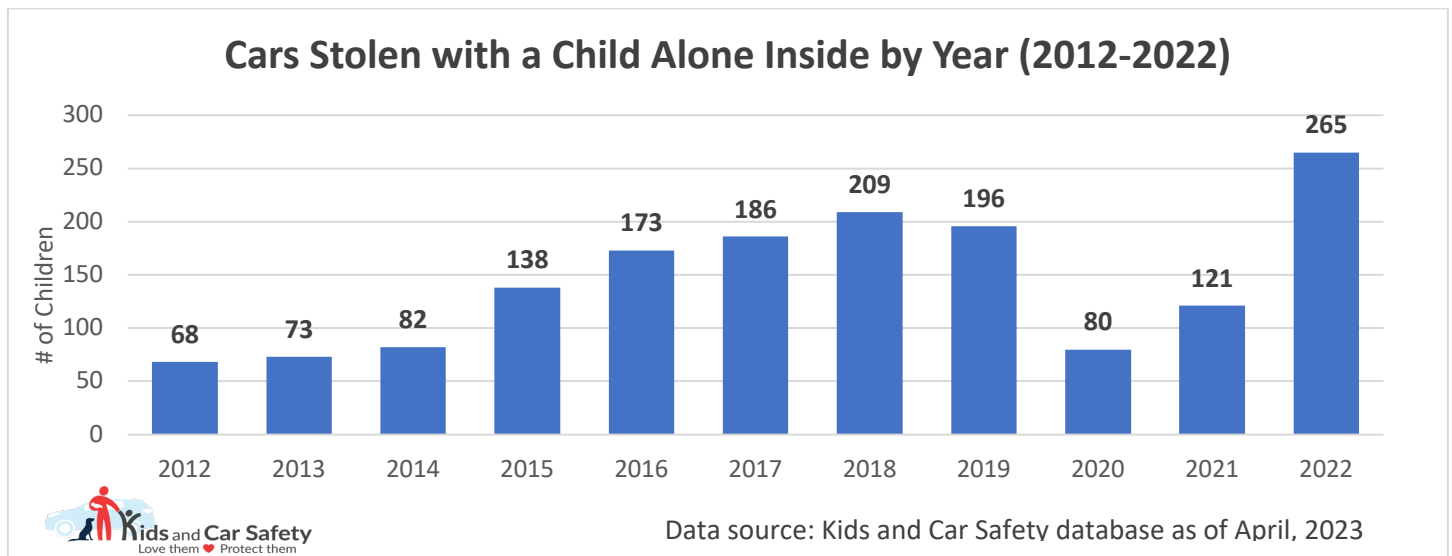




## Fact Sheet: Cars Stolen with Children Alone Inside

Contrary to what many believe, this is not a rare occurrence. Kids and Car Safety is the only group in the U.S. that is documenting cases where cars are stolen with a child that had been left alone inside the vehicle. Although the victims of these types of incidents typically survive, it is incredibly traumatizing for everyone involved. Incidents like this are very easily avoidable by never leaving a child alone in a vehicle.



Thieves watch for vehicles to be left unattended with the keys inside or left running. Most of the time, they don't realize that there is a child inside until after they have already stolen the vehicle. What typically follows is the child being abandoned by the car thief either inside the stolen vehicle or left on the side of the road, in a parking lot or somewhere else leaving them susceptible to many dangers.

Car thieves know that if they are charged with car theft, it's a minor infraction and the consequences are minor. But kidnapping is a very serious offense with severe consequences. Although states may have different degrees of punishment, all states categorize kidnapping as a felony.

These are crimes of opportunity, and carjackers know where people feel safe leaving their vehicles running. They watch and they wait. Hotspots for carjackings are ATMs, gas stations, parking lots, parking garages, residential driveways, and poorly lit streets. Another common scenario targets delivery drivers, mostly those dropping off food. In that situation, the carjackers will make a delivery order and wait at the address for the driver to show up then steal their vehicle when they drop off the food.

Car thefts happen even in the safest neighborhoods. It only takes a few seconds for a car thief to jump into a vehicle and be gone.

Importantly, these incidents cost a lot of money, and a lot of time which is paid for by taxpayer dollars.

**Tips for families:**

1. Never leave a child of any age or pet alone in a vehicle, not even for a minute.
2. Use the drive-thru so you don't have to leave your vehicle.
3. If a business doesn't offer curbside delivery, call upon arrival and ask them to bring your order to your car. Most people are more than happy to accommodate you when you tell them you have small children. It takes a village!
4. Keep car doors locked and keys on your person when pumping gas with children inside the vehicle.

**Car Theft Video PSA:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-wdJDoykYA&list=PLiTMO4amBVbJwmPgEjDRRTkqBNuJmYAeD&index=24>

For more information on the dangers children face when left alone in vehicles visit our [website](#).