

Hedrick Medical Center joins KidsAndCars.org

Hedrick Medical Center, along with KidsAndCars.org, other child safety advocates, concerned government agencies, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration observed Heat Stroke Prevention Day on Wed, July 31.

Posted Aug. 1, 2013 @ 1:09 pm Chillicothe News

Hedrick Medical Center, along with KidsAndCars.org, other child safety advocates, concerned government agencies, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration observed Heat Stroke Prevention Day on Wednesday, July 31. Heat stroke is the leading cause of non-crash vehicle fatalities for children 14 and younger, but can be prevented.

“A change in routine, fatigue, distraction, anxiety —each can lead to a tragic momentary memory lapse,” Janette Fennell, founder and president of KidsAndCars.org, said. “It can happen to anybody, even the most loving and attentive parents.”

A parked car can reach 125 degrees in minutes, even when the windows are partially open. Children are especially vulnerable to heat stroke, as their body temperatures rise three to five times faster than an adult’s. The number of child heat stroke deaths in vehicles continues to average approximately 37 per year; or about one every 10 days. Since the group began tracking data, at least 670 children have died in these preventable tragedies.

All parents need to carefully follow the guidelines for placing car seats in the back seat – the safest place for children to ride. Additionally, babies should ride rear-facing in their car seats till age 2, according to the guidelines prescribed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. At the same time, parents must understand that while requiring children to ride in the back seat has saved many lives, it also requires drivers to take extra precautions to avoid children from being unknowingly left alone in a vehicle.

“Following KidsAndCars.org’s Look Before You Lock safety education tips doesn’t cost a penny, and provides several layers of protection so your child will not be unknowingly left in a vehicle,” Fennell added. “We never know when there might be a day that our memory fails us, so we urge parents to implement these easy-to-follow instructions so that they become a habit for them and all who care for their child.”

“We see ourselves as educators as well as health care professionals,” said Laura Warren, manager of patient care for Hedrick Medical Center’s Birthing Center. “It’s important that we remind and educate folks of this serious issue.”

KidsAndCars.org’s Look Before You Lock safety education tips include:

- Get in the habit of always opening the back door of your vehicle every time you reach your destination to check to make sure no child or pet has been left behind.
- Keep a large stuffed animal in the child's car seat. Right before the child is placed in the seat, move the stuffed animal to the front passenger seat as a visual reminder that your child is in the back seat.
- Put something you'll need on the floorboard in the back seat in front of your child’s car seat (cell phone, handbag, employee ID, briefcase, etc.). This ensures you open the back door of your vehicle to retrieve your belongings.
- Make arrangements with your daycare provider or babysitter to call you within 10 minutes if your child does not arrive as expected.
- Never leave children alone in or around cars, not even for a minute. Instead, use drive-through? services when available.
- Keep vehicles locked at all times - even in the garage or driveway - and keep car keys and remote openers out of reach of children.

<http://www.chillicothenews.com/article/20130801/NEWS/130809894/1001/NEWS?rssfeed=true>