

## Preventing "Backovers" and Other Non-Traffic Motor Vehicle Injuries to Children

IRB# 2005-067

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### **Synopsis:**

Every year, children are injured and often killed in "crashes" such as this. In order to obtain a better understanding of the scope of this problem in California, we are undertaking a study to gather information about these incidents. Interest in a study of "backover" crashes was heightened by national research that Janette Fennell has undertaken within her own organization. Her findings interested both SFIC, and Stanford, who decided to design a Backover study, and invite other Trauma Centers to participate. This study is being conducted at seven Pediatric Trauma Centers across California. Two consultants will also be involved: Janette Fennell, Founder/President of the non-profit organization "Kids and Cars", and Kate Bernacki MPH, VOSP (Vehicle Occupant Safety Program) Co-coordinator for the State of California, Department of Health services. Neither consultant will be collecting data but both will be instrumental in disseminating educational information when the project is completed; Ms Bernacki has also assisted in developing the database for collecting the data. The information collected will be used to determine the types of situations where "backover" crashes occur and the types of injuries children receive as a result of those crashes. This information will then be used to design ways to help prevent "backover" crashes.

This is a prospective, multi-center observational study utilizing chart review, and parental interview when necessary to collect data. We will collect data from July 2005 to July 2008 by reviewing medical records of children identified by e codes (mechanism of injury codes) as having been rolled over by a vehicle. Data collected will include patient age and sex, characteristics of the vehicle (i.e., make and model), the circumstances of the injury event, diagnoses and severity of injuries, and final patient disposition.

Once this critical data is compiled, it will be analyzed at the Department of Health Services, EPIC (Epidemiology and Prevention for Injury Control) Branch in Sacramento. We hope to identify trends, determine a profile of children at highest risk for backover injuries and implement an intervention in the communities served by these trauma centers. We will conduct community outreach and disseminate information to parents and car dealers/ manufacturers to inform parents about the root causes of backover injuries and teach them strategies for how such injuries can be prevented. Lastly, we will use information from this project to advocate for safety devices, consumer protection policies and systematic improvements in the collection of backover injury data.