



NEVER leave a child alone inside a vehicle... not even for a minute!

There are far too many children seriously injured or killed from being left alone in or around a vehicle for “just a minute.” The worst thing any parent or caregiver can do is to say “that would never happen to me.”

We all understand the inconvenience of loading, unloading and reloading a child into a vehicle... it is exhausting! BUT...we must never put our own convenience above the safety of our precious children. Below are just a few reasons why children should never be left alone inside a vehicle for “just a minute.”

- 1. Within minutes a young child can begin to suffer the life-threatening symptoms of heatstroke.** The inside of a vehicle acts like a greenhouse trapping in heat causing the temperature inside to rise VERY quickly. Cracking the windows does NOT drastically reduce the temperature inside a vehicle. A child’s body temperature rises 3-5 times faster than an adult.
Somebody Help Me! (30sec PSA): <http://youtu.be/GQ6BC-oKHRA>
It only Takes a Second (30sec PSA): <http://youtu.be/T4wttLNSZiU>
Heat Stroke (30sec PSA): <http://youtu.be/kYGAlagq-Wg>
- 2. Vehicles are stolen with children alone inside** every week. This happens even in the safest neighborhoods and it only takes a few seconds for a thief to jump into your vehicle and take off with your child in tow. Most of the time, the thief doesn’t see the child until they’ve already stolen the vehicle.
Car Theft (30sec PSA): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTa98jQfYtg&feature=relmfu>
- 3. Power windows in vehicles have killed or injured thousands of children.** It takes just 22 pounds of force to suffocate or injure an infant while power windows exert 30-80 pounds of force. Children are curious; they push buttons without realizing the dangers of what can happen. In many cases, a parent was standing very close to the vehicle and had turned their back for just a few seconds.
Power Windows (30sec PSA): <http://youtu.be/aNs97tJJFzI>
Bounce Back (30sec PSA): <http://youtu.be/vsSwV2se20k>
- 4. Every year hundreds of children are hospitalized or even killed after accidentally setting a car into motion.** Most drivers think that their vehicle cannot be shifted into gear unless the vehicle is running and the driver has their foot on the brake. However, this is NOT the case with older vehicles. They can be knocked into gear while turned off and without the driver’s foot on the brake. Check your vehicle to see if it can be shifted into gear without your foot on the brake: <http://www.kidsandcars.org/userfiles/dangers/heat-stroke/btsi-testing-051211.pdf>
- 5. Children have been strangled by seat belts** in vehicles.
- 6. Vehicle fires** are started by children who have discovered matches or a lighter.
- 7. Children have been seriously injured from falling out of a vehicle.**

8. **If a child gets out of a vehicle they face a whole new set of dangers.** Children are backed over and run over by slow forward moving vehicles in parking lots and driveways. Every year, thousands of children are killed or seriously injured because a driver backing up or moving slowly forward didn't see them.
62 children behind a SUV (30 sec PSA) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fn0RocUSLmk>
Cade (30 sec PSA) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7W4RCyTj3E>
Bye-bye syndrome (15 sec PSA) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkPNgfcCtbs>
9. **Abductions and kidnappings** are rare, but they DO happen.
10. **A child can choke on something inside of the vehicle** and there would be no adult there to help them. Children are known for putting everything in their mouth.
11. Children as young as 3-4 years old have been known to “**take the car for a spin**” – even the most well behaved children are curious. They see Mom and Dad drive and they want to do it too.

Our hope is that every parent is educated about these frightening situations that happen every day. Think it can't happen to you or your child? Think again. These are NOT risks you want to take with your child.

Safety Tips for Parents and Caregivers:

- ✓ Never leave children alone in or around cars; not even for a minute.
- ✓ If you see a child alone in a vehicle, get involved. Call 911 immediately. If the child is in distress, get them out of the vehicle as quickly as possible.
- ✓ Use drive-thru services when available (restaurants, banks, pharmacies, dry cleaners, etc.) and pay for gas at the pump. If you order take-out, you can ask them to bring the food out to your car.
- ✓ Never leave a vehicle unattended with the engine running under any circumstances.
- ✓ Do not put children or adults inside a vehicle with the engine running while clearing snow or ice off the vehicle. Always clear the tailpipe first to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- ✓ Keep car keys and remote openers out of reach of children and keep vehicles locked at all times, even in driveways or garages. Ask home visitors, child care providers and neighbors to do the same.
- ✓ Always set your emergency brake when your vehicle is parked.
- ✓ In any state, a person can face child endangerment or neglect charges for leaving a child alone in a vehicle, even if the state does not have a law specifically making it illegal to leave a child alone in a vehicle.

To learn more about the many dangers children face when left alone in or around vehicles please visit KidsAndCars.org's website at: <http://www.KidsAndCars.org>.

For more information visit www.KidsAndCars.org or contact us at email@KidsAndCars.org.