

Driveway safety

Kidsafe SA Inc. | June 2019

Tragically one child, often a toddler, is run over in the driveway every week in Australia¹. The vehicle is often being driven by a parent, relative or friend.

The vehicle is usually only moving slowly, however, a slow moving vehicle reversing down a driveway can trap a child, causing fatal crush injuries. Children who survive are often left with severe long-term injuries.

Why the risk?

Young children are naturally inquisitive and want to see what is going on. They move surprisingly fast and can run into the street without warning. In the time it takes for the driver to say goodbye and start the car, a child can move from a 'safe' position, onto the driveway and into the path of the vehicle.

Small children, particularly toddlers, can be impossible to see from inside a car, especially if they are directly behind it. Most drivers are aware of their car's 'blind spots' however sometimes it is difficult to know how large these 'blind spots' really are. Even if your car has parking sensors or a video camera fitted, you may not notice a small child until it is too late to stop.



Courtesy of Kidsafe Queensland Driveway Safety Project & SGIO Reversing Visibility Index.

Safety Steps: Don't go if you don't know!

Supervise

- Always supervise your children when near cars and driveways.
- Hold your child's hand when near cars and driveways.
- If you are the only adult at home and need to move a vehicle, even only a small distance, place your child securely in the vehicle with you while you move it.

Separate

- Create safe play areas for your children away from traffic.
- Where possible, avoid using the driveway as a play area for children.
- Make access to the driveway from the house difficult for young children by using security doors, fencing or gates.

See

- Drivers should walk around their vehicle before moving it, even if your car has parking sensors or a reversing camera fitted.
- Wave goodbye from a safe place. Where possible, avoid using the driveway to wave goodbye.

References:

¹CARRS-Q, State of the road: Driveway runovers fact sheet, 2011

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