



VISALIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

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*****NEWS RELEASE*****
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HYUNDAI and KIA Owners, Be Aware of this Growing Crime Trend!

There has been a significant increase in thefts of Hyundai and Kia vehicles in Visalia. The increase is also a nationwide problem and has become a trend on social media platforms. The social media videos show how to steal these vehicles in seconds using a USB cable. The Kia models being targeted are from 2011-2021, and the Hyundai models are from 2015-2021.

The Visalia Police Department have identified the suspects as a group of teenagers ranging from the ages of 13 to 19 years old.

One 19-year-old, two 17-year-olds, eight 16-year-olds, four 15-year-olds, three 14-year-olds, and three 13-year-old boys and one girl have been arrested for auto theft in the past two months. Most of them have been arrested more than once and some are on their fourth arrest.

Detectives say the teens usually are in a group of three or four and go out looking for unlocked Hyundai's and Kia's between the hours of 10 p.m. and 3 a.m. If unlocked, they hot wire the vehicle and drive off.

The Visalia Police Department would like to remind everyone to be aware and take preventative measures to avoid car theft.

1. Lock your doors
2. Remove all keys from your vehicle
3. Remove valuables from your vehicle.
4. Close the windows
5. Park in well-lit areas or near cameras
6. Install an audible alarm system
7. Install an anti-theft device (column collars, steering wheel locks, brake locks)
8. Install a tracking device (Apple Airtags, Samsung SmartTags, Tile Mate GPS Tracker)

If you have been a victim of this crime, Kia and Hyundai have settled a \$200 million consumer class-action lawsuit due to the crime wave targeting their models. For more information, please contact Hyundai at 800-633-5151 or Kia at 800-333-4542.

Remember, if you see something, say something. Please report any suspicious activity to 911 or our non-emergency line at 559-559-734-8117.



