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SAFETY TIPS

CHILDREN IN CARS HEATSTROKE PREVENTION TIPS FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Parents and caregivers are urged to take a few simple steps to never run the risk of losing a child to heatstroke because kids in hot cars can be deadly.

- Never leave infants or young children unattended in a vehicle—even if you leave the windows partly open or the air conditioning on. Remember, it's against the law to leave a child unattended in a vehicle in many states. But most importantly, you run the risk of losing a child to heatstroke because kids are much more sensitive to rising temperatures than adults.
- A NHTSA review indicates many of these deaths come from parents or caregivers accidentally leaving their infants in the car. So do things to remind yourself that a child is in the vehicle, such as: writing yourself a note and putting the note where you will see it when you leave the vehicle; placing your purse, briefcase or something else you need in the back seat so that you will have to check the back seat when you leave the vehicle; or keeping a familiar object in your car's safety seat, such as a stuffed toy. After the child is buckled in, place the object where the driver will notice it when he or she is leaving the vehicle to always remember their child.
- If you are dropping your child off at childcare, and it's normally your spouse, partner or caregiver who drops them off, have them call you to make sure the drop off went according to plan.
- Set a reminder on your cell phone or calendar to alert you to be sure you dropped your child off at day care. You can also download the Baby Reminder App for iPhones.
- Have a plan with your childcare provider so they will call you if your child does not show up for childcare by a certain time.
- Never let children play in an unattended vehicle. Teach them a vehicle is not a play area.
- Always lock your vehicle doors and trunk and keep the keys out of a child's reach. If a child is missing, quickly check all vehicles, including the trunk.
- If you see a child alone in a hot vehicle, call 911 or your local emergency number immediately. If they are in distress due to heat, get them out as quickly as possible. Cool the child rapidly (not an ice bath but by spraying them with cool water or with a garden hose).
- Remember: kids in hot cars are a deadly combination. Don't take the chance.

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Additional Resources:

- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration - www.safercar.gov/heatstroke
- San Francisco University, Department of Geosciences - www.ggweather.com/heat/index.htm
- Safe Kids - www.safekids.org
- Kids and Cars - www.kidsandcars.org
- Children's Hospital of Philadelphia - www.chop.edu