

AFRICAN-AMERICAN TOOLKIT

BUCKLE UP AMERICA

Fact Sheet and Talking Points

Seat belt use rates are at an all-time high, but the rate among African-Americans falls behind the national average...resulting in thousands of tragic deaths.

- Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death in the African-American community. Specifically, motor vehicle crashes are:
 - The leading cause of death for African-American children ages 1 to 14; and
 - The second leading cause of death for African-Americans ages 15 to 34.
- Regular seat belt use is the single most effective way to protect people and reduce fatalities in motor vehicle crashes.
- Nationally, of the passenger vehicle occupants involved in fatal crashes in 2008, the 73 percent who were restrained **survived** the crash.
- In 2008, the National Occupant Protection Use Survey** reported 75 percent of Blacks regularly wore their seat belts, falling 8 percentage points below the national average.
- Sadly, in 2008, more than 2,500 African-American passenger vehicle occupants were killed in motor vehicle crashes.
- The good news is seat belts saved an estimated 1,000 African-American lives and prevented approximately 11,000 serious injuries in 2008.
- But the results could have been even higher, if the seat belt use rate equaled the national rate of 83 percent. In fact, an additional 161 lives might have been saved and 1,200 serious injuries prevented. That's also more than 1,300 families that might have been spared the pain of a loved one killed or injured.
- When worn correctly, seat belts have proven to reduce the risk of fatal injury to front-seat passenger car occupants by 45 percent – and by 60 percent in pickup trucks, SUVs and minivans.

Young African-Americans – Especially Males – Are Among Those at Greatest Risk

Of the African-American passenger vehicle occupant fatalities in 2008, fatalities in young men 15 to 34 were more than twice those of young women. Sadly, 76 percent of these young men were unbuckled at the time of the crashes.

You Can Make a Difference – *Buckle Up America.*

- Too many African-Americans are dying and it's time to reduce this deadly trend.
- Whether you are just traveling around the corner or across the country, wearing your seat belt is one of the best steps you can take to make sure you make it to your destination safely.
- Encourage family, friends and loved ones to buckle up, every trip, every time. It could be a matter of life or death.

For more information, please visit www.nhtsa.gov.

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*According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, all numbers and percentages referencing belted or unbelted fatalities are based on "Known Usage."

** The National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) is the only nationwide probability-based observational survey of seat belt use in the United States. The survey observes usage as it actually occurs at a random selection of roadway sites, and so provides the best tracking of the extent to which passenger vehicle occupants in this country are buckling up. To find out more about the NOPUS data, please see the document on Seat Belt Use in 2008 – Demographic Results. <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811183.pdf>. Data collectors determine race by observation only.