

Child Traffic Fatalities Expected to Double This Year

Failure to Protect Kids With Speed Safety Cameras Will Lead to Increased Child Fatalities

 **TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES** and Council Member Justin Brannan

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New York City drivers have killed at least nine children in traffic crashes so far this year, according to analysis by Transportation Alternatives. **In less than six months, drivers have already killed the same number of children killed in traffic in all of last year.**

New York City's successful school-based speed camera program will expire on July 25, at which point the 140 speed cameras currently protecting children outside their schools will be turned off. A bill to prevent this, and instead renew and expand New York City's speed camera program, S6046-C, is currently being held in committee by Republican lawmakers who oppose the child-protection devices.

The problem is pervasive and ongoing: just three days ago, a four-year-old girl was killed by a reckless driver on a Brooklyn sidewalk, and a 17-year-old girl was killed as she crossed the street in front of her Queens school when an elderly driver sped through a red light and crashed into her.¹

Findings:

- An analysis of publicly available data and news sources by Transportation Alternatives found that, as of June 26, New York City has seen at least nine children aged 17 or younger killed in traffic crashes on New York City streets in 2018. Two-thirds of children killed by drivers so far this year were pedestrians.
- **New York City is currently on pace to see twice as many child fatalities in 2018 as last year**, and the highest annual total since 2012, before the implementation of Vision Zero, the citywide plan to eliminate traffic fatalities by 2024.
- While overall traffic fatalities citywide have declined since Vision Zero was implemented, child traffic fatalities continue to grow year-over-year.

Annual Child Traffic Fatalities, New York City

| YEAR | FATALITIES |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 2009 | 22 |
| 2010 | 18 |
| 2011 | 14 |
| 2012 | 19 |
| 2013 | 15 |
| 2014 | 11 |
| 2015 | 13 |
| 2016 | 6 |
| 2017 | 9 |
| 2018 (YTD) | 9 |
| 2018 (Proj.) | 18 |

The Solution:

Speeding kills, and has reached crisis proportions for children in New York City. Enforcement by police officers alone cannot sufficiently address this epidemic. However, speed safety cameras, which ticket vehicle owners who exceed the speed limit by more than 10 mph in school zones, are fair, efficient, and highly effective. At typical fixed camera locations, speeding during school hours fell by an average of 63 percent, and 81 percent of vehicle owners ticketed do not receive a second speed camera violation.² The implementation of speed safety cameras also coincided with a 23 percent decrease in pedestrian crash-injuries in camera locations, as well as a citywide drop in pedestrian fatalities.

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However, the New York State Senate has refused to reauthorize the existing speed camera program, and on July 25, the existing cameras will be turned off indefinitely, leaving drivers more free to speed in school zones.³

Expanding school speed safety cameras across New York City is the single most effective way to prevent child traffic deaths. That's why 64 percent of New York voters, including 70 percent of seniors and 60 percent of car owners, strongly support more speed safety cameras near schools.⁴ In order to ensure the cameras continue doing their job, state Senate leaders and the governor must reconvene the Senate and vote on S6046-C.

Endnotes

- 1 <https://www.amny.com/news/brooklyn-girl-killed-car-accident-1.19408867>, <https://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/local/Girl-Killed-88-Year-Old-Woman-Queens-Car-Crash-NYPD-Police-486477691.html>
- 2 <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/speed-camera-report-june2017.pdf>
- 3 <https://ny.curbed.com/2018/6/21/17488928/nyc-speed-cameras-school-zone-legislation-expire>
- 4 <https://www.transalt.org/news/releases/10089>