

## IMPORTANT EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS:

Alabama Coalition Against Rape Hotline:  
**1-800-725-RAPE**

RAINN National Sexual Assault Hotline:  
**1-800-656-HOPE**

Alabama Poison Center:  
**1-800-462-0800**

Suicide Hotline:  
**1-800-SUICIDE**

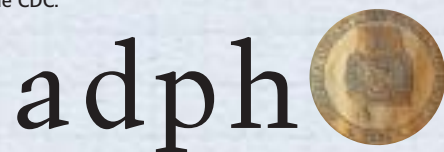
Fire:  
**911**  
or your local emergency number

Alabama State Fire Marshal's Office:  
**1-334-241-4166**

Police:  
**911**  
or your local emergency number

Ambulance:  
**911**  
or your local emergency number

This brochure was supported by cooperative agreement #U17/CCU419368-04 from the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC.

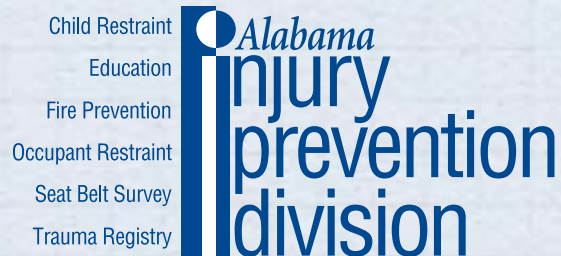


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Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease  
Injury Prevention Division  
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(800) 252-1818 • (334) 206-5300  
[www.adph.org/injuryprevention](http://www.adph.org/injuryprevention)

ADPH-INJ-12/11-03-kw

# INJURY PREVENTION PROGRAM

*of Alabama*



Alabama Department of Public Health

The Injury Prevention Division of the Alabama Department of Public Health promotes activities designed to reduce injuries in our state through a variety of programs.

## HOW CAN INJURIES BE REDUCED?

Injuries can be reduced by determining what causes them and then sharing ways to prevent them through health promotion and education programs along with special events that promote safety. Examples of these programs are encouraging the use of smoke alarms, seat belts, child car seats and the use of bicycle helmets, along with participating in health and safety fairs. All of these activities prevent injuries, which also reduces disability and death.

## INJURIES ARE NOT ACCIDENTS – THEY CAN BE PREVENTED.

Injuries are not random, uncontrollable events, but rather predictable and preventable incidences with identifiable causes. Injuries affect everyone. Injury is the leading cause of death for all Americans ages 1 to 34, and injury remains one of the leading causes of death, no matter how long someone may live.

## TWO TYPES OF INJURIES:

- Unintentional injuries- events that happen which are not deliberate or done with purpose. Examples of unintentional injuries are falling down the stairs, motor vehicle crashes and bicycle crashes.
- Intentional injuries- something you do with the purpose of hurting yourself or others. These are planned actions. Examples of intentional injuries are suicides, shooting someone, or knowingly poisoning someone.

*Average number of injury deaths per year in Alabama:*

**3,267**

## 5 LEADING CAUSES OF UNINTENTIONAL INJURY IN ALABAMA:

- 1. Motor Vehicle Crashes**
- 2. Falls**
- 3. Suffocation**
- 4. Fire/Burn**
- 5. Poisoning**

*Homicides and Suicides by firearms are the top two intentional injuries in Alabama.*



# INJURY PREVENTION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

## Alabama Head and Spinal Cord Injury Registry/ Alabama Trauma Registry

The Alabama Head and Spinal Cord Injury Registry (AHSCIR) and Alabama Trauma Registry (ATR) programs facilitate the department's injury prevention efforts through patient follow-up and research. The head and spinal cord injury registry enables follow-up contact and assistance through the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services for patients who have had a head or spinal cord injury. The trauma registry collects information about other injuries to help us focus our educational efforts. It contains information about whether seat belts were worn in a motor vehicle crash, what kind of injury the patient endured and many other facts. These registries allow us to focus on programs that will educate the public on ways to prevent these injuries from happening, thereby reducing disability and death.

- Although the motor vehicle crash (MVC) fatality rate for Alabama dropped slightly from year 2000 to 2001, it remains ranked among the nation's worst seven states at 22.27 per 100,000 population. (Traffic Safety Facts 2001, US - DOT/NHTSA)
- More than half the people who sustain spinal cord injuries are between 16 and 30 years old. (CDC Injury Fact Book 2001-2002)

## Child Restraint

The goal of the child restraint program is to reduce the number of deaths and injuries resulting from motor vehicle crashes by increasing the use of child passenger safety seats or car seats. The correct use of car seats is promoted by providing information to parents and children through daycares, teachers, health fairs and newspapers. If car seats are used correctly we can help lower the number of children injured or killed in a motor vehicle crash.

Child Restraint continued.

- For children ages 1 to 14, motor vehicle injuries are the leading cause of death. (CDC Injury Fact Book 2001-2002)
- Although 87% of Alabamians are using car seats. (ADPH 2003 Report) approximately 85% are installed incorrectly. (National SAFE KIDS Campaign)
- Although rates are improving, only about 6% of children ages 4 to 8 ride in booster seats, the recommended safety seat for this age group. (CDC Injury Fact Book 2001-2002)

## Occupant Restraint

The goal of the occupant restraint program is to reduce the number of traffic-related deaths and injuries through increased use of seat belts. Presentations, incentives and educational materials are provided in addition to attending media appearances and conducting school based essay and poster contests to encourage the use of seatbelts. Information is provided to both children and adults about the importance of wearing seatbelts. If more people wear seatbelts the number of injuries and deaths from motor vehicle crashes will be reduced. Our goal is to increase seat belt use to 100%.



- Only 35% of high school students report that they always wear their seat belt. (CDC Injury Fact Book 2001-2002)
- As of 2003 the seat belt usage was 77.4%. (2003 Seat Belt Report)

## Seat Belt Survey

Observational surveys are conducted every year to determine seat belt and child passenger safety seat (car seat) usage rates in the state. Twenty-three sites in fifteen different counties are observed for one hour. The observer looks to see if the driver and/or passengers are wearing their seat belts and have their children in car seats. The findings of the surveys are calculated and organized into an annual report that is presented at a news conference held each year to announce the results of the survey. This allows us to see whether our efforts to increase the use of seat belts and car seats are working.



## Fire Prevention

The mission of the Alabama Smoke Alarm Initiative (ASAI) is to save lives in Alabama. This is done by providing fire safety education such as the importance of having smoke alarms and a fire escape plan and by providing and installing smoke alarms at no cost to households in target communities. These target communities are chosen based on high death rates from fire, high poverty rates and population size.

- Approximately 70-80% of fatal home fires occur in homes without working smoke alarms. (Source: NFPA's "U.S. Experience with Smoke Alarms and Other Fire Alarms" report)
- Alabama ranks in the top ten nationally for fire-related fatalities and injuries.
- As of August 4, 2003 a total of 1704 smoke alarms have been installed in six counties in Alabama.

## State Capacity Building Program

The State Capacity Building Program is designed to improve the division's ability to prevent injuries and resulting deaths and disabilities. This program enables the health department to collect data about specific types of injuries in the state so we can focus our efforts more directly on how to prevent them and reduce death. With this information we can design and implement programs to fit specific community needs and provide support and training along the way when needed. Data that is collected may be used to inform policy makers of the need for injury prevention support throughout the state of Alabama.

## The Rape Prevention and Education Program

This program supports the Alabama Coalition Against Rape (ACAR) and its 15 member rape crisis centers in its efforts to provide services and information to victims of sexual assault. The Centers provide a 24-hour crisis hotline for victims and educational activities in schools, organizations and communities. The Alabama Department of Public Health along with the Alabama Coalition Against Rape and the Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence have collaborated with other state agencies to develop a plan to reduce sexual assault and domestic violence. The plan will focus efforts to reduce sexual assault and domestic violence in Alabama by carrying out specific tasks associated with these intentional injuries.

- In 2002, according to the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center there were 1,567 total rapes in the state.
- Annually, approximately 1.5 million women are raped and/or physically assaulted by an intimate partner in the US. (Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey, Department of Justice, 2000 report)

## Suicide Prevention

In response to the Surgeon General's Call to Action, the Alabama Suicide Prevention Task Force (ASPTF) was formed to develop a statewide plan to reduce suicide. Task force members represent various agencies and organizations statewide including: the Alabama Department of Public Health, Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, Crisis Centers, Department of Education and many more. The ASPTF plan provides information about help that is available in the state regarding suicide. Visit [www.adph.org/suicideprevention](http://www.adph.org/suicideprevention).

- Alabama is ranked in the top 15 among all other states for suicide deaths.
- For Americans ages 10 to 24, suicide is the third leading cause of death. (CDC Injury Fact Book 2001-2002)

See reverse for important emergency phone numbers.