

# A mother's mission to prevent child deaths in hot cars

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(Bernard Reid/WCIV)

CHARLESTON, S.C. (WCIV) -- South Carolina is currently leading the country in hot car deaths for children this summer with three deaths statewide, according to the nonprofit [KidsandCars.org](http://KidsandCars.org).

In the last 20 years, more than 670 children have died in hot vehicles and as of July 15 of this year, 17 children have died, reports [KidsAndCars.org](http://KidsAndCars.org).

Deona Bien is the Director of Women and Children Services at Trident Health and is also the Vice President of the nonprofit, [KidsandCars.org](http://KidsandCars.org).

"When children are left in a car their metabolism is three to five times faster than that of an adult so they can't process the heat like you and I can," she said.

Bien's own daughter, Aslyn Paige Ryan, was inadvertently left in a hot car by her babysitter and died in 2004.

"That is the first mistake, thinking that it can't happen to them," Bien said. "If you can drive to a location and can't remember your drive there, that is as easy as forgetting your child is in the car."

Part of Bien's duties at Trident Health includes educating young parents on the dangers of heat and cars with their new babies.

"This has no socioeconomic boundaries; any child is at risk. Our memories do fail us," she said. "Automakers know that is why we have the alerts when you leave the keys in the car, when you don't buckle your seat belt, when your tire pressure is low."

Bien stresses how it only takes three seconds to look behind you in the car to remember if your child is there or not and to save yourself a lifetime of heartache.

"I look at my daughter's loss as something that helped drive me to be an advocate for the community," Bien said. "I couldn't let her death be meaningless and I feel like every time I tell her story, I feel that it saves a life. I may never know the faces and the names of the children that have been saved but I am certain it has."

[KidsandCars.org](http://KidsandCars.org) launched a petition this week to the White House that calls for automakers to make technology and car safety measures mandatory that would help reduce child deaths in hot cars. The petition calls for 100,000 signatures by August 13.

To view and sign the petition, click [here](#).

<http://www.abcnews4.com/story/26019988/a-mothers-mission-to-prevent-child-deaths-in-hot-cars>