

Driveway Safety

Sadly, many children, usually toddlers, are killed or injured in their own home driveway by vehicles driven by someone who loves them.

Children under 3 years are the most at risk but older children have also been casualties¹. **Off-road** injuries happen in home driveways, unfenced yards, private property, farms, footpaths, car parks, caravan parks and private roads.

Why are young children at risk in off-road environments?

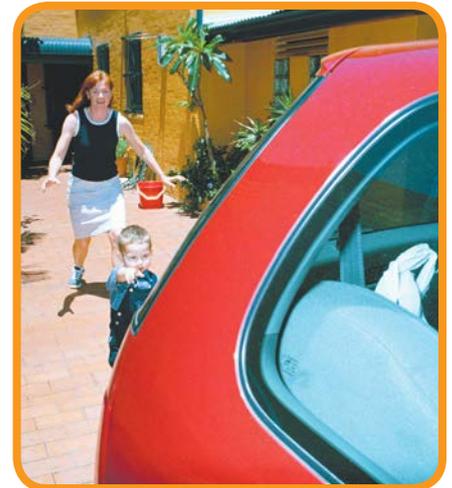
They want to be with the people they love – they want to welcome them and wave them goodbye. They're explorers, they move fast and can get into danger very quickly. It takes many years before they can understand that they need to move out of the way of an approaching vehicle.



Dad's home and Sam wants to say "Hi!"



Sam's never been able to open the front door by himself before...until now!



Dad has no idea that Sam's behind the car!

Hold their hands or hold them close to keep them safe.

Even at home young children always need an adult to be with them and keep them safe.

About driveway casualties

- Off-road injuries to young children are likely to result in death.
- Many of the children who are not killed, sustain severe physical and brain injuries.
- The driver is usually unaware that the child is on the driveway or is running to greet them.
- The driver is usually a parent, family member or friend, but couriers and drivers of commercial and heavy vehicles and tractors have also been involved¹.
- The vehicles are slow moving and usually reversing out, but some have been reversing in, moving forward or turning.¹
- While 4WDs and heavy vehicles are frequently involved, so are family sedans, station wagons and utilities. The NRMA found significant blind areas that reduce drivers' visibility at the front and rear of many vehicles. Check your vehicle's blind spot and [reversing visibility](#) ratings.

What can we do to protect young children from off-road injury?

- Always expect the unexpected with young children.
- If there is another adult around, clearly hand over responsibility for the child.
- If you are the only adult around and need to move the car, put the children in the car, safely restrained, before you move it.
- Check for children and walk around your vehicle before driving off. But remember, even after you've checked, young children are fast and can quickly move into your vehicle's path.
- Never leave children alone in cars, even in home driveways.
- Physically separate play areas from vehicle access.
- Make best use of advances in vehicle technology and design that enable you to detect objects - including children - near your vehicle. **However, no technology can replace close and active adult supervision.**

¹NSW Child Death Review Team 2011 Annual Report