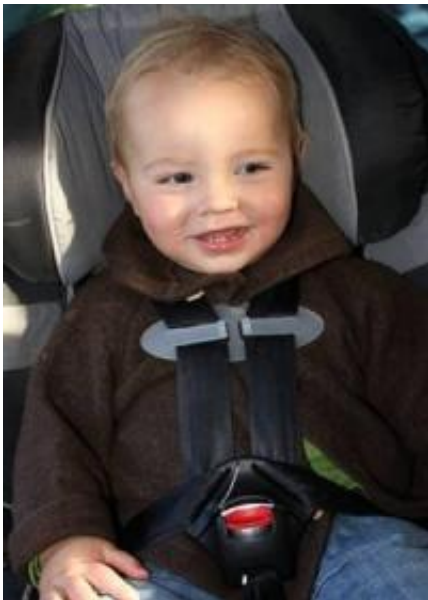


## Every third child incorrectly restrained in cars, says European study

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Correct child restraint in the car. Copyright Marianne Skjerven-Martinsen, NIPH

Car accidents are the main cause of serious injury and death among children in Norway. A new study from the Norwegian Institute of Public Health shows that 37 per cent of all children under 16 years are incorrectly restrained in the car. 23 per cent of children are so poorly restrained that a collision would have very serious consequences. The study results were presented at a seminar on traffic accidents in Oslo on 8th October.

"With the correct use of safety equipment, fewer children will be injured and killed in traffic," says Dr Marianne Skjerven-Martinsen from the research project "Barn i Bil" (Children in the [Car](#)) at the Institute's Division of [Forensic Medicine](#) and Drug Abuse Research.

## **Incorrect use of seat belts most prevalent**

From April to August in 2011, Skjerven-Martinsen and her project team members completed a total of six roadside studies where they stopped cars in weekend traffic and examined how children were secured. The studies were carried out in collaboration with [traffic](#) police along high-speed roads in south-east Norway. A total of 1260 children under 16 years were included in the study. The results show that:

- 37 per cent of all children under 16 years were incorrectly restrained in the car.
- 23 per cent were incorrectly restrained in such a way that severe or fatal injury would have been caused by a [car crash](#) on a high-speed road.
- Safety errors are highest in children aged 4-7 years.
- The five most common mistakes, irrespective of age, are; misplaced [seat belts](#), twisted belts, loose straps, belt under the arm instead of over the shoulder and young children (

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