

accidents don't have to happen



# Child on the Drive!

A guide to keeping children safe in and around cars

**At least 39 children in the UK have been killed on, or near, the driveways of their home since 2001**

- Most victims were toddlers – all were under seven years old
- Tragically it is often an adult member of the child’s family, or a neighbour, driving the vehicle
- Over half of parents surveyed could recall their child following them out of the house without them realising\*

**Fact:** 24 children have died after being hit by a reversing vehicle.

When a car is being reversed, the driver has a limited view - small children may not be visible in the mirrors. Where possible it is better to reverse onto a driveway and drive off forwards.

..... **Before you start:** .....

**Where are the children?**

They could appear unexpectedly



**Check around the vehicle**

Use the mirrors, look over your shoulder – be aware of blind spots



**If possible,**

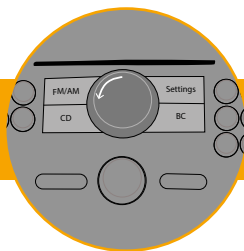
ask another adult to guide you as you reverse



..... **As you reverse:** .....

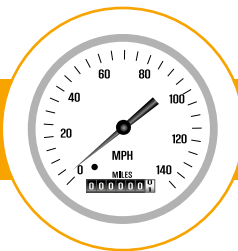
**Listen**

Open your windows and turn down the radio



**Go slowly**

Keep checking all around



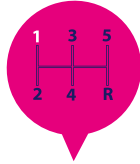
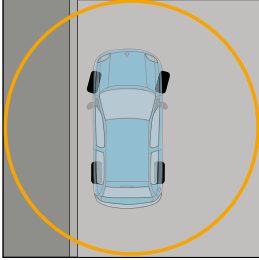
**Continue to look**

Don't just rely on mirrors

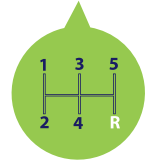
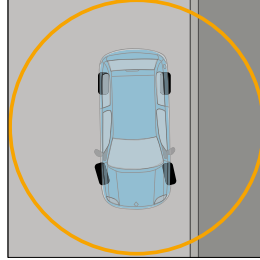


# Fact: Three children died after being struck by a car after the handbrake was accidentally released.

**PING: Park in Gear!** When parking on a slope, always park in gear and turn the wheel so that if the brakes fail, the car will not roll straight into traffic.



**Parked facing uphill**  
Use a forward gear and point the wheels away from the kerb



**Parked facing downhill**  
Use a reverse gear and point the wheels towards the kerb

## Michelle Patterson's five-year-old son Harry was killed when the family car rolled down the driveway.

"Arriving home with Harry and his brother, Dylan, I parked the car on our sloping driveway, applied the handbrake and went into the house. I had no idea that the car had started to roll backwards. Devastatingly, Harry was behind the car and was crushed between the car and a wall. He died instantly of his injuries.

The inquest showed that there was no fault with the handbrake - the combination of cooling brakes and the driveway incline released the braking system. Had the car been parked in gear this tragic accident would never have happened.

To keep the memory of our lively, lovely son alive, we've been campaigning to raise awareness of parking in gear (PING).

**Remember Harry and remember to PING"**



# Fact: Electric windows, choking and fire hazards in cars have all proved fatal to small children.

Young children should never be left alone inside a vehicle, even when the engine is turned off. Shockingly, 95% of parents surveyed reported leaving their children in the car on the driveway while they "dashed back into the house" and more than 60% admitted leaving them in the car while they ran errands.

## **A car is not a safe place for a child to play!**

In a few fatal accidents, a child accidentally released the handbrake. Discourage your youngsters from playing with car windows and make sure that dangerous items, such as lighters and medicines, are not kept within reach of little hands.

# Where are your keys?

- Never leave the keys in the ignition when you get out of the car. Always turn the steering wheel until it locks after removing the ignition key.
- At home, keep the car keys in a safe place, out of reach and sight of children.
- Always keep your car locked.



## Mark Goodwill's son Iain was only 17 months old when he was tragically killed by an accidentally started car.

"Iain had been playing in the garden with other children. We had no idea that a toddler had come into the kitchen and climbed onto a chair to take the car keys from the key hook on the wall. He unlocked the car and started the engine – probably imitating what he had seen grown-ups do.

Iain was behind the car as it jumped backwards. Heartbreakingly, he was run over and died from his injuries.

In memory of our beloved, happy son, we have campaigned tirelessly about driveway safety. Now, all new European and Japanese cars cannot be accidentally started as the clutch pedal needs to be depressed. Unfortunately, that's not the case for older models.

We urge parents to keep their keys out of sight and out of reach of children so no more families will suffer in the way that we have."

For more information on child safety in and around cars, visit RoSPA's website: [www.rospa.com/drivewaysafety](http://www.rospa.com/drivewaysafety)

\*From a 2010 survey conducted by RoSPA, in conjunction with the Iain Goodwill Trust ([www.iains-trust.org](http://www.iains-trust.org)).



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