

Keeping Your Kids Safe In, Out And Around The Car...



Parents have enough to worry about when raising children. Keeping children safe in the car requires more than just a seat belt and proper car seat. Use the tips below to ensure your children are safe in, out and around any vehicle.

Mishaps happen in seconds.

Teaching vehicle safety will save countless lives.



The American Trauma Society, **Pennsylvania Division** (ATSPA) is a non-profit organization committed to trauma prevention and mitigation through education and advocacy.

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Heatstroke

Heatstroke is one of the leading causes of non-crash related fatalities among children. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 52 children died of heatstroke in 2019.

Vehicle heatstroke occurs when a child is left in a hot vehicle, allowing their body temperature to quickly rise. Heatstroke begins when body temperature reaches 104 degrees. A core body temperature of 107 is lethal.

An outside temperature of 75 degrees can raise a vehicle temperature to 109 degrees in 30 minutes.

Prevention Tips:

- Look before you lock. Make it a habit.
- If you notice a child is alone in a car, take action.
- Know that even in cooler temperatures, heatstroke can still occur.

Seat Belt Entanglement

While seat belts are designed to protect individuals, it can be dangerous if the belt becomes tangled around a child's head, neck, or wrist. Most seat belts have a locking mechanism, used during car seat installation, that may restrict a child's ability to free themselves.

Prevention Tips:

- Teach children that seat belts are not toys.
- If a child has an unused seat belt within reach, ensure that it is buckled.

Power Windows

Many kids are injured when a window is closed on their finger, wrist or hand. Some kids have even been strangled by power windows.

Prevention Tips:

- Teach children not to play with window switches.
- Properly restrain children in car seats or seat belts to prevent them from accidentally activating power windows and sunroofs.
- Look and make sure your children's hands, feet and head are clear of windows before closing. If available, activate the power window lock switch.

Vehicle Rollaway

Brake Transmission Safety Interlock (BTSI) was made a requirement in all vehicles by Model Year 2010. Before this feature, it was possible for vehicles to be shifted out of park, even if the engine was off. Vehicle rollaway can still occur with keyless ignition or push-button start if the vehicle has not been turned off and shifted into park.

Prevention Tips:

- Use emergency brake every time you park.
- Always ensure the vehicle is securely in park position before shutting off and exiting.

Trunk Entrapment

Naturally curious children may think that cars are a place for exploring, but playing can turn deadly if they become trapped in the trunk. Starting in 2001, all vehicles with a trunk are required to be equipped with a 'glow in the dark' trunk release inside the trunk compartment.

Prevention Tips:

- Teach children that vehicle trunks are not for playing.
- Lock your car doors/trunk and be sure that keys are out of sight and out of the reach of children.
- Educate children on the 'glow in the dark' trunk release.

Backover

Backover incidents typically occur when a vehicle backing out of a driveway or parking space backs over a child because the child is not visible to the driver.

Prevention Tips:

- Teach children to move away from a vehicle when a driver gets in it or if car is started.
- Always walk around your vehicle to check the area before backing up.
- If available, use a back-up camera, but do not solely rely on this device.