

# PediatricSafety

One Ouch is Too Many

## Emma's Inspirations

Posted on May 16, 2014 ·

When our daughter Emma was an infant, we moved into our new house. As parents of six children, we were very excited about getting to this new house and getting some much needed unloading done! Pulling into the driveway, we all became very excited and quickly left the car to see the house. There was so much to do – everyone went off in different directions.

Closed Cars  
Don't Breathe,  
Check Your Seats  
Before You Leave!



www.emmasinspirations.com



I had assumed that my husband or one of the older kids had taken Emma from her car seat (as that was almost ALWAYS the case) and he thought that it was me who had brought her inside. Making the assumption that everything was okay, we went about unpacking and arranging our new home. In a sudden moment of panic, I realized that our baby girl wasn't even in the house. Nearly 45 minutes after we had arrived, I rushed to our car for Emma.

The sun was hot for a spring day. I cannot tell you the thoughts and fears, and the horror that welled up inside of me as I was sure I had harmed our baby girl! I thank God every day that my

older son had opened the back window on the ride up because he felt car-sick, or Emma may not have become the vibrant six year old she is today!

From that point on we left notes in all the cars. **"Where's Emma?"** was our catch phrase. We were determined to always check the seats and never let this happen to us again.

When my daughter and I read about the school principal who, out of routine, left her baby in a closed car all day, and the dad who forgot the baby was in his back seat because he didn't 'usually' drop him off at child-care, we were sad and sickened by their tragedies... yet we knew how 'routine' oriented we all are today... and how easy it is for this tragedy to take place:

- An average of 40 children die each year in closed vehicles... and numerous others have been left alone in closed cars by adults who assume the car is a 'safe place' for their children...
- How many bus drivers do we read about who fail to "check the seats"!
- What is typically not realized is how quickly the air inside our vehicles can become saunas for our precious little ones... with temperatures escalating 20 to 30, or even 40 degrees higher INSIDE the car than the air OUTSIDE the car! According to an article in New Science Magazine (July 5, 2005) , a study done out of Stanford University re-echoes these facts: cars become ovens, even while outside temperatures are on the 'cool' side!
- Children's bodies' heat up 3 to 5 times faster than adults, and a child can be critically injured or tragically dead within minutes!
- In 2001, according to [Kids N Cars](#), there were approx 20 child deaths due to hyperthermia. In 2011, there were 33. In 2010 there were over 49 (the highest number of fatalities in one year – ever)

My daughter and I remembered our 'notes'. I thought of easy ways to leave a 'note' affixed to car windows, in key spots, to help remind us to "check the seats before we leave". We decided to design decals to help save lives, as well as awaken our awareness of the dangers of vehicle suffocation for small children and pets! This is how we came up with [Emma's Inspirations](#).

I came up with the idea of static-cling decals to adhere (but not STICK with adhesive) to the car windows. I wanted to add a couple of 'check' marks to the decals with a stick figure boy and girl (some with a cat and dog added as well) and add a phrase that rhymed to increase the ease of remembering the dangers of suffocation for adults... and to educate children as well. I thought the phrase would help develop a new mindset for everyone... and help educate our children about automobile safety- the same way we educate them about outlet and toaster safety.

I thought 3 decals for each car was a good idea so I put them together in packages of 6 ... enough for two cars. One could be placed just above the driver's side window door-lock, another just below the rear-view mirror, (or the left corner of the windshield), and one for the back window corner. Some moms stick one on the kitchen window as well; to remind them to keep any cars outside LOCKED from little hands or hide and seek players! Others place one on or above their house alarm to remind them to check the seats.

Gene Weingarten of the Washington Post wrote a painfully candid article on this subject on Sunday, March 8, 2009. He recounts the tragedy of three families as they endure the heartache of recognition that their children died a horrifically "modern" death; they suffocated in seats their parents never took a second glance in! These are situations no family ever would have anticipated.

[Emma's window decals](#) are that little reminder you need when things are moving at a fast pace. By sticking these decals in the right places you will have a simple and affordable reminder to check again. A reminder so simple ...yet one that could save your child's life!

### HEALTHFUL HINTS

Many parents are unaware of the dangers lurking around parked cars. According to the [Kids N Cars](#) national database, there are a number of injuries that can happen in a 'MOMENT' to children left unattended in or around motor vehicles. Here are just a few things to watch for:

- A child can suffocate in unattended vehicles;
- Children can get their heads and hands caught in power windows;
- They can inadvertently shift the car into gear...or fall out windows and doors;
- "Frontovers" and "Backovers" are responsible for approx 61% of non-traffic fatalities for children under the age of 15;
- We must be of a mind to NEVER LEAVE OUR CHILDREN ALONE IN OR AROUND CARS.

The decals from [Emma's Inspirations](#) are an accident prevention tool to remind us to DOUBLE CHECK our seats, REMOVE any passengers, and LOCK our EMPTY parked cars from curious little ones. Other areas where safety stickers can keep your children safe from harm:

- ID stickers for child safety seats – if you were ever in an accident, it would provide key information about your child to caregivers that you may be unable to communicate. You can usually get these at your local pharmacy or stationery store...
- You might want to place a decal or sticker on a house or apartment window or door to alert emergency personnel to the presence of children in the home.
- Poison Control stickers should be placed on phones themselves or next to the phone and/or on an inside cabinet door.
- Medical alert bracelets or anklets or stickers or decals on a child's seat or diaper bag or person to warn of potentially life-threatening allergies.
- Decals and stickers are good to remind 'no metal' in the microwave or toaster.
- Stickers and decals are small, yet significant aids in helping us keep track of the never ending flow of "things to remember to mention" or "do" or "watch out for" ... as we manage the literal "ins" and "outs" of our days... and care for the people, who at the end of our day, we do it ALL for... our children!

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**Editor's Note:** we first ran this post in November of 2009. With the weather warming up and National Heat Awareness Day on Friday the 23rd, we wanted to take a moment to share it with you again as a reminder to **Please Check the Seats Before You Lock!**

<http://www.pediatricsafety.net/2014/05/emmas-inspirations-2/#sthash.z3M5kkfK.dpuf>