

Vehicle Maneuver	School Bus Body Type	Vehicle Used as School Bus	Other Body Type	Total
Going Straight	48	3	28	79
Slowing or Stopping in Traffic Lane	3	0	0	3
Starting in Traffic Lane	26	3	1	30
Passing or Overtaking Another Vehicle	0	0	9	9
Leaving a Parked Position	5	0	0	5
Maneuvering to Avoid an Animal, Pedestrian, Object, Other Vehicle, etc.	0	0	2	2
Turning Right	9	0	0	9
Turning Left	13	1	0	14
Backing Up (Other Than for Parking)	0	1	0	1
Negotiating a Curve	1	1	2	4
Entering Parked Position	1	0	0	1
Changing Lanes	0	0	1	1
Other/Unknown	0	0	1	1
11-Year Total	106	9	44	159

For more information:

Information on traffic fatalities is available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, NVS-421, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590. NCSA can be contacted on 800-934-8517. Fax messages should be sent to 202-366-7078. General information on highway traffic safety can be accessed by Internet users at <http://www.nhtsa.gov/portal/site/nhtsa/ncsa>. To report a safety-related problem or to inquire about motor vehicle safety information, contact the Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236.

Other fact sheets available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis are *Overview, Alcohol, African American, Bicyclists and Other Cyclists* (formerly titled *Pedalcyclists*), *Children, Hispanic, Large Trucks, Motorcycles, Occupant Protection, Older Population, Pedestrians, Race and Ethnicity, Rural/Urban Comparisons, Speeding, State Alcohol Estimates, State Traffic Data, and Young Drivers*. Detailed data on motor vehicle traffic crashes are published annually in *Traffic Safety Facts: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Crash Data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System and the General Estimates System*. The fact sheets and annual Traffic Safety Facts report can be accessed online at <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/CMSWeb/index.aspx>.

Table 4
School Transportation-Related Crashes Involving Occupant Fatalities, 1996-2006

Year	School Bus Body Type				Vehicle Used as School Bus				Total			
	Single-Vehicle Crash		Multiple Vehicle Crash		Single-Vehicle Crash		Multiple Vehicle Crash		Single-Vehicle Crash		Multiple Vehicle Crash	
	Crashes	Fatalities	Crashes	Fatalities	Crashes	Fatalities	Crashes	Fatalities	Crashes	Fatalities	Crashes	Fatalities
1996	5	5	3	3	2	2	0	0	7	7	3	3
1997	0	0	5	8	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	9
1998	1	2	4	4	0	0	0	0	1	2	4	4
1999	2	2	6	6	0	0	2	2	2	2	8	8
2000	7	9	6	7	2	2	2	3	9	11	8	10
2001	5	9	6	8	1	1	0	0	6	10	6	8
2002	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	2	1	1
2003	5	5	2	2	3	3	1	1	8	8	3	3
2004	2	2	5	5	0	0	0	0	2	2	5	5
2005	3	3	4	5	0	0	2	2	3	3	6	7
2006	0	0	3	6	0	0	2	2	0	0	5	8
Total	31	38	45	55	10	10	10	11	41	48	55	66
Average	3	4	4	5	1	1	1	1	4	4	5	6

Note: Does not include occupants of other vehicles in school transportation-related crashes.

Table 5
Fatalities in School Transportation-Related Crashes, 1996-2006

Year	Occupants of School Transportation Vehicle*			Pedestrians			Other Non occupants	Occupants of Other Vehicles	Total
	Driver	Passenger	Total	Struck by School Vehicle*	Struck by Other Vehicle	Total			
1996	2	8	10	16	7	23	2	101	136
1997	5	5	10	17	2	19	5	97	131
1998	3	3	6	21	3	24	7	91	128
1999	6	4	10	20	6	26	4	127	167
2000	8	13	21	19	7	26	1	99	147
2001	6	12	18	18	4	22	6	95	141
2002	1	2	3	16	4	20	6	100	129
2003	6	5	11	22	5	27	2	100	140
2004	3	4	7	27	3	30	3	93	133
2005	5	5	10	27	3	30	7	87	134
2006	3	5	8	18	3	21	2	119	150
Total	48	66	114	221	47	268	45	1,109	1,536
Average	4	6	10	20	4	24	4	101	140

*Includes school bus body type and non-school bus used as school bus.