



OREGON SAFETY BELT OVERTIME BLITZ & RECENT OREGON CARSEAT LAW FACT SHEET & TALKING POINTS February 3 – February 16, 2020

- ODOT crash data for 2017 shows lack of safety belt or child restraint use was a factor in 22% or 64 of a total 285 motor vehicle occupant fatalities.
- Beginning Monday, February 3 and extending through Sunday, February 16, law enforcement agencies throughout Oregon will use federally funded overtime to educate the public about safety belt and child seat laws including a recently passed law increasing safety for children under age two.
- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading nationwide cause of death for children ages one through twelve years old. In 2017, 1,906 children under twelve were injured in Oregon traffic crashes, 9 percent were reported not using a child restraint system. It is estimated that car seats may increase crash survival by 71% for infants under one year old and by up to 59% for toddlers aged one to four. Booster seats may reduce the chance of nonfatal injury among four to eight year olds by 45% compared to safety belts used alone.
- Safety belts used correctly can reduce the risk of major crash injury or death by up to sixty-five percent.
- **In 2017 an Oregon law was passed requiring children to ride in a rear-facing safety seat until they are at least two years old.** A child over age two must continue to ride in a car seat with harness or in a booster until they reach age eight or 4' 9" in height and the adult belt fits them correctly.
- The recent law, which extends the rear-facing requirement from the previous age one to age two, will better protect the child's head, neck, and spine from potential crash injuries. This is because a rear-facing seat spreads crash forces evenly across the seat and child's body while also limiting forward or sideways motion of the head.
- For help selecting or installing child car seats, consult the seat manufacturer's instructions, your vehicle owner's manual, or visit a local child seat fitting station listed at: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats#inspection-inspection> or at <http://oregonimpact.org/car-seat-resources.htm>.