



MOMENTARY DECISIONS WITH LIFELONG IMPACT: BEING SELFISH ABOUT YOUR SAFETY



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Everyone wears their seatbelt. Or do they?

Most of us have been guilty of taking off our seatbelts to reach for something, even just for a few seconds.

Maybe we've let a kid lay down in the back of a car because they are sleepy and grumpy – after all, the back seat is safer, isn't it?

The whole group wants to ride together, and someone sits on a lap in order to fit in one car – it's fine, though, we're only going down the street.

Momentary decisions can have lifelong impact. My passion for seatbelt safety comes from exactly that.

My daughter's close friend, Kailee Mills, was in the back seat of a car with three other friends. She removed her seatbelt to take a picture with her friend at the exact moment the driver lost control. The three others in the vehicle walked away with bumps and bruises, but Kailee will forever be 16. The Mills family will live with unquantifiable grief for the rest of their lives. When the accident occurred, they were shocked she wasn't buckled. The thing is, she was, until the moment where she made a fleeting decision.

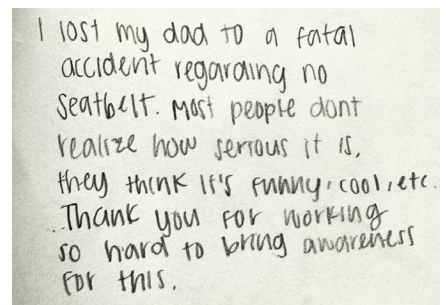
Within days of the accident, Kailee's father David Mills addressed a group of heartbroken teenagers. What he said has stuck with me. "You need to be selfish about your safety." He's right. If something is unsafe, we need to stop it or remove ourselves. We owe it to our families; we owe it to ourselves. We can't predict when something catastrophic may occur. Seconds matter. We need to be relentless when it comes to making safe decisions. Every time, every second.



Since that day I have learned that this is much more common than I would have expected. The Kailee Mills Foundation website states the following staggering statistics:

- ▶ 10,000 people in the United States die annually from not wearing a seatbelt.
- ▶ 27.5 million Americans admit there are times when they do not wear a seatbelt.
- ▶ If you are not buckled up, you are 30 times more likely to be ejected from your vehicle.
- ▶ 75% of people ejected from a vehicle do not survive.
- ▶ On the flip side, 86% of vehicle occupants that survived a fatal crash were wearing a seatbelt.

Almost immediately following the loss of Kailee, the Mills family started a foundation to drive awareness to the importance of wearing seatbelts and what could happen when we don't. At a recent event, a student gave them a note afterwards. It simply said,



That note reminded me of our rig crews; of how many people we have on the road. It reminded me of my kids and how they would feel losing a parent. Make the simple decision: buckle up.

Who do you buckle up for?

The Kailee Mills foundation has been active at over 400 community and school events. They have partnered with the state for the Click It Or Ticket campaign. They perform seatbelt checks and share their story. They are making a difference, and you can too. To get involved, visit their website.

<https://www.kaileemillsfoundation.org/>



Interested in our 2024 Actively C.A.R.E. Goals? Scan to see where we are putting our safety focus.