

Family Urges Lawmakers For Change

By: [Danielle Krout](#) WTAJ-TV Updated: April 13, 2013

CAMBRIA TOWNSHIP, CAMBRIA COUNTY--- A Cambria County family is fighting to make sure safety is not just an option on new vehicles anymore.

Autumn Danchanko was accidentally hit in her family driveway back in 2011; she was just 2-years old.

"Every day you are reminded that she passed away," said Eric Danchanko, Autumn's dad. "You see her belongings in the house and it's a reminder that her life was taken."

More than a year after his daughter's death Eric began doing research on accidents involving children hit behind cars, what he found [shocked](#) him.

"Safety should not be an option it should be standard... there have been a lot of other local children who have been taken in similar tragedies like in ours."

Danchanko found that in 2008 Congress passed a law requiring manufactures to improve safety standards on all vehicles, like camera's and rear sensors. Nearly five years later those standards have yet to be mandated because of delays by the [U.S. Department of Transportation](#). If they would have been, the 2010 Ford pickup truck that hit Autumn would have been equipped with backup cameras and sensors, maybe saving Autumn's life.

"The 'Sync' feature and air bags comes standard but not motion sensors?" Danchanko's hired an attorney to bring awareness to this delay that could save the lives of more than 50 children a week who are hit in rear accidents, according to the DOT.

"If we can save the life of another child so another family doesn't have to live this tragedy our daughter didn't die in vein."

The Danchanko family is not seeking any monetary money from the suit, just awareness.

The family also established a foundation called "Autumn's Angel's," where they build community playgrounds. The family said the mission of this fund is to provide comfort, support, and a place of tranquility for those who have lost an immediate family member; encourage faith in God to inspire the souls of the brokenhearted; revitalize play areas and create areas of beautification in memory of children who have passed; and to foster health, fitness and education for surviving family members.

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EBENSBURG, CAMBRIA COUNTY--- Eric and Dana Danchanko lost their 2-year old daughter Autumn nearly two years ago, now they're urging law makers to take action on rearview camera's in cars.

"My wife and I never imagined we would be the ones who would loose a child," said Eric Danchanko. "The lack of visibility didn't just take our daughter but two kids per week."

The Danchanko's were one of several [families](#) who spoke on capital hill Thursday; all of them lost a child in a backup accident. Congress passed a law in 2008 requiring manufacturers to improve safety standards like rear-view cameras and sensors on all vehicles. Almost five years later, the standards have yet to be mandated due to delays by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Joan Claybrook, president emeritus, Public Citizen and former Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), stated, "Rearview cameras are available and affordable. Many auto manufacturers are making them standard equipment on new makes and models. Rearview cameras as standard equipment will save lives and save consumers hundreds of dollars in potential repair costs when they can actually see when backing up. Every day of delay costs consumers and puts children at risk."

"We have heard political figures say 'we must do everything we can to save our children,'" said Danchanko. "It is too late for our child but not too late for another child."

