



Technology Can Save Lives On The Road, But It's Critical To Be Prepared

(NAPSA)—Children spend a lot of time in automobiles being driven to and from school, daycare and extracurricular activities, to name a few. So it is just as important for children to know when and how to contact emergency personnel from an automobile as they do from home.

David and Robyn Clement of Baytown, Tex., know this firsthand. After Robyn became ill while driving down a busy street with her three children in the car, 9-year-old Victoria took her mother's cell phone and called her father.

"Dad, something's wrong with Mom," she said as Robyn, who could barely move her hands and feet, managed to safely steer the vehicle into a parking lot.

David, who feared his wife was having a heart attack or stroke, told his daughter to push the OnStar emergency button on their Chevy Suburban's dashboard. OnStar uses Global Positioning System (GPS) satellite technology and wireless communication to link drivers to an advisor who can provide real-time assistance. Victoria pressed the OnStar button and was connected quickly to an advisor while David listened via his cell phone.

Victoria explained the situation to the advisor, who relayed the information and the vehicle's location to a 911 operator who then dispatched an ambulance to the scene. "Victoria is a very level-headed kid," said David of his daughter's handling of the situation. "I couldn't believe she was so calm."

In another incident, Maria Ledsma's 10-year-old daughter

used OnStar to contact emergency services after Ledsma suffered a seizure while driving with her four young children in Michigan.

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Every day, an estimated 156,000 calls are made to 911 using wireless technology, according to the Cellular Telecommunications & Internet Association (CTIA). OnStar also responds to more than 6,000 motor vehicle emergencies each month.

Children ages 6 to 18 spend an average of one hour a day in cars, according to a recent National Household Travel Survey conducted every six years by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Teaching children how to communicate with emergency personnel from a vehicle is as important as instructing them how to do so from home. Here are some tips:

- Talk to your children about how and when to dial 911, or how to use an in-vehicle communication system, such as OnStar, during an emergency.
- Explain to your children that 911 can be a source of help to them during an emergency.
- Teach children to give their full name and remain as calm as possible when speaking with the 911 operator or OnStar advisor so that they can send appropriate help as quickly as possible.
- Stay on the line until the operator says it is OK to hang up.