

LOOKING BACK

You'll Wish You Had...

Every year, thousands of young children are injured or killed in motor vehicle incidents that occur off the roadways. These incidents happen when children are left unattended in or around motor vehicles. Many of them occur at home in their own driveways and often involve a driver who is a parent or close family member. Children, especially toddlers, are difficult for drivers to see when they are behind a vehicle, putting them at risk for being backed over, a tragedy no family should have to endure.

The good news is that these injuries, like all other types of injury, are preventable! You can help to make sure that children are kept safe by practicing the following safety tips.

As a Parent...

- Avoid using the driveway as a “playground” and teach your children to never play around parked vehicles.
- If using the driveway as a place for kids to play, block the entrance to stop cars from pulling in.
- Supervise your children when playing in areas near parked motor vehicles and whenever a vehicle is to be moved. Never leave a child alone around parked cars!
- Make children aware that “parked” vehicles can soon become moving vehicles and just because they see the car, it doesn’t mean that the driver of that car can see them.

As a Driver...

- Take a walk around and behind your vehicle prior to moving it.
- When backing out of your driveway, be sure that you know where every child is. Make sure you can see them by asking that they move into full view while backing your vehicle or securely place them in the vehicle with you.
- Keep in mind that the design of large trucks, vans and Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs) together with the slope of the roadway or driveway can decrease your ability to see objects behind you.
- Continue to scan the area when backing up using your mirrors and looking over both shoulders.
- Be aware of the size of blind spots in the vehicles you drive. Blind spots are the areas you cannot see while looking forward, through either your rear-view or side mirrors, or in larger vehicles, over your shoulder. A driver who is 5’1” can have a rear blind spot of 50 feet in a pick-up truck.
- Back up slowly and be prepared to stop.

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- While supervision is the best prevention, consider the purchase and installation of supplemental safety devices, especially if you drive a truck or SUV. These devices include extended mirrors, audible collision detectors/sensors and rear view cameras that may give drivers the increased visibility or warning they need. These devices should only be used to enhance visibility, and not be a substitute for safe driving behaviors.

