



NEWS RELEASE

KidsAndCars.org

<http://www.kidsandcars.org/>

Contact:

Janette Fennell, 415-336-9279 or Janette@KidsAndCars.org

Safety Groups Lament Gaps In Projected Auto Fatalities

April 21, 2005 - Today's release of projected 2004 highway injuries and fatalities excludes incidents involving children who have been backed over in driveways and parking lots, died of hyperthermia in hot cars, or been injured or killed in power window incidents. In other words, children killed in "nontraffic, noncrash" events, of which there were at least 165 fatalities last year, are not being included in the report according to the nonprofit child safety advocacy group, KidsAndCars.org (www.KidsAndCars.org).

"These children are invisible in these reports because the federal government doesn't count incidents that happen in driveways and parking lots," said Janette Fennell, Founder and President of KidsAndCars.org. "The government has the authority to regularly gather this information but has so far declined to do so. Can you imagine how a parent feels when the death of their child isn't even 'counted'? All children are precious and we need our government to collect this important data and work to eliminate these predictable and preventable fatalities."

Congress is considering legislation that would require the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to count these data, according to Sally Greenberg, Senior Product Safety Counsel for Consumers Union. "We not only need to count these children injured and killed in nontraffic noncrash events, we need to prevent these incidents from happening in the first place." Greenberg noted that there is language in the pending Senate bill that would study backover warning technology. "While a study would be a step in the right direction, it's not going to save lives," Greenberg said. "At the same as we gather data, we must also require that all vehicles provide visibility when backing up, safe power windows that automatically reverse if something gets in the way and reminder systems to prevent hyperthermia incidents."

Greenberg also urged Congress to pass the entire safety title that is part of the larger transportation bill. Congress is now considering legislation that will address many other safety problems, particularly rollover deaths in SUVs by directing federal government action. It is time for the Administration to drop their objections and for Congress to enact this legislation that will ensure safer cars and enhanced safety for children and American families.

#

About KidsAndCars.org: Founded in 1996, KidsAndCars.org is a national nonprofit child safety organization dedicated to preventing injuries and deaths of children in and around motor vehicles. KidsAndCars.org promotes awareness among parents, caregivers and the general public about the dangers to children, including backover and frontover incidents, and heatstroke from being inadvertently left in a vehicle. The organization works to prevent tragedies through data collection, education and public awareness, policy change and survivor advocacy.

