

Traffic Safety Facts

2008 Data

DOT HS 811 165

School Transportation-Related Crashes

A school transportation-related crash is a crash which involves, either directly or indirectly, a school bus body vehicle, or a non-school bus functioning as a school bus, transporting children to or from school or school-related activities.

Since 1998 there have been about 414,399 fatal motor vehicle traffic crashes. Of those, 0.34 percent (1,409) were classified as school transportation-related.

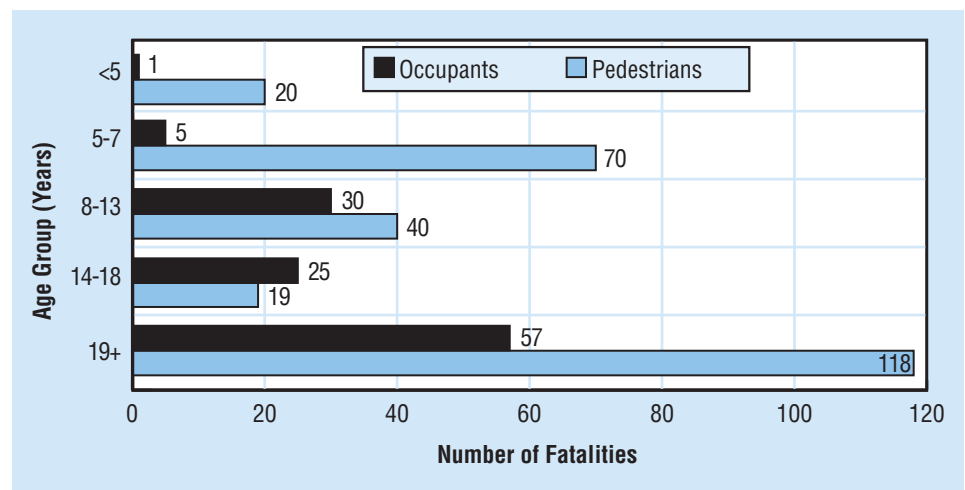
Since 1998, 1,564 people have died in school transportation-related crashes—an average of 142 fatalities per year. Most of the people who lost their lives in those crashes (72%) were occupants of other vehicles involved. Nonoccupants (pedestrians, bicyclists, etc.) accounted for 20 percent of the deaths, and occupants of school transportation vehicles accounted for 8 percent.

Since 1998, 149 school-age pedestrians (younger than 19) have died in school transportation-related crashes. Over two-thirds (69%) were killed by school buses, 7 percent by vehicles functioning as school buses, and 24 percent by other vehicles involved in the crashes. About one-half (47%) of all school-age pedestrians killed in school transportation-related crashes were between the ages of 5 and 7.

“An average of 19 school-age children die in school transportation-related traffic crashes each year—5 occupants of school transportation vehicles and 14 pedestrians.”

Figure 1

Total Occupant and Pedestrian Fatalities in School Transportation-Related Crashes, by Age Group, 1998-2008



Note: Occupant fatalities shown are for occupants of school buses and non-school buses used as school buses.

On average, 14 school-age pedestrians are killed by school transportation vehicles (school buses and non-school bus vehicles used as school buses) each year, and 3 are killed by other vehicles involved in school bus-related crashes.

More school-age pedestrians have been killed between the hours of 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. than any other time of day.

Table 1

Fatalities in School Transportation-Related Crashes by Time of Day, 1998-2008

Time of Day	Occupants*	Pedestrians	Total
Midnight–6:59 a.m.	10	11	21
7:00–7:59 a.m.	20	31	51
8:00–8:59 a.m.	9	15	24
9:00–9:59 a.m.	6	2	8
10:00–10:59 a.m.	8	0	8
11:00–11:59 a.m.	0	5	5
Noon–12:59 p.m.	1	2	3
1:00–1:59 p.m.	0	6	6
2:00–2:59 p.m.	21	20	41
3:00–3:59 p.m.	28	43	71
4:00–4:59 p.m.	10	10	20
5:00–11:59 p.m.	5	4	9
Total	118	149	267

*Does not include occupants of other vehicles in school transportation-related crashes.

“From 1998 to 2008, about one-half (47%) of the school-age pedestrians killed in school transportation-related crashes were between 5 and 7 years old.”

Between 1998 and 2008, 96 crashes occurred in which at least one occupant of a school transportation vehicle died. More than half of those crashes (59%) involved at least one other vehicle. In the 39 single-vehicle crashes, 46 occupants — 17 drivers and 29 passengers — were killed. In the 57 multiple-vehicle crashes, 32 drivers and 40 passengers died. In the 39 single-vehicle crashes, the first harmful events were as follows: striking a fixed object (23 crashes), a person falling from the vehicle (5 crashes), the vehicle overturning (5 crashes), the vehicle colliding with a train (2 crashes), other non-collision (1 crash), and collision with a non-fixed object (1 crash).

In 51 percent of all crashes involving fatalities to occupants of a school transportation vehicle, the principal point of impact was the front of the vehicle.

Since 1998, four drivers and one passenger have died in school bus body vehicles providing transportation for purposes other than school or school-related activities (churches, civic organizations, etc.). In 1987, one such multi-vehicle crash resulted in the deaths of 27 occupants, including the driver.

Table 2

Total Occupant Fatalities in School Transportation-Related Crashes by Principal Impact Point on School Transportation Vehicle and Type of Crash, 1998-2008

Principal Impact Point on School Transportation Vehicle	Type of Crash				Total	
	Single-Vehicle		Multiple-Vehicle			
	Crashes	Fatalities	Crashes	Fatalities	Crashes	Fatalities
Front	17	21	32	39	49	60
Right Side	7	9	9	11	16	20
Left Side	3	4	11	14	14	18
Rear	3	3	3	3	6	6
Top	0	0	1	4	1	4
Undercarriage	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Collision	8	8	0	0	8	8
Other/Unknown	1	1	1	1	2	2
Total	39	46	57	72	96	118

“Impacts to the front of the school transportation vehicle occur in 51 percent of fatal school transportation-related crashes.”

Table 3

School-Age Pedestrians Killed in School Transportation-Related Crashes by Vehicle Maneuver, 1998-2008

Vehicle Maneuver	School Bus Body Type	Vehicle Used as School Bus	Other Body Type	Total
Going Straight	49	4	22	75
Slowing or Stopping in Traffic Lane	2	0	0	2
Starting in Traffic Lane	26	3	0	29
Passing or Overtaking Another Vehicle	0	0	9	9
Leaving a Parked Position	4	0	0	4
Maneuvering to Avoid an Animal, Pedestrian, Object, Other Vehicle, etc.	0	0	2	2
Turning Right	7	0	0	7
Turning Left	13	1	0	14
Backing Up (Other Than for Parking)	0	1	0	1
Negotiating a Curve	1	1	2	4
Entering Parked Position	1	0	0	1
Changing Lanes	0	0	1	1
Total	103	10	36	149

For more information:

Information on traffic fatalities is available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, NVS-424, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590. NCSA can be contacted at 800-934-8517. Fax messages should be sent to 202-366-7078. General information on highway traffic safety can be accessed by Internet users at www.nhtsa.gov/portal/site/nhtsa/ncsa. To report a safety-related problem or to inquire about motor vehicle safety information, contact the Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236.

Other fact sheets available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis are *Overview, Alcohol, African American, Bicyclists and Other Cyclists, Children, Hispanic, Large Trucks, Motorcycles, Occupant Protection, Older Population, Pedestrians, Race and Ethnicity, Rural/Urban Comparisons, Speeding, State Alcohol Estimates, State Traffic Data, and Young Drivers*. Detailed data on motor vehicle traffic crashes are published annually in *Traffic Safety Facts: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Crash Data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System and the General Estimates System*. The fact sheets and annual Traffic Safety Facts report can be accessed online at www.nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/CATS/index.aspx.

Table 4

School Transportation-Related Crashes Involving Occupant Fatalities, 1998-2008

Year	School Bus Body Type				Vehicle Used as School Bus				Total			
	Single-Vehicle Crash		Multiple-Vehicle Crash		Single-Vehicle Crash		Multiple-Vehicle Crash		Single-Vehicle Crash		Multiple-Vehicle Crash	
	Crashes	Fatalities	Crashes	Fatalities	Crashes	Fatalities	Crashes	Fatalities	Crashes	Fatalities	Crashes	Fatalities
1998	1	2	4	4	0	0	0	0	1	2	4	4
1999	2	2	6	6	0	0	2	2	2	2	8	8
2000	7	9	6	7	2	2	2	3	9	11	8	10
2001	5	9	6	8	1	1	0	0	6	10	6	8
2002	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	2	1	1
2003	5	5	2	2	3	3	1	1	8	8	3	3
2004	2	2	5	5	0	0	0	0	2	2	5	5
2005	3	3	4	5	0	0	2	2	3	3	6	7
2006	0	0	3	6	0	0	2	2	0	0	5	8
2007	2	2	1	1	0	0	1	2	2	2	2	3
2008	3	3	6	9	1	1	3	6	4	4	9	15
Total	31	38	44	54	8	8	13	18	39	46	57	72
Average	3	3	4	5	1	1	1	2	4	4	5	7

Note: Does not include occupants of other vehicles in school transportation-related crashes.

Table 5

Fatalities in School Transportation-Related Crashes, 1998-2008

Year	Occupants of School Transportation Vehicle*			Pedestrians			Other Non-occupants	Occupants of Other Vehicles	Total
	Driver	Passenger	Total	Struck by School Vehicle**	Struck by Other Vehicle	Total			
1998	3	3	6	21	3	24	7	91	128
1999	6	4	10	20	6	26	4	127	167
2000	8	13	21	19	7	26	1	99	147
2001	6	12	18	18	4	22	6	95	141
2002	1	2	3	16	4	20	6	100	129
2003	6	5	11	22	5	27	2	100	140
2004	3	4	7	27	3	30	3	93	133
2005	5	5	10	27	3	30	7	87	134
2006	3	5	8	19	3	22	2	118	150
2007	4	1	5	16	2	19	6	112	142
2008	4	15	19	20	1	21	8	105	153
Total	49	69	118	225	41	267	52	1,127	1,564
Average	4	6	11	20	4	24	5	102	142

* Includes school bus body type and non-school bus used as school bus.

**Includes 1 pedestrian fatality in which the striking vehicle was not identified.