

# Look Before You Lock

Toolkit

**LOOK  
BEFORE YOU  
LOCK**



## Purpose of this toolkit

Leaving children unattended in a vehicle poses a serious risk to their health and safety. Even on mild days, the temperature inside a car can rise rapidly, putting children at risk of heatstroke or even death. Making it a habit to always look before you lock takes only a moment, but it can save a child's life.

The NSW Department of Education is the regulatory authority (NSW Regulatory Authority) for early childhood education and care (ECEC) in NSW. Our 'Look Before You Lock' safety awareness program aims to increase the ECEC sector's awareness of safe transportation practices and encourage services and the community to take simple actions to keep children safe.

This toolkit has been developed to help all ECEC services, including those who provide transport (such as family day care) as well as those that do not, and our broader stakeholders in ECEC, to promote this important safety message to families and the community. It contains resources for providers and services to download and share on their own platforms.

If you have any questions about the 'Look Before You Lock' safety awareness program, please contact the NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Regulatory Authority's Information and Enquiries line at 1800 619 113.



## Key messages

Share 'Look Before You Lock's' important safety message with parents, carers and the community.

**1.**

**The NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Regulatory Authority's 'Look Before You Lock' safety awareness program aims to raise awareness of the critical risks of harm to children during transportation and encourage safe and compliant practices.**

**2.**

**Be aware of the critical risks when it comes to transporting children, especially in hot weather where temperatures can rise to dangerous levels.**

**3.**

**'Look Before You Lock' reminds us to never leave a child unattended in a vehicle, even for a moment.**

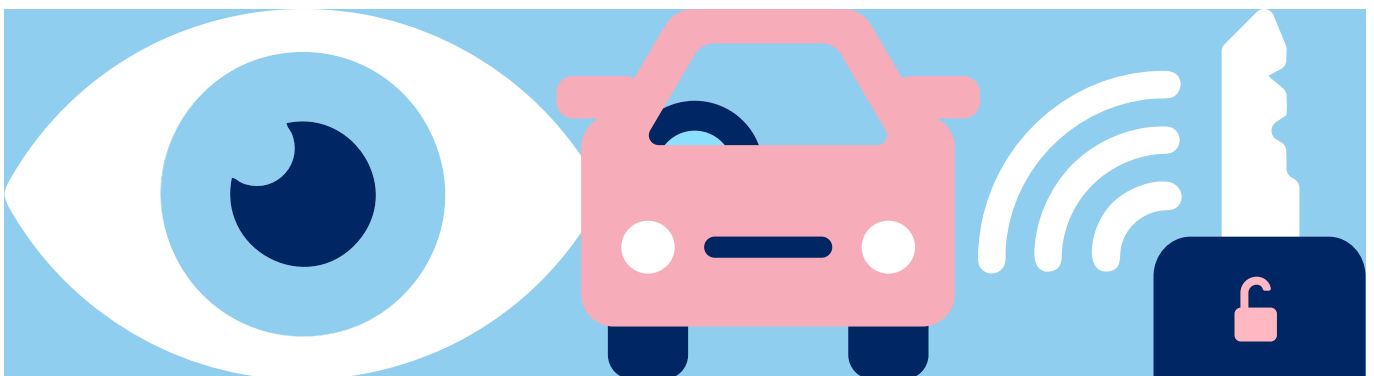
**4.**

**The simple yet effective practice of 'Look Before You Lock' can save lives and should be part of your transport routine.**

## Child-focused activities

Introduce the 'Look Before You Lock' message to children at your ECEC service using these child-focused activities.

- Create a checklist for children to fill out before embarking and disembarking a vehicle, making sure that the checklist is designed for multiple ages and needs, and reflects your service context. Checklists can help reinforce the roles children play in checking the back seat to make sure they have their belongings, and that no one is left behind.
- Lead a storytelling or role-play activity on what safe transport looks like. This can help children understand and visualise safe transport practices by engaging in different scenarios.
- Create a puzzle, for example using the 'Look Before You Lock' logo and an image of a bus, to help children to associate vehicles with the 'Look Before You Lock' message and better understand the meaning.
- Create a memorable jingle or rhyme using the words 'Look Before You Lock' and consider how you can embed this into your service's transport practices. Encourage children to sing the jingle or rhyme when they enter and exit a vehicle. Repetition helps to keep the key message at the forefront of children's minds.
- Create a storybook about safe transportation. Consider how you can customise this story using images and photos of your own service context. Using your service context will help children memorise the 'Look Before You Lock' process whenever they disembark a vehicle.



# Newsletter article or email to families

## Regular transport providers

Use the following copy as a guide to remind parents and carers of your service's safe transportation practices.

### Keeping children safe during transportation

At **[service name]**, we take our responsibility to keep children safe seriously.

The NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Regulatory Authority's 'Look Before You Lock' safety awareness program reminds us that children should never be left unattended in a vehicle, even for a moment. Temperatures inside a car can rise rapidly, even on mild days, putting children at serious risk of heatstroke or even death.

At **[service name]**, we are committed to supporting safe transportation practices. This means:

- **[Insert details of your service's safe transportation practices – e.g., staff always check vehicles before locking, safe drop-off and pick-up routines, transport risk assessments, how families are supported during arrival and departure].**
- **[Insert what safe transportation means to your service – e.g., making sure children are always accounted for, using clear routines for excursions, ensuring staff training].**

Our safe transportation, safe arrival and excursion policies and procedures are available here **[insert link or location]** so families can stay informed.

We encourage all families to build safe transportation habits at home too by:

- always taking your child with you when you leave your vehicle, even if you're only stepping away for a moment
- checking the back seat before you lock your vehicle
- using reminders such as placing essential items in the back seat.

Together, we can strengthen a culture of safety and ensure children are protected at all times.

To learn more about our service's safe transportation practices, please speak with a member of our team.

For more information about 'Look Before You Lock', head to the NSW Department of Education's website.

### Other ECEC services

At **[service name]**, we take our responsibility to keep children safe seriously.

The NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Regulatory Authority's 'Look Before You Lock' safety awareness program reminds us that children should never be left unattended in a vehicle, even for a moment. Temperatures inside a car can rise rapidly, even on mild days, putting children at serious risk of heatstroke or even death.

We encourage all families to build safe transportation habits when dropping off and collecting your child at our service, as well as at home by:

- always taking your child with you when you leave your vehicle, even if you're only stepping away for a moment
- checking the back seat before you lock your vehicle
- using reminders such as placing essential items in the back seat.

Together, we can strengthen a culture of safety and ensure children are protected at all times.

For more information about 'Look Before You Lock', head to the NSW Department of Education's website.

# Conversation guide

Speaking with parents and carers about 'Look Before You Lock' is a great way to ensure the important safety message goes beyond your service environment and is embedded in families' routines. For services that provide regular transport, this is also an opportunity to support parents and carers to understand your safe transportation practices.

Use the following talking points as a guide to start conversations with parents and carers.

## 1. Why does this matter?

Speak to parents about the dangers of leaving children unattended in vehicles. Consider mentioning the following facts:

- A parked car can heat up to dangerous levels within minutes – even on mild days and especially during the warmer months.
- Leaving a child unattended in a vehicle, even for a short time, can lead to serious medical emergencies or even death.
- Children's bodies heat up much faster than adults', which makes them especially vulnerable.

## 2. What do we do at our service to keep children safe?

If your service arranges or provides transport, consider speaking about:

- safe transportation policies and procedures
- processes around embarking and disembarking
- routine safety practices such as ensuring records are up to date, roll checks, head counts and physical vehicle inspections
- how often policies and procedures are reviewed and updated
- how often transport risk assessments are reviewed and updated
- staff training and professional development.

If your service does not arrange or provide regular transport, consider speaking about:

- routines for safe drop-off and pick-up
- how your service supports families during arrival and departure times
- safe transportation during excursions
- staff training and professional development.

## 3. What simple actions can families take to make 'Look Before You Lock' part of their daily routine?

The 'Look Before You Lock' safety message goes beyond service premises and activities. Encourage parents to build simple steps into their daily routine to avoid unintentionally leaving a child in a vehicle.

- Always take your child with you. Never leave them unattended in your vehicle, even for a moment.
- Check the back seat every time before locking the vehicle.
- Use a reminder to help make it a habit. Place your phone, keys or bag in the back seat.
- Share the 'Look Before You Lock' message with grandparents, friends, babysitters and any other authorised adults who drive your child.
- Be extra alert if your routine changes.

## 4. How can we work together?

Consider asking parents and carers the following questions:

- Do you have any questions about how we keep children safe during transportation? Are there any areas in our practice you'd like to learn more about or provide feedback on?
- Is there anything we can do to help you feel supported in making 'Look Before You Lock' a habit?
- How do you think we could share this safety message more widely in our community?

# Social media resources

Use the social media tiles and text across your service's channels.

## Every single time.

Building simple steps into your daily routine can help you avoid accidentally leaving a child in a vehicle. Look Before You Lock and protect children from serious harm, every single time. It only takes a minute.



## Never leave a child unattended.

Temperatures inside a car can rise rapidly, putting children at serious risk of medical emergencies or even death. Before you walk away, always check the back seat to ensure no child is left behind. Set reminders and place essential items in the back. Look Before You Lock. Make it a habit.



## Check the back seat.

Leaving children unattended in vehicles can pose serious risks, especially in hot weather. Help keep children safe by always thoroughly checking your vehicle before locking up.



## It's a life-saving routine.

Children can face danger if left unattended in a vehicle. Take a moment to double-check before locking your vehicle. It's a simple yet life-saving routine that can make all the difference.



# Social media resources

Use the social media tiles and text across your service’s channels.

## One simple vehicle check can save a life

Children being left alone in vehicles happens more often than it should – sometimes by mistake, or sometimes for a short minute.

This short minute can be dangerous for a child in a parked vehicle, especially in warm weather. Children’s bodies overheat quickly and can cause serious consequences to their wellbeing.

If you see a child alone in a vehicle, call Triple Zero (000) immediately.

Develop simple habits to ensure no child is left unattended in a vehicle. #LookBeforeYouLock



## Check for children in vehicles

Did you know that the inside of a vehicle can heat up dangerously fast? A few minutes can be enough to cause harm to a child left inside.

That’s why it’s important to check the back seat before you lock your car. Make this simple act a habit to ensure your child is safe and not left behind. #LookBeforeYouLock



## Make it a habit

Even on mild days, temperatures inside a car can rise rapidly, putting children at serious risk of medical emergencies or even death. These incidents are preventable.

Before you walk away, always check the back seat to ensure no child is left behind. Set reminders and place essential items in the back. Look Before You Lock. Make it a habit. #LookBeforeYouLock



## Posters


Print and display these posters at your service to remind parents and carers of the importance of Look Before You Lock.



# Postcard for families

Print and share this postcard with parents and carers to encourage them to learn more about your safe transportation practices.

New awareness program



The NSW Department of Education is the Regulatory Authority for early childhood education and care. The department's 'Look Before You Lock' safety awareness program reminds us that we should never leave a child unattended in a vehicle, even for a moment.

**When transporting children, looking before you lock your vehicle can be a life-saving routine.**

## Ask your service

Speak with your child's early childhood education and care service to find out how they're keeping your child safe during transportation.

**Some questions you can ask include:**

- What processes are in place to ensure the safe arrival of children?
- What is the educator-to-child ratio during transit?
- How do educators ensure children remain safe and secure during the journey?
- How are parents informed when their child arrives safely at the ECEC service and when they depart?
- Are there regular reviews of transport safety practices to ensure continuous improvement?
- What are some ways for families to improve their transport practices at home to ensure children's safety?
- Where can I find the service's policies and procedures on transportation, safe arrival of children and excursions?

If you have any questions about the 'Look Before You Lock' safety awareness program, please contact the NSW ECEC Regulatory Authority's Information and Enquiries line at 1800 619 113 or email [ececd@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ececd@det.nsw.edu.au).

<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid #0070C0;"> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">برنامج جديد للتوعية</p>  <p style="font-size: 0.7em; margin: 5px 0;">إلى دائرة التعليم في نيو ساوث ويلز هي الجهة التنظيمية المسؤولة عن تعليم ودعاية الطفولة المبكرة. إننا نذكركم ونطلب منكم بالتأكد من أن أطفالكم لن يظلوا في أي مركبة، ولو لفترة قصيرة، لأنهم لن يكونوا تحت المراقبة قبل قفل مركبتك.</p> </div> <p>Arabic</p>	<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid #0070C0;"> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">새로운 인식 프로그램</p>  <p style="font-size: 0.7em; margin: 5px 0;">NSW 교육청이 유아기 교육 및 돌봄을 담당하는 기관입니다. 교육청의 '잠그기 전에 살펴보세요' 안전 인식 프로그램은 다만 잠시라도 아이를 차에 남겨 두는 것만으로도 안전하는 것을 보장해 줄 수 없습니다. 아이들을 차로 이동시킬 때, 차 문을 잠그기 전에 살펴보는 것은 약속을 구할 수 있습니다.</p> </div> <p>Korean</p>	<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid #0070C0;"> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">ਨਵੀਂ ਸੁਚੇਤ ਕਰਮ</p>  <p style="font-size: 0.7em; margin: 5px 0;">NSW ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਡਿਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਯੰਤਰਿਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਨਿਯੰਤਰਿਤ ਕਰਮ (RCA) ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਡਿਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਯੰਤਰਿਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਨਿਯੰਤਰਿਤ ਕਰਮ (RCA) ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਡਿਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਯੰਤਰਿਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਨਿਯੰਤਰਿਤ ਕਰਮ (RCA) ਹੈ।</p> </div> <p>Punjabi</p>	<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid #0070C0;"> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">新安全宣传计划</p>  <p style="font-size: 0.7em; margin: 5px 0;">新南威尔士州教育是新南威尔士州教育和托儿服务部的监管机构。新南威尔士州教育的“先检查后锁车”安全宣传计划提醒大家，无论何时都不能将儿童单独留在车内，哪怕只是片刻时间。接送儿童时，养成锁车前检查这个习惯可能是挽救生命的關鍵。</p> </div> <p>Simplified Chinese</p>	<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid #0070C0;"> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">新安全宣傳計畫</p>  <p style="font-size: 0.7em; margin: 5px 0;">新南威爾斯州教育是新南威爾斯州學校教育及托兒服務的監管機構。新南威爾斯州教育的「先檢查後鎖車」安全宣傳計畫提醒大家，無論何時都不能將兒童單獨留在車內，哪怕只是片刻時間。接送兒童時，養成鎖車前檢查這個習慣可能是挽救生命的關鍵。</p> </div> <p>Traditional Chinese</p>	<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid #0070C0;"> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">Chương trình ý thức mới</p>  <p style="font-size: 0.7em; margin: 5px 0;">Bộ Giáo Dục NSW là Cơ Quan Kiến Tạo và Quy Định các hoạt động liên quan đến việc chăm sóc và giáo dục trẻ em. Chương trình ý thức về an toàn "Xem kỹ trước khi khóa" nhắc nhở mọi người rằng chúng ta không bao giờ nên để một đứa trẻ trong xe mà không có người trông nom, dù chỉ trong giây lát. Khi chuyển chở con cái, xem kỹ trước khi khóa cửa xe có thể là một thói quen giúp cứu được mạng người.</p> </div> <p>Vietnamese</p>
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