

Parked Cars—Dangerous for Kids!

Child
Safety
Facts
2009



A vehicle is not a playground or a babysitter!

Every year many children die tragically in or around parked cars. Leaving a child in a car without an adult, even for a few minutes, is a kind of child neglect. It is illegal in some states.

Death in a Hot Car

Tragedy can happen when a parent or other caregiver mistakenly leaves a baby or young child in the car. A vehicle can heat up rapidly, even with a window rolled down. A child can easily get heat stroke. This can cause brain damage or death in minutes.

This can happen to stressed parents whose daily routine changes unexpectedly. Sometimes people do not want to wake a sleeping child.

Prevention tips

- Check to make sure that all children are out of the car after you park it.
- Put your briefcase or purse on the floor in the back seat on every trip. This will remind you to look in back before leaving your vehicle.
- Make sure your childcare provider always calls you if your child is not dropped off as planned.
- Check your car and trunk right away if your child is missing.



Kids Left Alone in Cars

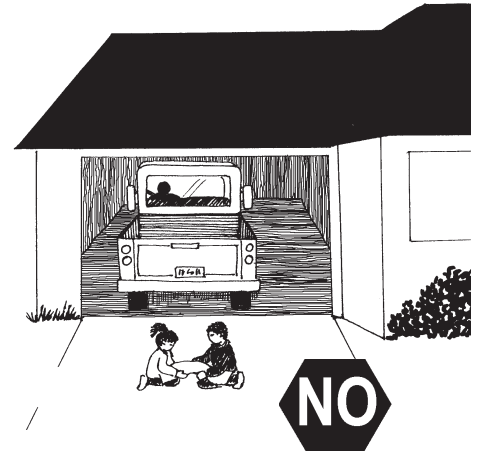
Never leave your child in a vehicle without an adult, even in his or her car seat. Even a brief stop could turn into a tragedy. These things do happen:

- Children can get dangerously overheated on a sunny day. This can happen even if they are left in the car for only a few minutes.
- A child playing with the driver's controls can start the car rolling. Children learn how to make the car go by watching drivers.
- A child can be strangled if the window goes up while he or she is leaning out. This can happen easily in cars with windows that go up when the control switch is pressed down. (Check to see if your car's window switches are this kind.)
- Kids can get trapped in car trunks while playing.

Prevention tips

- Always take your child with you when you leave the car. Do not be tempted to leave your children alone when you go into a store for "just a minute."
- Keep doors of parked cars locked. Put keys out of reach.
- Keep rear fold-down seats locked. This will help prevent kids from playing in the trunk.

Tell all your child's caregivers about the dangers of parked cars. Make sure they follow the Prevention Tips given here.



Driveway Dangers

Moving your vehicle in a driveway or parking area is dangerous. Toddlers and young children are often run over when they play near parked cars.

All vehicles have blind zones in front and behind, where the driver cannot see a child. Blind zones are biggest in high vehicles like pickups, vans, SUVs.

Prevention tips

- **Walk around your vehicle** to be certain that no children are there before starting the engine.
- Find other places for children to play. Teach them never to play in the driveway or parking area.

Resources

KIDS AND CARS, 913-327-0013, www.kidsandcars.org
Harrison's Hope, 636-451-0606, www.harrisonshope.org
4 R Kids Sake, 951-278-1820 or 951-737-2539, www.4rkidssake.org
Consumer Reports: www.consumerreports.org (search for "blind zones")

Make
Every Ride
A Safe Ride

