

Mom with painful past reminds parents to 'look before you lock'

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PHOENIX - As the temperatures heat up, it's important to remember to "look before you lock." The Phoenix Fire Department says it only takes minutes for a child to suffer heat stroke if left in a hot car.

Dawn Peabody never imagined such a tragedy would happen to her family. Her 2-year-old daughter was accidentally left behind in a hot car and died. She's speaking out in hopes no one else suffers such a terrible fate.

It was October 18, 2008 that dawn Peabody's life was turned upside down. Her 2-year-old daughter Maya was pronounced dead at a valley hospital from heat stroke.

"My whole world was spinning. I couldn't believe that something like that could happen to our family."

The family had gone out to breakfast earlier that Saturday morning with some family visiting from out of town. Dawn says she headed to work after her husband put Maya in his car and headed home. The other kids rode with the grandparents,

"It was 100% an accident. My husband came home to have a good time with his kids, you know, grandparents were here learning to rope in backyard," says Peabody.

It was an hour later when someone realized Maya was missing

"Inside of a vehicle the temperatures can, in a matter of 15 minutes, get to 125 degrees," says Captain Troy Casky with the Phoenix Fire Department.

He says tragedies like Maya's happen all too often to responsible loving parents. His advice: stay in a routine and keep a safety checklist.

"Look before you lock. Look in the backseat just as a reminder, take a step for just a few seconds. Like drowning prevention, just a few seconds to look in that vehicle, regroup, see if there's anything you're missing," recommends Casky.

Maya was outgoing, a hugger, says her mom. A loving toddler that left a lasting impression in the hearts of those who knew and loved her most -- a toddler who is saving lives even after losing hers.

"We definitely do miss her like crazy. We talk about her all the time. We have twins now, we tell them about her big sister and she's still part of our hearts."

The Peabody's are part of a program called Ray Ray's Pledge, which offers tips for parents on how to prevent such a tragedy.

Online: www.rayrayspledge.com

<http://www.myfoxphoenix.com/story/22504602/2013/06/05/mom-with-painful-past-reminds-drivers-to-lock-before-you-lock>