



Please visit the Harrison's Hope [download center](#) for biographies, fact sheets, statistics, recent news, legislation and tip sheets.

Media Contacts

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Questions & Answers

Q1: What is Harrison's Hope?

A1: Harrison's Hope is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit agency, based in St. Louis, Mo., dedicated to the prevention of injuries and deaths due to children being left unattended in or around motor vehicles.

Q2: Who founded Harrison's Hope?

A2: Terrill and Michele Struttmann founded Harrison's Hope in 1999 after two toddlers, left unattended in a running vehicle, set it in motion and killed the Struttmann's 2-year-old son, Harrison. The Struttmanns have since devoted their lives to preventing similar accidents.

Q3: What is the goal of Harrison's Hope?

A3: To save lives and reduce the number of serious injuries resulting from children being left alone in or around cars.

Q4: Does Harrison's Hope have a Web site?

A4: Yes. Information about Harrison's Hope can be found on the Internet at www.harrisonshope.org.

Q5: Does Harrison's Hope have any partners and who are they?

A5: Harrison's Hope has partnered with 4R Kids Sake to help document incidents for Kids in Car's national database. Harrison's Hope also works with service clubs across the country including Kiwanis International,

Optimist International and Rotary International.

Q6: How can my organization partner with Harrison's Hope?

A6: Harrison's Hope is constantly in need of individuals who can donate either time or money to help further this cause. To get involved, please visit our Web site or send an e-mail to contactus@harrisonshope.org.

Q7: Does Harrison's Hope have offices outside of Missouri?

A7: Harrison's Hope currently only has one office in Washington, Mo. However we are looking to build a network of spokespersons across the country to help achieve our goal of raising awareness about this important issue.

Q8: How do I become a Harrison's Hope spokesperson?

A8: If you are interested in spreading the word on behalf of Harrison's Hope, please visit our Web site or send an e-mail to contactus@harrisonshope.org.

Q9: Does Harrison's Hope have materials available for distribution?

A9: Yes. Harrison's Hope has a variety of educational materials available for distribution including fact sheets, tip sheets, take-action activity documents, brochures, posters, public service announcements, videos, magnets and window clings.

Q10: Where can I get Harrison's Hope materials?

A10: Tip sheets, fact sheets and take-action activity documents are available for free from our Web site download center. Other educational materials are available for purchase through our Web site.

Q11: Does Harrison's Hope have an annual fundraiser?

A11: Harrison's Hope hosts an annual fundraising auction in March. In 2007, the auction raised more than \$40,000. The success of the event ensures the continuation of Harrison's Hope lifesaving work.

Q12: How can I help Harrison's Hope?

A12: Everyone can help. Ten ways you can get started today include:

- **Accept responsibility.** Never leave children alone in a car and never allow them to play in or around vehicles, *"not even for a minute."*
- **Watch the news.** Forward information and local newspaper clips reporting incidents of children left unattended in or around vehicles to HH. This will help maintain the national Harrison's Hope database. Please send clips to contactus@harrisonshope.org or the address below.
- **Speak up.** Write to local and state legislators about this important safety issue. Sample legislation and letters can be found at www.harrisonshope/m_nav/legislation.html.
- **Raise awareness.** Publish articles about the dangers of leaving children unattended in or around vehicles in community organization, religious and school newsletters.

- **Stay alert.** Keep an eye out for unattended children in parking lots and other locations where vehicles are parked. Leave a Harrison's Hope brochure on the windshield of any vehicle where children have been left unattended. If you fear the children are in imminent danger, or if the caregiver does not return within five minutes, call 911. Stay with the children until there is a safe environment.
- **Lock-up.** Never leave your vehicle unlocked or let your children play in or around any vehicle. Unlocked vehicles pose serious risks to children who are naturally curious, even if there are no keys in the ignition.
- **Eliminate temptation.** Car trunks can be a tempting, secret place to hide. Teach children about the dangers of a car and never leave car keys within the reach of children.
- **Reach out.** Harrison's Hope is building a network of spokespersons in all 50 states. Please connect us with people in your area who are interested in sharing their experiences about children left unattended in or around vehicles through the Harrison's Hope organization.
- **Purchase.** Purchase and distribute Harrison's Hope education materials.
- **Donate.** Harrison's Hope is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are 100 percent tax deductible.

INCIDENTS & FATALITIES

Q13: What are the dangers of leaving children alone in or around cars?

A13: Anyone can become a victim of these preventable deaths and injuries, but children are especially at risk. Risks can and do include abduction, heat stroke, hypothermia, setting a vehicle in motion, trunk entrapment and even fatal car crashes.

Q14: Why focus on this issue?

A14: People leave children unattended in or around vehicles more frequently than you may think. Harrison's Hope has documented more than 3,860 incidents involving children left alone in or around motor vehicles since 2000. In addition, it is not illegal in many states to leave children unattended in or around vehicles.

Q15: Who tracks the incidents that occur as a result of leaving children unattended in or around cars?

A15: No federal or state agency is currently collecting information related to deaths and injuries that occur as non-traffic incidents on private property.

Q16: Then, how can Harrison's Hope know the number of incidents that occur as a result of leaving children unattended in or around cars?

A16: Harrison's Hope maintains its own national database to evaluate the circumstances and consequences of leaving children unattended in or around cars.

Q17: How does Harrison’s Hope maintain its database of incidents?

A17: Harrison’s Hope has partnered with 4R Kids Sake to document incidents through the collection of newspaper clips and broadcast stories reporting incidents of children left unattended in or around vehicles.

Q18: How many incidents have been documented?

A18: In 2007, Harrison’s Hope has documented 747 incidents involving 962 children left unattended in or around vehicles and 187 children who have lost their lives in these incidents. Overall since 2000, Harrison’s Hope has documented more than 3,920 incidents involving 5,017 children. See chart for incidents tracked since 2001.

YEAR	INCIDENTS	KIDS INVOLVED	FATALITIES
2007	747	962	187
2006	567	756	132
2005	450	539	157
2004	443	560	121
2003	583	728	143
2002	433	593	116
2001	381	465	94
Total	3,604	4,603	950

Q19: What are the most common fatalities involving children left alone in or around a car?

A19: More than 80 percent of these fatalities result from hot weather or back over accidents.

- **Hot and cold weather:** The temperature inside a car can reach deadly levels within minutes – even with the windows open a little. Heat exhaustion, hypothermia and even death can occur.
- **Backing up:** It’s difficult for drivers to see small children when they back up. Cross-view mirrors and backup detection devices can help drivers see the rear of their vehicle.

Q20: How can deaths or injuries be prevented?

A20: The best thing adults can do is never leave children alone in or around a car –not even for a minute. We offer the following tips to help prevent accidents:

- Keep vehicles locked at all times – even in the garage or driveway.
- Never leave keys within the reach of children.
- Teach children to never play in or around vehicles.
- Consider installing cross-view mirrors and/or a backup detection device on your vehicle.

- Make sure all young passengers have left your car after it is parked.
- When a child is missing, check vehicles and trunks immediately.
- If a child is locked inside a vehicle, get him or her out as quickly as possible. If the child is hot or appears sick, call 911 or your local emergency number immediately.

Q21: What can I do if I see children left unattended in a vehicle?

A21: Help Harrison's Hope raise awareness about this important issue. Do not be afraid to tell parents or caregivers about the dangers when you see anyone leaving children unattended in a vehicle. Harrison's Hope recommends leaving a "Not Even for a Minute" flyer on the windshield of any vehicle that has children left unattended. If possible, stay with the children until the responsible party returns, or call 911 if they do not return within five minutes (or sooner if you fear the children are in imminent danger).

Q22: How many states have legislation about leaving kids alone in cars?

A22: Twelve states have laws protecting children left unattended in cars. The states with this legislation are: California , Connecticut , Florida , Illinois , Louisiana , Maryland , Nebraska , Nevada, Pennsylvania , Tennessee (Effective July 1, 2007), Texas , and Washington.

Q23: Do any other states have similar legislation?

A23: Kentucky and Missouri have laws that take effect if an injury or fatality occurs when a child is left unattended in a motor vehicle.

Q24: Are there any states with pending legislation?

A24: Yes. In 2007, at least thirteen states have pending legislation including: Alabama, Arizona , Hawaii , Iowa , Kansas , Massachusetts , Michigan , Missouri , Montana, New York , North Carolina, Oklahoma , and Virginia .

Q25: Is anyone addressing the issue on a national level?

A25: Harrison's Hope is not currently lobbying in Washington D.C. for preventative legislation. It is our understanding that the type of legislation we are pursuing should be mandated at the state level. However, we would like to see the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) or the Center for Disease Control (CDC) track incidents involving kids in and around cars to show the true magnitude of the issue.

Q26: Has Harrison's Hope conducted any lobbying regarding this legislation?

A26: Harrison's Hope has successfully lobbied to pass a law in its home state of Missouri. The law calls for a person to be prosecuted if they knowingly leave a child under the age of 10 unattended in a vehicle. On May 12, 2000, a bill passed the Missouri legislature that makes it a felony if a person is killed as a result of someone leaving a child in a car. Harrison's

Hope continues to pursue legislation in the states that do not already have preventative laws. If you are interested in helping Harrison's Hope pursue legislation in your state, visit the Harrison's Hope Web site or send an e-mail to contactus@harrisonshope.org.

Q27: What has Harrison's Hope done so far to promote the adoption of new legislation?

A27: Harrison's Hope is working with legislators in several states to raise the level of awareness regarding children being left alone inside vehicles and is pursuing preventative legislation in all 50 states.

Q28: These incidents don't happen too often. Why should state or federal governments get involved with criminal legislation?

A28: Because these deadly incidents are preventable. Legislation can raise awareness of the issue and serve as a deterrent to adults leaving children alone in or around vehicles.