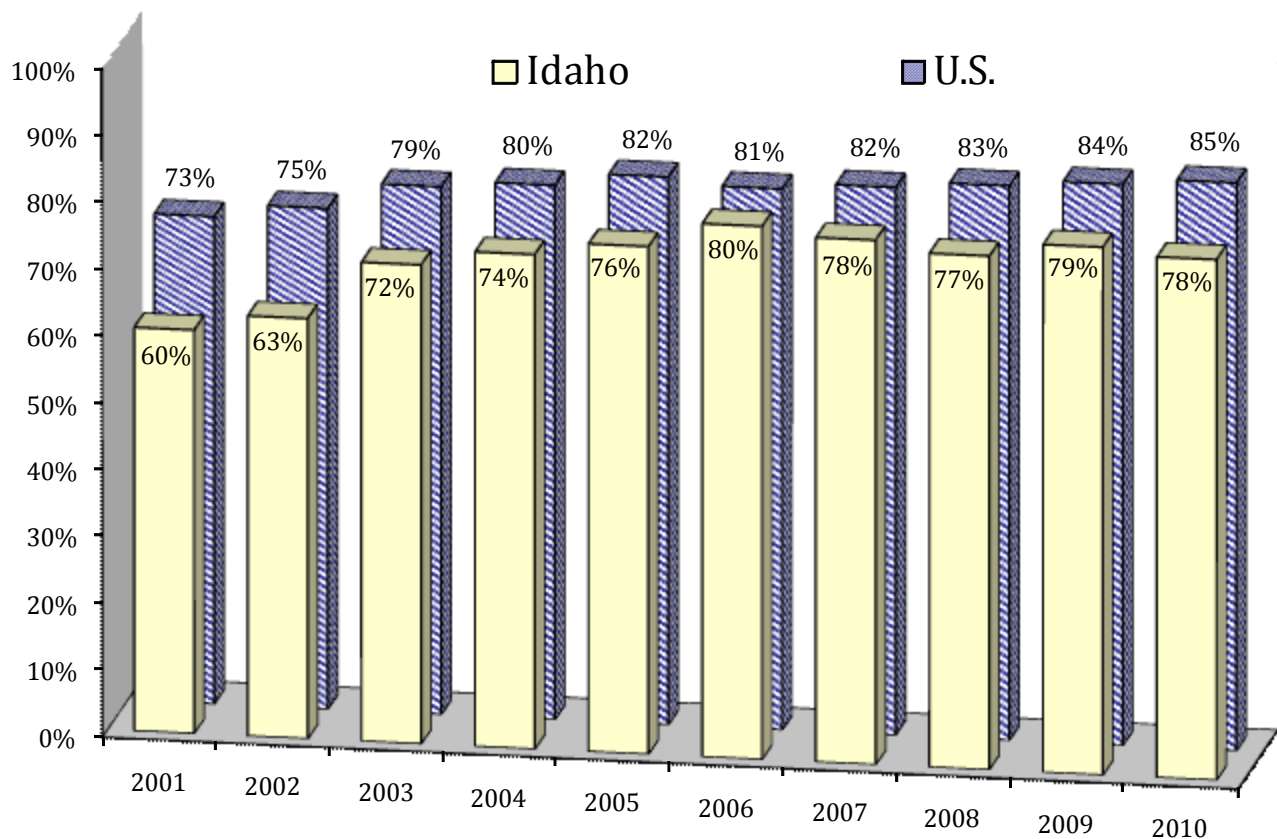


Safety Restraint Usage

Idaho's seat belt use law, effective July 1, 1986, requires seat belt use for front seat passengers and drivers, regardless of residency, in vehicles with a gross vehicle weight of 8,000 pounds or less that were manufactured with safety belts. The law is a "secondary" law and can only be enforced when someone is stopped for another traffic violation. The law was updated July 1, 2003. It now covers all seating positions and has enhanced penalties for drivers less than 18 years of age. Drivers and occupants, 18 years of age and older, receive separate tickets.

Figure 13 depicts observed seat belt use by year for both Idaho and the U.S. The figures are the observed rates for persons in passenger cars, pickups, sport utility vehicles, and vans, which make up 92% of the vehicles involved in motor vehicle crashes. The U.S. usage rate comes from the National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) and the mini NOPUS, which are done alternately every year.

Figure 13
Observed Seat Belt Usage – Idaho vs. U.S.: 2001 - 2010



The methodology for national seat belt surveys differs from that of Idaho and does not include any observation sites in Idaho.

Observational Seat Belt Survey Results

Table 27 shows the observed shoulder harness seat belt use by county.

Table 27							
Observed Seat Belt Use by County: 2006-2010							
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Change 2009-2010	Avg. Change 2006-2009
Ada	93.0%	90.5%	91.1%	94.0%	96.9%	3.1%	0.4%
Bannock	66.9%	65.1%	66.0%	66.7%	65.5%	-1.8%	-0.1%
Bingham	53.9%	54.8%	50.5%	58.0%	54.2%	-6.6%	2.9%
Blaine	66.6%	66.9%	72.7%	69.9%	79.1%	13.1%	1.8%
Bonner	82.5%	89.8%	86.2%	71.1%	74.0%	4.0%	-4.2%
Bonneville	66.3%	60.9%	58.7%	65.0%	65.2%	0.4%	-0.4%
Canyon	80.5%	82.9%	86.3%	87.7%	90.2%	2.9%	2.9%
Cassia	58.9%	68.1%	61.9%	65.6%	60.7%	-7.6%	4.2%
Elmore	70.8%	72.8%	71.3%	72.2%	72.3%	0.2%	0.7%
Kootenai	89.0%	86.3%	78.1%	82.2%	70.2%	-14.7%	-2.4%
Latah	79.4%	76.7%	81.8%	80.3%	84.7%	5.5%	0.5%
Madison	65.3%	59.0%	60.7%	68.8%	63.2%	-8.2%	2.2%
Minidoka	70.4%	66.7%	75.2%	66.1%	67.3%	1.8%	-1.6%
Nez Perce	85.1%	84.6%	86.9%	84.0%	89.0%	6.0%	-0.4%
Payette	86.9%	83.4%	82.1%	88.5%	91.3%	3.2%	0.7%
Twin Falls	68.4%	71.1%	73.7%	75.5%	76.6%	1.4%	3.4%
Statewide	79.8%	78.5%	76.9%	79.2%	77.9%	-1.6%	-0.2%

The Office of Highway Safety evaluates compliance rates through analysis of crash data and statewide observational surveys of seat belt use. Observational surveys are conducted by observing shoulder harness use or non-use. The observational survey is a representative sample of the state and does not include all counties.

Table 28 shows the observed seat belt use for the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) districts⁴ by vehicle type. District 3 (south-western Idaho) had the highest overall usage at 93.2%, while district 5 (south-eastern Idaho) had the overall lowest usage at 62.6%.

ITD District	Passenger Cars	Vans and Sport Utility Vehicles	Pickup Trucks	All Vehicles
1	69.5%	74.8%	68.7%	71.1%
2	91.5%	90.3%	79.2%	87.4%
3	94.9%	94.3%	88.0%	93.2%
4	73.0%	81.6%	58.4%	71.0%
5	65.3%	71.0%	48.3%	62.6%
6	69.5%	72.8%	45.8%	64.3%
Statewide	80.2%	82.3%	68.3%	77.9%

Usage rates for the occupants of pickup trucks continue to be lower than usage rates for other types of passenger vehicles. The usage rate for pickup truck occupants in 2010 ranged from a high of 88.0% in District 3 (south-western Idaho) to a low of 45.8% in District 6 (north-eastern Idaho).

Seat belt usage varied by the type of roadway the vehicles were traveling on. It ranged from a high of 97.4% on urban interstates to a low of 40.6% on rural minor collectors (although there is only one site with this functional class and it has a very low amount of traffic).

There was no statistically significant difference between urban and rural sites. Usage on urban roadways was 78.6%, while usage on rural roadways was 75.8%. There was also no statistically significant difference between major and minor roadways. Usage on major roadways was 81.4% while usage on minor roadways was 76.0%. Major roads were defined as interstates and principal arterials. Minor roads were comprised of the rest of the roadway functional classifications.

Self-Reported Seat Belt Usage Results

Table 29 shows the self-reported seat belt use for people, ages 7 and older, in passenger cars, pickups, sport utility vehicles, and vans that were killed or seriously injured. The child passenger safety seat law was upgraded in 2005 to include children age 6 and younger. Research has indicated there is a tendency for persons involved in crashes to falsely report compliance with the seat belt law and thus, self-reported use tends to overstate actual use⁵. Seat belt use by severely or fatally injured occupants can be more directly assessed by law enforcement officers or emergency medical personnel, and is therefore, more reliable.

Injury Type	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Change 2009-2010	Avg. Change 2006-2009
Fatalities -Restraints Used	38.8%	34.8%	32.9%	41.0%	46.7%	13.8%	3.0%
Serious Injuries -Restraint Used	67.6%	66.1%	64.6%	65.9%	65.4%	-0.7%	-0.8%

Of the 152 passenger motor vehicle occupants killed in 2010, only 71 were using seat belts. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates seat belts are 50% effective in preventing fatalities and serious injuries. By this estimate, there were 71 lives were saved in 2010 by seat belt usage and an additional 36 lives (half of those killed and unbelted) could have been saved if everyone had buckled up.

Costs of Injuries by Safety Restraint Use

Injury Type	Safety Restraints			Costs of Injuries		
	Used	Not Used	Unknown	Used	Not Used	Unknown
Fatality	71	72	9	\$429,803,281	\$435,856,848	\$54,482,106
Serious Injury	677	313	45	\$204,097,043	\$94,360,967	\$13,566,273
Visible Injury	2,166	554	126	\$182,898,854	\$46,780,224	\$10,639,546
Possible Injury	4,994	642	292	\$279,526,613	\$35,934,338	\$16,343,967
Total				\$1,096,325,790	\$612,932,377	\$95,031,892

Self-reported seat belt use can be biased because of the penalties involved for not wearing a seat belt (meaning people misrepresent their belt use to avoid a ticket). The number of people using seat belts is higher for the less severe injury categories because of this bias, but also because seat belts lessen the severity of injuries sustained in crashes. Had the occupants that were seriously injured and belted not been wearing a seat belt, they may have been killed.

Local Safety Restraint Usage

Table 31 presents self-reported restraint use rates for all motor vehicle occupants, 7 years old and older, involved in fatal and serious injury crashes for each county, for 2006 through 2010. Crash data provides an analysis of the restraint use at the local level. This information is self-reported to the investigating officer after a crash. The self-reported use is for all occupants, regardless of injury type, involved in fatal and serious injury crashes.

County by Population	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Change 2009-2010	Avg. Change 2006-2009
50,000 and over							
Ada	84.8%	83.8%	85.4%	83.9%	85.1%	1.3%	-0.3%
Bannock	64.8%	73.6%	53.4%	64.2%	72.6%	13.2%	2.1%
Bonneville	68.5%	69.4%	65.8%	72.4%	64.1%	-11.5%	2.1%
Canyon	79.7%	82.2%	78.4%	80.1%	76.4%	-4.5%	0.2%
Kootenai	74.3%	79.2%	77.8%	82.0%	77.3%	-5.7%	3.4%
Twin Falls	83.0%	71.2%	76.3%	76.4%	82.1%	7.4%	-2.3%
20,000 - 49,999							
Bingham	58.5%	49.5%	51.6%	54.6%	47.7%	-12.6%	-1.8%
Blaine	76.5%	40.0%	47.4%	29.3%	52.4%	79.0%	-22.5%
Bonner	63.3%	72.7%	74.0%	84.7%	83.3%	-1.6%	10.4%
Cassia	50.7%	55.1%	60.9%	60.0%	61.4%	2.3%	5.9%
Elmore	69.9%	70.1%	69.1%	74.4%	67.7%	-9.1%	2.2%
Latah	63.5%	77.3%	81.6%	70.0%	75.0%	7.1%	4.4%
Madison	58.6%	42.1%	74.6%	55.6%	56.5%	1.7%	7.8%
Nez Perce	83.5%	70.8%	81.4%	58.8%	76.1%	29.5%	-9.4%
Payette	80.4%	51.2%	66.1%	63.5%	75.0%	18.1%	-3.7%
10,000 - 19,999							
Boundary	75.8%	69.4%	77.8%	40.0%	70.6%	76.5%	-15.0%
Franklin	66.7%	55.3%	60.9%	58.8%	68.4%	16.3%	-3.4%
Fremont	66.7%	93.8%	63.8%	63.6%	52.9%	-16.8%	2.8%
Gem	61.5%	69.7%	77.3%	68.0%	76.0%	11.8%	4.0%
Gooding	43.5%	57.1%	53.9%	65.0%	52.9%	-18.6%	15.5%
Idaho	71.4%	35.5%	42.9%	45.2%	58.1%	28.6%	-8.1%
Jefferson	46.2%	57.7%	25.0%	60.0%	57.9%	-3.5%	36.1%
Jerome	57.9%	63.1%	60.6%	56.4%	74.3%	31.7%	-0.6%
Minidoka	64.7%	56.7%	53.9%	61.5%	60.6%	-1.5%	-1.0%
Owyhee	64.5%	16.3%	25.0%	42.9%	52.4%	22.2%	16.7%
Shoshone	73.3%	65.0%	54.6%	66.7%	80.0%	20.0%	-1.7%

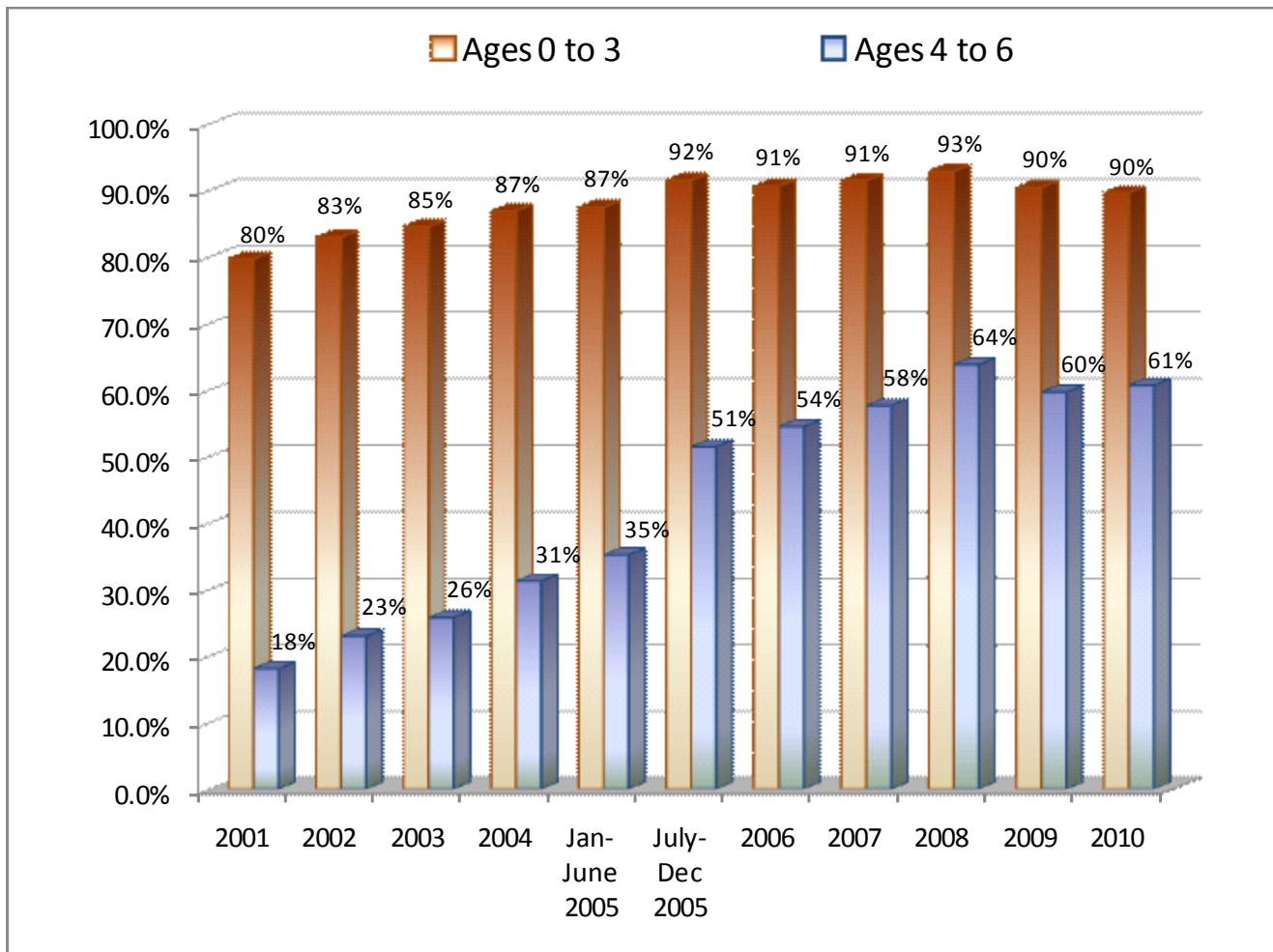
Table 31 (Continued)
Self-Reported Restraint Use in Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes by County: 2006-2010
in Passenger Cars, Pickups, Sport Utility Vehicles, and Vans

County by Population	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Change 2009-2010	Avg. Change 2006-2009
5,000 - 9,999							
Bear Lake	50.0%	65.0%	53.3%	31.3%	72.2%	131.1%	-9.8%
Benewah	63.2%	68.2%	28.6%	9.5%	32.1%	237.6%	-38.9%
Boise	75.0%	77.6%	75.5%	62.3%	69.2%	11.2%	-5.6%
Caribou	92.9%	0.0%	60.0%	80.0%	33.3%	60.0%	11.1%
Clearwater	42.3%	33.3%	36.4%	41.7%	44.4%	6.6%	0.8%
Lemhi	59.3%	63.2%	80.0%	50.0%	73.3%	46.7%	-1.4%
Power	46.2%	41.7%	55.0%	30.8%	38.2%	24.3%	-7.3%
Teton	58.3%	50.0%	90.9%	40.0%	50.0%	25.0%	3.8%
Valley	48.2%	81.4%	81.8%	50.0%	36.7%	-26.7%	10.2%
Washington	100.0%	78.6%	91.7%	56.3%	68.8%	22.2%	-14.5%
0 - 4,999							
Adams	100.0%	38.5%	50.0%	85.7%	100.0%	16.7%	13.3%
Butte	50.0%	60.0%	69.2%	90.0%	50.0%	-44.4%	21.8%
Camas	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	72.7%	84.6%	100.0%	0.0%
Clark	40.0%	83.3%	88.2%	72.7%	12.5%	-82.8%	32.2%
Custer	90.0%	40.0%	38.9%	75.0%	92.3%	23.1%	11.5%
Lewis	0.0%	66.7%	50.0%	60.0%	54.6%	-9.1%	28.3%
Lincoln	52.2%	44.4%	53.3%	50.0%	54.6%	9.1%	-0.4%
Oneida	58.3%	70.8%	42.9%	44.4%	55.6%	25.0%	-4.8%
Statewide Average	73.5%	72.3%	71.8%	71.7%	73.1%	2.1%	-0.8%

Child Safety Seat Usage by Age Groups

The child safety seat law was upgraded in 2005 to include all children under the age of 7 years old. The law took effect July 1, 2005. Prior to that, Idaho Code required every child, under the age of four, and weighing less than 40 pounds be restrained in a car safety seat that meets the federal standards when traveling in a non-commercial motor vehicle manufactured with seat belts after January 1, 1966.

Figure 14
Child Safety Seat Usage by Age Group in Crashes: 2001 - 2010



The change in the child safety seat law increased usage among the 4 to 6 year old age group by 16 percentage points in the last half of 2005. Increased publicity of the law change also seemed to have an effect on the 0 to 3 year old age group, increasing child safety seat usage by 5 percentage points.

Parents are continuing to place their very young children (ages 0-3) in a child safety seat at a high rate (90%), while only 61% place their toddlers (ages 4-6) in child safety seats or booster seats, even though they are too small for seat belts to fit them correctly.

Child Safety Seat – Self-Reported Usage

Table 32 shows self-reported child safety seat use for children in passenger cars, pickups, sport utility vehicles, and vans from 2006 to 2010.

Injury Type	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Change 2009-2010	Avg. Change 2006-2009
Fatalities							
Restrained	3	4	3	1	3	200.0%	-19.4%
Unrestrained	0	2	2	3	1	-66.7%	83.3%
Serious Injuries							
Restrained	7	15	15	12	10	-16.7%	31.4%
Unrestrained	12	10	10	13	13	0.0%	4.4%
Visible Injuries							
Restrained	63	44	46	54	65	20.4%	-2.7%
Unrestrained	45	40	16	21	32	52.4%	-13.3%
Possible Injuries							
Restrained	217	199	254	175	193	10.3%	-3.9%
Unrestrained	71	77	65	54	67	24.1%	-8.0%
No Injuries							
Restrained	2,175	2,522	2,334	2,168	2,193	1.2%	0.5%
Unrestrained	627	649	502	564	580	2.8%	-2.3%
Total Restrained	2,466	2,785	2,653	2,411	2,465	2.2%	-0.3%
Total Unrestrained	771	788	597	655	695	6.1%	-4.1%
% of Children Restrained	76.2%	77.9%	81.6%	78.6%	78.0%	-0.8%	1.1%

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates child safety seats are 69% effective in preventing fatalities and serious injuries. By this estimate we can deduce that a child safety seats saved 7 lives in 2010. Additionally, 22 serious injuries were prevented and 9 of the 13 unrestrained serious injuries may have been prevented if they had all been properly restrained.