A re you aware that many parents never bother to protect their children from the most common cause of epilepsy and permanent brain damage? Do you know there is an “immunization” for the most deadly “disease” afflicting children today?

These statements are difficult, maybe impossible to believe. How often have you seen children riding in cars without child safety seats and/or safety belts to protect them?

The force of a car crash or sudden stop at 30 mph has the same effect on a child as falling from a three story building. One of the most important jobs as a parent is keeping your child safe when riding in a vehicle.

We all want to keep our children to be safe and secure and help them live to their full potential. Knowing how to prevent leading causes of injury, like road traffic injuries, is a step toward this goal.

Every hour, 150 children between ages 0 and 19 are treated in emergency departments for injuries sustained in motor vehicle crashes. More children ages 5 to 19 die from crash related injuries than from any other type of injury. Proper use of child safety seats helps keep children safe.

Start a life saving habit in the first ride, and never let your child ride any other way. If he or she gets out of the seat, stop the car right away and put the child back in it.
Important Safety Reminders

Failure to read the child safety seat instructions, in addition to vehicle owner’s manual instructions regarding the seat belts, could result in death or serious injury as a result of failure of the child safety seat to be properly secured and/or properly restrained.

Children in rear facing child seats should not be placed in the front seat of vehicles equipped with passenger side air bags. The impact of a deploying air bag striking a rear facing child seat could result in injury to the child. NHTSA also recommends that children 12 and younger sit in the rear seat away from the force of a deploying air bag.

Children age 12 and younger are safest when properly buckled in the back seat of a motor vehicle.

Take the Time to Encourage Good Behavior

- Take the time to encourage good behavior and healthy lifestyle choices, by using your seat belt.
- Correct and consistent use of seat belts is the best and easiest way to stay safe while in a vehicle.
- A child who learns to use seat belts becomes a teenager who does the same, and that teenager uses a seat belt throughout life, while teaching and encouraging others to do the same.
- Whether they show it or not, your children notice everything you do, and they learn from the things you say. When you buckle your child in, tell them the seat is to keep them safe in the car.
- No matter who you have in the car, no matter where you’re going, before you start the car, ask aloud whether everyone is buckled up. The routine will sink in, and everyone will use their seat belts as a matter of habit.
- Make sure children are not sharing seat belts or buckled in while sitting on someone else’s lap.
- Placing your child in their child passenger seat, and using a seat belt is the best way to prevent injury in the event of a motor vehicle crash.
- All children should ride buckled up in the back seat of the car, this is the safest part of the vehicle.

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