

SPIRIT OF ALABAMA: Car Backup Safety

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The Dahlen Family is on a mission to hopefully prevent injuries or deaths in driveway accidents. After the death of one of their children, Abigail, Brandy, her husband Michael, son Nathan, and their other children are behind a [new website](#) focusing on keeping kids safe around cars.

Two years ago, the Dahlens lost their daughter Abby when she fell down playing moments before a neighbor backed out of their driveway.

"She was very rambunctious and spunky is a word that a lot of people use for her," Michael Dahlen said. "She had a way of things that she wanted them to be done and when they went that way, everybody was happy. And when they didn't go that way, nobody was happy, because she was running the house and setting the rules for everybody else." When you meet the Dahlens and know their story, you want to say something -- anything -- that might help. Michael and Brandy Dahlen know all of us mean well.

"People will say things like, 'Well, God won't give you more than you can handle,' and I completely disagree with that -- I think this is way more than I can handle," Brandy Dahlen said. "God won't give you anymore than He can handle, and He has carried us through. When it's been more than I can get through, when it's been one moment at a time and those moments are so dark, it's awful. He has carried us through those moments."

The Dahlens moved after Abigail died. They all put one foot in front of another. That's all they can do.

"I guess as a family we had to come together and support each other and understand that you know this is not easy, but it's our new reality and this is what we have to accept and move forward," Michael Dahlen said.

It's happens more often than you might think. Every week 50 children are backed into in driveway accidents, and two children die this way every week.

Brandy Dahlen is on a mission to change that.

"To teach children not to play in driveways. Our child was killed in a driveway. I always thought that was a safe place to play but it's not, it's extremely dangerous and most of these accidents occur in the driveway, not in the road," she said. The Dahlens' oldest son Nathan is 15, and is very close to becoming an Eagle Scout. His project is all about kids and cars.

"Stressing that backup cameras are important, I'm stressing that people should pay attention where kids are, pay attention to various safety tips before they get in a car," Nathan Dahlen said.

You can find a lot of information at [kidsandcars.org](#). Nathan does an entire presentation about driveway accidents and prevention. His goal is to save lives.

"If I save one that's all the difference I need," he said.

Brandy Dahlen homeschools all seven of her children. All of them are involved in many activities. Busy is good -- but being together is critical.

"Our faith in God has held us up you know. I think God has carried us through a lot of it. But just keep finding something to do and some way forward, even though I don't feel happy, I don't know if I'll ever feel happy. I can find meaning and joy through doing things actively," Brandy Dahlen said.

Besides accident awareness, Brandy reaches out to families who lose children in similar accidents. She's willing to listen and support others moms who are hurting. Sometimes that might involve saying nothing at all.

That's the spirit of Alabama.

<http://www.alabamas13.com/story/21623826/spirit-of-alabama-car-backup-safety>