

## Backover Fact Sheet

In the U.S., 50 children are backed over **EVERY WEEK** because a driver could not see them. Rearview cameras can be installed on *any* vehicle to end these predictable tragedies.

### Blindzones... every vehicle has them

A blindzone is the area behind a vehicle where the driver cannot see even when looking back and using their rear and side view mirrors correctly. (Blindzones are also in front of cars but are not as large)

- Average blindzone = 15 to 25 feet
- Shorter drivers = larger blindzones
- Over 60% of backovers involve a larger vehicle (truck, van, SUV)



### Circumstances

- Backovers take place mainly in driveways and parking lots.
- In over 70% of these incidents, a parent or close relative is the driver behind the wheel.
- **Bye-Bye Syndrome™**: Children don't want to be left behind when they hear the words 'bye-bye.' Many times children follow behind the person who is leaving. The driver is unaware the child snuck out, thinking they are still safe inside. The child stands behind the vehicle where they cannot be seen and is backed over.

### Contributing Factors

You cannot avoid hitting something you literally cannot see.

- Most drivers are unaware of the very large, dangerous blindzone that is found behind ALL vehicles.
- Children do not understand the danger of a slow moving vehicle; they believe if they see the vehicle, the driver can see them.
- Children do not recognize boundaries (property lines, sidewalks, driveways or parking spaces) and are very impulsive.

### Age

- The predominant age of backover victims is **one-year-old**. (12-23 months). Toddlers have just started walking/running at this age, testing the limits and trying new things.
- Children younger than 5-years-old are at the most risk, but children of all ages can be backed over.



### Statistics

On average 232 fatalities and 13,000 injuries occur every year due to backovers.\*

Thousands of children are seriously injured or killed every year because a driver backing up was not able to see them behind their vehicle. Many elderly people are also backed over by vehicles.

### Rear Visibility Standard:

To reduce the risk of devastating backover crashes involving vulnerable populations (especially very young children), KidsAndCars.org and their partners, worked to prevent these predictable and preventable tragedies for over one-decade. A rear visibility standard was issued on April 7, 2014 as mandated by the Cameron Gulbransen Kids Transportation Safety Act.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) issued the final rule to expand the required field of view for all passenger vehicles weighing less than 10,000 pounds.

This new standard specifies the area behind a vehicle which must be visible to the driver when the vehicle is placed into reverse. The agency anticipates that in the near term, vehicle manufacturers will use rearview camera systems and in-vehicle visual displays to meet the requirements of this rule. All motor vehicles sold or leased in the U.S. must comply with this regulation by May 2018.

KidsAndCars.org anticipates that the rear visibility rule will significantly reduce backover crashes. Education and awareness of backover crashes will continue to be critical for decades because most older-model vehicles do not have rearview cameras. All vehicles can and should be retrofitted to include rearview technology.

### **Prevention/Safety Tips:**

KidsAndCars.org urges everyone to install a rearview camera and sensors on their vehicle. Many drivers [incorrectly] believe they have to wait until they purchase a new vehicle to have a rearview camera system; but an after-market rearview camera and/or sensors can be installed on ANY vehicle.

Drivers should also heighten their awareness before engaging a vehicle into reverse; especially when children are present. Young children are impulsive and unpredictable; still have very poor judgment and little understanding of danger.

- Always walk around and behind a vehicle prior to moving it.
- Know where your children are. Make sure they move away from your vehicle to a place where they are in full view before moving the car. Verify that another adult is directly supervising children before moving your vehicle.
- Install a rearview camera, back-up sensors and/or additional mirrors on your vehicles. Use these devices in addition to looking around and behind your vehicle carefully to detect if anything is in your path before backing.
- Make sure children hold hands with an adult in parking lots at ALL times. If you have multiple children and not enough hands, create a hand-holding train or fasten the younger children into a stroller and make sure everyone stays together.
- Teach children that “parked” vehicles might move and make sure they understand that the driver might not be able to see them, even if they can see the driver.
- Teach your children to never play in, around or behind a vehicle. The driveway is not a safe place to play.
- If you have an adult passenger with you, ask them to stand outside the vehicle and watch for children or animals as you back out. Ensure they are a safe distance away from the vehicle so that they are not in any danger.
- Be aware that steep inclines and large SUV’s, vans and trucks can add to the difficulty of seeing behind a vehicle.
- Keep toys, bikes and other sports equipment out of the driveway.
- Trim landscaping around the driveway to ensure drivers can see the sidewalk, street and pedestrians clearly when backing out of their driveway. Pedestrians also need to be able to see a vehicle pulling out of the driveway.
- Install extra locks on doors inside the home high enough so children cannot reach them and toddlers cannot slip outside on their own.
- Roll down the driver’s side window when backing so you can hear if someone is warning you to stop.
- Be especially careful about keeping children safe in and around cars during busy times, schedule changes and periods of crisis or holidays.

Please share these important safety tips with your childcare providers, teachers, relatives, friends, family and neighbors...

## **These precautions can save lives.**

\*Source: Not-in-Traffic Surveillance: Fatal and Injury Statistics in Nontraffic Crashes, DOT HS 811 813, April 2014, 2008-2011

For more information visit [www.KidsAndCars.org](http://www.KidsAndCars.org) or contact us at [email@KidsAndCars.org](mailto:email@KidsAndCars.org).