

Spring Safety Tips: Kids In and Around Cars

Preventing Backover Accidents

Many children are killed or seriously injured in backover incidents. A backover incident typically occurs when a vehicle coming out of a driveway or parking space backs over an unattended child because the driver did not see him or her.



Prevention Tips

- Teach children not to play in or around cars.
- Always walk around your vehicle and check the area around it before backing up.
- Be aware of small children—the smaller a child, the more likely it is you will not see them.
- Teach children to move away from a vehicle when a driver gets in it or if the car is started.
- Have children in the area stand to the side of the driveway or sidewalk so you can see them as you are backing out of a driveway or parking space.
- Make sure to look behind you while backing up slowly in case a child dashes behind your vehicle unexpectedly.
- Roll down your windows while backing out of your driveway or parking space so that you'll be able to hear what is happening outside of your vehicle.
- Teach your children to keep their toys and bikes out of the driveway.
- Because kids can move unpredictably, you should actively check your mirrors while backing up.
- Many cars are equipped with detection devices that provide rearview video or warning sounds, but they cannot completely take the place of actively walking around your car to make sure children are safely out of the way. Do not rely solely on these devices to detect what is behind your vehicle.



What You Need to Know,

- Backover can happen when you least expect it. Never leave a child alone in or around a vehicle.



Preventing Trunk Entrapment

Children are naturally curious and love to explore their surroundings. If you leave your kids unattended, in or near a vehicle, it may not be long before they are playing in it. Hide and seek can turn deadly if they get trapped in the trunk, where temperatures can rise very quickly—resulting in heatstroke or asphyxiation.

As of Sept. 1, 2001, automobile manufacturers were required to equip all new vehicle trunks with a 'glow in the dark' trunk release inside the trunk compartment. Show your kids how to use the release in case of an emergency. If your car is older and does not have the 'glow in the dark' trunk release, ask your automobile dealership about getting your vehicle retrofitted with a trunk release mechanism.



Prevention Tips

- Teach children that vehicle trunks are for cargo, not for playing.
- Check the trunk right away if your child is missing.
- Lock your car doors and trunk and be sure keys and remote entry devices are out of sight and reach of your kids.
- Keep the rear fold-down seats closed/locked to keep your children from climbing into the trunk from inside your car.



What You Need to Know,

- Many factors can contribute to trunk entrapment injury or death. Always supervise your child and never leave him or her alone in or around a vehicle for any reason.
- Younger children are more sensitive to heat than older children and adults, and are at greater risk for heatstroke.
- High temperature, humidity, and poor ventilation create an extremely dangerous environment in a vehicle trunk.
- Check the trunk right away if your child is missing.
- Trunk entrapment has similar risks to heatstroke: Even in cooler temperatures, your vehicle can heat up to dangerous temperatures very quickly. An outside temperature in the mid-60s can cause a vehicle's inside temperature to rise above 110 degrees Fahrenheit. The inside temperature of your car can rise almost 20 degrees Fahrenheit within the first 10 minutes.

