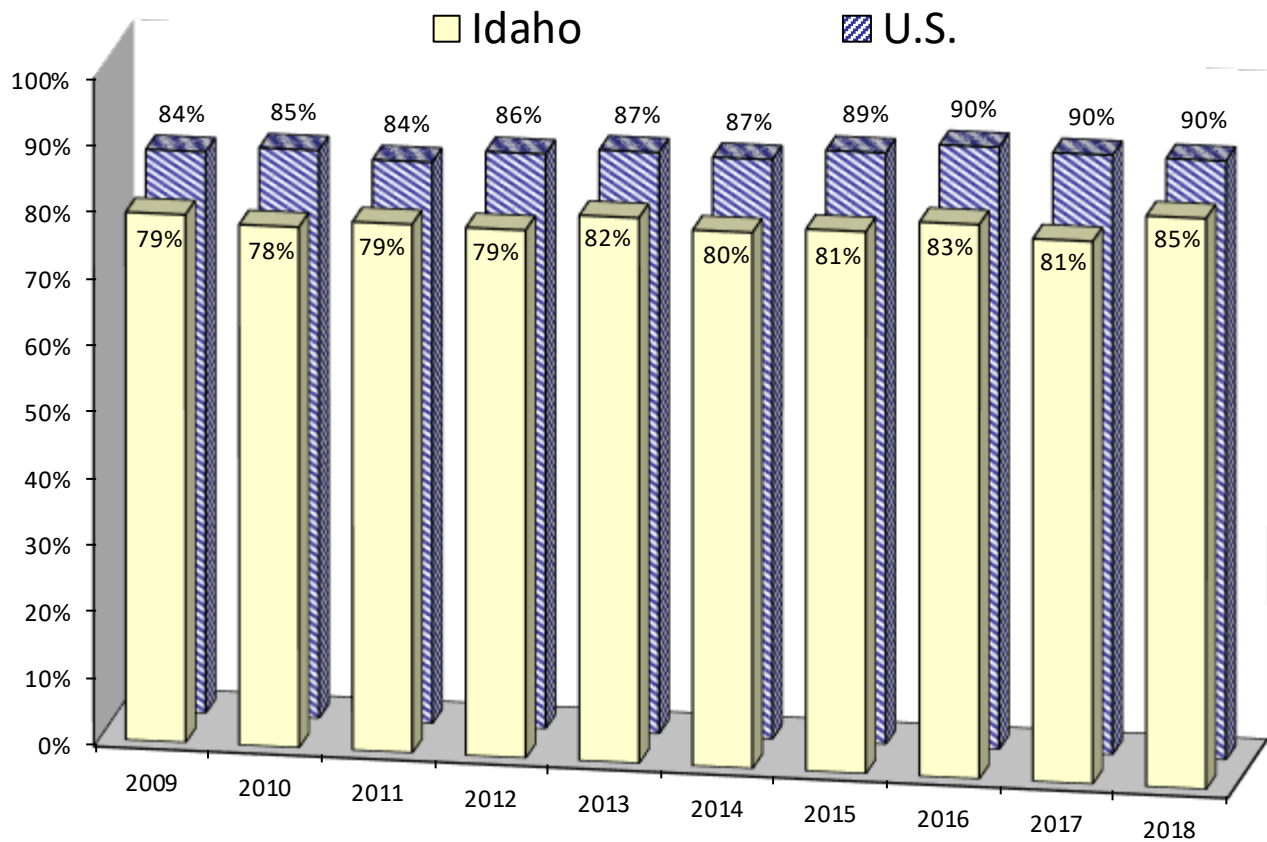


Safety Restraint Usage

Idaho's seat belt use law, effective July 1, 1986, requires seat belt use for front seat passengers and drivers, regardless of residency, in vehicles with a gross vehicle weight of 8,000 pounds or less that were manufactured with safety belts. The law is a "secondary" law and can only be enforced when someone is stopped for another traffic violation. The law was updated July 1, 2003. It now covers all seating positions and has enhanced penalties for drivers less than 18 years of age. Drivers and occupants, 18 years of age and older, receive separate tickets.

Figure 13 depicts observed seat belt use by year for both Idaho and the U.S. The figures are the observed rates for persons in passenger cars, pickups, sport utility vehicles, and vans, which made up 92% of the vehicles involved in motor vehicle crashes in 2018. The U.S. usage rate comes from the National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) and the mini NOPUS, which are done alternately every year.

Figure 13
Observed Seat Belt Usage – Idaho vs. U.S.: 2009 - 2018



The methodology for national seat belt surveys differs from that of Idaho and does not include any observation sites in Idaho.

Observational Seat Belt Survey Results

Table 27 shows the observed shoulder harness seat belt use by county. The methodology for the observational seat belt survey has been revised in 2013 and 2018. A new set of counties and observation sites were selected for the sample.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Change 2017-2018	Avg. Change 2014-2018
Ada	92.2%	93.9%	91.7%	88.8%	95.9%	7.9%	-1.2%
Bannock	80.5%	87.2%	85.9%	89.4%	75.4%	-15.7%	3.6%
Bingham	71.2%	79.7%	87.2%	82.4%	----	----	5.3%
Bonner	81.0%	78.8%	77.1%	78.6%	85.1%	8.2%	-1.0%
Bonneville	70.5%	65.9%	66.0%	74.0%	75.1%	1.5%	1.9%
Canyon	91.9%	88.1%	90.2%	91.5%	82.6%	-9.8%	-0.1%
Elmore	90.5%	89.4%	90.1%	89.0%	88.7%	-0.3%	-0.6%
Franklin	----	----	----	----	67.4%	----	----
Fremont	----	----	----	----	69.3%	----	----
Gem	80.2%	72.7%	76.2%	55.3%	----	----	-10.7%
Gooding	68.6%	56.2%	69.3%	72.4%	----	----	3.2%
Jerome	----	----	----	----	75.1%	----	----
Kootenai	75.9%	74.1%	76.8%	76.0%	85.0%	11.8%	0.1%
Latah	83.5%	82.9%	84.4%	83.4%	84.6%	1.5%	0.0%
Madison	72.2%	67.7%	71.2%	74.0%	----	----	1.0%
Minidoka	62.9%	57.0%	61.9%	72.6%	----	----	5.5%
Nez Perce	80.6%	78.2%	77.4%	84.3%	87.5%	3.8%	1.6%
Payette	90.5%	92.1%	86.3%	85.1%	----	----	-2.0%
Twin Falls	68.8%	59.7%	68.4%	72.7%	71.3%	-2.0%	2.6%
Washington	----	----	----	----	93.0%	----	----
Statewide	80.2%	81.1%	82.9%	81.2%	85.4%	5.2%	0.4%

The Office of Highway Safety evaluates compliance rates through analysis of crash data and statewide observational surveys of seat belt use. Observational surveys are conducted by observing shoulder harness use or non-use. The observational survey is a representative sample of the state and does not include all counties.

Table 28 shows the observed seat belt use for the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) districts⁴ by vehicle type. A map of the transportation districts can be found in Appendix A. District 3 (south-western Idaho) had the highest overall usage at 92.4%, while district 4 (south-central Idaho) had the overall lowest usage at 70.3%.

ITD District	Passenger Cars, Vans, and Sport Utility Vehicles	Pickup Trucks	All Vehicles
1	85.5%	83.8%	85.0%
2	92.4%	76.6%	87.3%
3	95.7%	83.3%	92.4%
4	74.5%	62.8%	70.3%
5	75.5%	59.3%	71.8%
6	79.2%	63.1%	75.0%
Statewide	88.6%	77.1%	85.4%

Usage rates for the occupants of pickup trucks continue to be lower than usage rates for other types of passenger vehicles. The usage rate for pickup truck occupants in 2018 ranged from a high of 83.8% in District 1 (northern Idaho) to a low of 59.3% in District 5 (south-eastern Idaho).

Self-Reported Seat Belt Usage Results

Table 29 shows the self-reported seat belt use for people, ages 7 and older, in passenger cars, pickups, sport utility vehicles, and vans that were killed or seriously injured. The child passenger safety seat law was upgraded in 2005 to include children age 6 and younger. Research has indicated there is a tendency for persons involved in crashes to falsely report compliance with the seat belt law and thus, self-reported use tends to overstate actual use⁵. Seat belt use by severely or fatally injured occupants can be more directly assessed by law enforcement officers or emergency medical personnel, and is therefore, more reliable.

Injury Type	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Change 2017-2018	Avg. Change 2014-2018
Fatalities -Restraints Used	44.3%	37.6%	34.6%	34.7%	36.8%	6.3%	-7.6%
Suspected Serious Injuries - Restraints Used	64.2%	66.8%	69.3%	65.4%	65.3%	-0.2%	0.7%

Of the 152 passenger motor vehicle occupants over the age of 7 killed in 2018, only 56 were using seat belts. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates seat belts are 50% effective in preventing fatalities and serious injuries. By this estimate, there were 56 lives saved in 2018 by seat belt usage and an additional 41 lives (half of those killed and unbelted) could have been saved if everyone had buckled up.

Costs of Injuries by Safety Restraint Use

Injury Type	Safety Restraints			Costs of Injuries		
	Used	Not Used	Unknown	Used	Not Used	Unknown
Fatality	56	82	14	\$561,102,012	\$821,613,661	\$140,275,503
Suspected Serious Injury	607	255	68	\$290,869,203	\$122,193,817	\$32,585,018
Suspected Minor Injury	2,691	393	242	\$351,220,269	\$51,293,038	\$31,585,026
Possible Injury	6,271	502	509	\$417,937,026	\$33,456,289	\$33,922,811
No Injury	37,049	1,405	2,835	\$125,085,981	\$4,743,605	\$9,571,615
Total				\$1,746,214,492	\$1,033,300,409	\$247,939,973

Self-reported seat belt use can be biased because of the penalties involved for not wearing a seat belt (meaning people misrepresent their belt use to avoid a ticket). The number of people using seat belts is higher for the less severe injury categories because of this bias, but also because seat belts lessen the severity of injuries sustained in crashes.

Local Safety Restraint Usage

Table 31 presents self-reported restraint use rates for all motor vehicle occupants, 7 years old and older, involved in fatal and serious injury crashes for each county, for 2014 through 2018. Crash data provides an analysis of the restraint use at the local level. This information is self-reported to the investigating officer after a crash. The self-reported use is for all occupants, regardless of injury type, involved in fatal and serious injury crashes. Values of “---” indicate there were no fatal or serious injury crashes.

County by Population	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Change 2017-2018	Avg. Change 2014-2018
50,000 and over							
Ada	85.7%	84.1%	89.0%	83.4%	85.6%	2.6%	-0.8%
Bannock	70.9%	74.8%	60.9%	56.3%	69.4%	23.5%	-6.9%
Bonneville	74.1%	77.9%	75.8%	68.1%	66.7%	-2.2%	-2.5%
Canyon	80.3%	79.6%	78.8%	77.9%	77.6%	-0.3%	-1.0%
Kootenai	72.9%	78.3%	75.1%	73.2%	74.4%	1.8%	0.2%
Twin Falls	87.4%	78.5%	79.0%	74.5%	69.8%	-6.3%	-5.1%
20,000 - 49,999							
Bingham	55.6%	61.5%	63.3%	66.7%	68.3%	2.4%	6.3%
Blaine	50.0%	63.0%	71.4%	83.3%	75.0%	-10.0%	18.7%
Bonner	71.2%	68.2%	56.9%	70.6%	68.1%	-3.5%	1.1%
Cassia	57.6%	63.9%	37.5%	36.0%	67.7%	88.2%	-11.4%
Elmore	80.0%	67.3%	65.7%	57.7%	58.1%	0.7%	-10.1%
Jefferson	71.1%	63.9%	66.7%	61.8%	72.2%	16.9%	-4.4%
Jerome	59.1%	52.6%	62.5%	66.7%	70.8%	6.2%	4.8%
Latah	46.4%	87.5%	70.0%	67.7%	74.3%	9.7%	21.7%
Madison	42.9%	57.1%	39.1%	61.1%	87.0%	42.3%	19.3%
Minidoka	53.8%	31.8%	66.7%	58.8%	50.0%	-15.0%	19.0%
Nez Perce	62.1%	81.0%	69.7%	66.7%	61.4%	-7.9%	4.0%
Payette	70.6%	62.8%	42.1%	47.6%	65.9%	38.3%	-10.3%
10,000 - 19,999							
Boundary	47.4%	40.0%	33.3%	65.2%	81.8%	25.5%	21.1%
Franklin	52.4%	72.7%	76.5%	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%	-4.1%
Fremont	78.8%	59.3%	20.0%	51.9%	66.7%	28.6%	22.7%
Gem	36.8%	68.2%	66.7%	50.0%	57.1%	14.3%	19.3%
Gooding	23.1%	72.4%	42.9%	38.1%	75.0%	96.9%	54.0%
Idaho	51.1%	51.7%	36.1%	35.0%	33.3%	-4.8%	-10.7%
Owyhee	58.3%	22.2%	53.8%	33.3%	0.0%	-100.0%	14.1%
Shoshone	58.8%	35.7%	52.4%	71.4%	42.9%	-40.0%	14.6%
Teton	50.0%	0.0%	58.3%	50.0%	100.0%	100.0%	28.6%
Valley	81.8%	71.4%	83.3%	64.5%	83.3%	29.2%	-6.2%
Washington	50.0%	73.7%	62.5%	69.2%	50.0%	-27.8%	14.3%

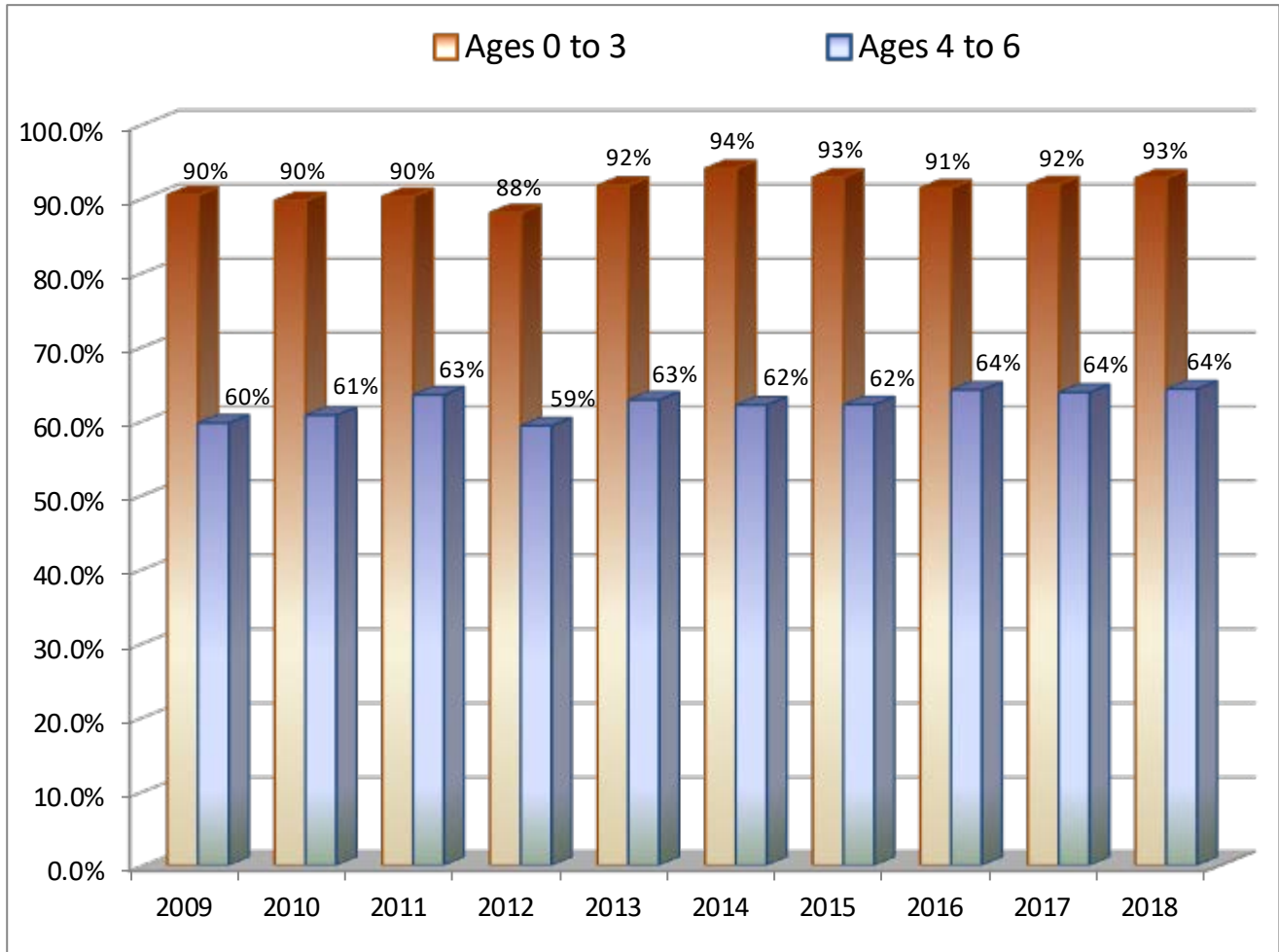
Table 31 (Continued)
Self-Reported Restraint Use of All Occupants in Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes by County: 2014-2018
in Passenger Cars, Pickups, Sport Utility Vehicles, and Vans

County by Population	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Change 2017-2018	Avg. Change 2014-2018
5,000 - 9,999							
Bear Lake	66.7%	40.0%	64.3%	100.0%	33.3%	-66.7%	25.4%
Benewah	55.6%	63.6%	75.0%	28.6%	14.3%	-50.0%	-9.8%
Boise	60.0%	61.5%	87.1%	88.9%	69.0%	-22.3%	15.4%
Caribou	33.3%	45.5%	66.7%	100.0%	70.0%	-30.0%	44.3%
Clearwater	76.9%	25.0%	62.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-5.8%
Lemhi	0.0%	53.8%	42.9%	25.0%	72.7%	190.9%	-28.7%
Lincoln	76.9%	75.0%	50.0%	57.1%	40.0%	-30.0%	-7.2%
Power	53.8%	46.2%	58.3%	34.8%	55.6%	59.7%	-9.4%
0 - 4,999							
Adams	0.0%	92.3%	20.0%	76.9%	28.6%	-62.9%	239.6%
Butte	66.7%	16.7%	91.7%	50.0%	100.0%	100.0%	109.8%
Camas	---	100.0%	33.3%	100.0%	75.0%	-25.0%	---
Clark	---	100.0%	66.7%	50.0%	100.0%	100.0%	---
Custer	50.0%	71.4%	22.2%	54.5%	50.0%	-8.3%	39.8%
Lewis	40.0%	100.0%	75.0%	100.0%	42.9%	-57.1%	52.8%
Oneida	66.7%	33.3%	75.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	13.9%
Statewide Average	74.6%	71.4%	75.0%	74.0%	74.4%	0.5%	-0.2%

Child Safety Seat Usage by Age Groups

The child safety seat law was upgraded in 2005 to include all children under the age of 7 years old. The law took effect July 1, 2005. Prior to that, Idaho Code required every child, under the age of four, and weighing less than 40 pounds be restrained in a car safety seat that meets the federal standards when traveling in a non-commercial motor vehicle manufactured with seat belts after January 1, 1966.

Figure 14
Child Safety Seat Usage by Age Group in Crashes: 2009 - 2018



Parents are continuing to place their very young children (ages 0-3) in a child safety seat at a high rate (93%), while only 64% placed their toddlers (ages 4-6) in child safety seats or booster seats, even though they are too small for seat belts to fit them correctly.

Child Safety Seat – Self-Reported Usage

Table 32
Self-Reported Child Safety Seat Use by Injury Type: 2014-2018
Under Age 7
in Passenger Cars, Pickups, Sport Utility Vehicles, and Vans

Injury Type	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Change 2017-2018	Avg. Change 2014-2018
Fatalities							
Restrained	3	3	1	1	0	-100.0%	-22.2%
Unrestrained	5	2	3	2	1	-50.0%	-14.4%
Suspected Serious Injuries							
Restrained	9	7	11	5	12	140.0%	-6.5%
Unrestrained	11	5	5	2	2	0.0%	-38.2%
Suspected Minor Injuries							
Restrained	64	66	82	57	77	35.1%	-1.0%
Unrestrained	15	30	5	23	24	4.3%	125.6%
Possible Injuries							
Restrained	160	267	315	214	248	15.9%	17.6%
Unrestrained	49	76	14	46	49	6.5%	67.4%
No Injuries							
Restrained	2,051	2,150	2,634	2,142	1,984	-7.4%	2.9%
Unrestrained	476	498	86	539	411	-23.7%	149.5%
Total Restrained	2,287	2,493	3,043	2,419	2,322	-4.0%	3.5%
Total Unrestrained	556	611	113	612	487	-20.4%	123.3%
% of Children Restrained	80.4%	80.3%	96.4%	79.8%	80.6%	1.0%	0.9%

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates child safety seats are 69% effective in preventing fatalities and serious injuries. By this estimate we can deduce that a life may have been saved if all children had been restrained in child safety seats. Additionally, 17 serious injuries were prevented and 1 unrestrained serious injuries may have been prevented if they had all been properly restrained.