

HEALTH

Heatstroke poses health risk for kids in cars

By [David Shum](#) Global News, June 27, 2013 1:35 pm



File photo Getty Images

TORONTO – A two-year-old boy [found dead inside a car in Milton, Ont., on Wednesday](#) has raised questions about parental responsibility and safety during hot weather conditions.

Police say the boy was left for a “significant portion of the day” in a family member’s vehicle that had been parked just outside the garage of a home.

Although the official cause of death has yet to be determined, health officials say extreme heat can be dangerous for all children, especially young infants.

[Health Canada cites on its website](#) that it is important to stay informed about local weather conditions and alerts so you know when to take extra care.

Symptoms of heat illness include changes in behaviour (sleepiness or temper tantrums), dizziness or fainting, nausea or vomiting, headache, rapid breathing and heartbeat, extreme thirst and decreased urination with unusually dark yellow urine.

[READ MORE: How extreme heat affects the body](#)

Health Canada also recommends to never leave children inside a parked vehicle or in direct sunlight.

When outside air temperature is 23°C/73°F, the temperature inside a vehicle can be extremely dangerous – more than 50°C/122°F.

[KidsAndCars.org](#), a U.S. based safety group, has compiled a list of tips for parents and guardians.

- Never leave children alone in or around cars; not even for a minute.
- Put something you’ll need like your cell phone, handbag, employee ID or brief case, etc., on the floor board in the back seat.
- Get in the habit of always opening the back door of your vehicle every time you reach your destination to make sure no child has been left behind. This will soon become a habit. We call this the “Look Before You Lock” campaign.
- Keep a large stuffed animal in the child’s car seat when it’s not occupied. When the child is placed in the seat, put the stuffed animal in the front passenger seat. It’s a visual reminder that anytime the stuffed animal is up front you know the child is in the back seat in a child safety seat.
- Make arrangements with your child’s day care center or babysitter that you will always call if your child will not be there on a particular day as scheduled.
- Keep vehicles locked at all times; even in the garage or driveway and always set your parking brake.
- Keys and/or remote openers should never be left within reach of children.
- Make sure all child passengers have left the vehicle after it is parked.
- When a child is missing, check vehicles and car trunks immediately.
- If you see a child alone in a vehicle, get involved. If they are hot or seem sick, get them out as quickly as possible. Call 911 or your local emergency number immediately.
- Be especially careful about keeping children safe in and around cars during busy times, schedule changes and periods of crisis or holidays.
- Use drive-thru services when available. (restaurants, banks, pharmacies, dry cleaners, etc.)
- Use your debit or credit card to pay for gas at the pump.

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