

## Heatstroke prevention tips for parents

Posted by [Joey Stipek](#) on June 11, 2012 at 11:46 am

Summer is here and as temperatures beginning to climb throughout the summer months, parents should be aware of the dangers of leaving your child unattended in your vehicle. Last year alone, there were two deaths in Oklahoma from child vehicular heatstroke death.

According to national non-profit child advocacy group Kids And Cars, each summer nearly 38 children die each year lose their lives from heat-related deaths from parents, family members or caretakers making the unwise decision to leave children alone unattended in a vehicle.

In a phone interview, President and Founder of Kids And Cars Janette Fennell said the number one mistake parents can make is thinking child vehicular heatstroke death couldn't happen to their child.

"90 percent of the cases it happens to good parents and another 10 percent of the cases it happens to parents possibly who have been involved with drugs or alcohol," Fennell said. "It knows no social or economic barriers."

Fennell said vehicles act like greenhouse in the way they absorb temperature. "They absorb heat in the glass, the dashboard and the seats," Fennell said. "In your first ten minutes you can get a jump in temperature and in twenty minutes you can get a thirty degree jump."

Fennell said a child's body heats up three to five times faster than an adult. "When a child's temperature climbs above 107 degrees their respiratory system — due to being immature — can't keep up with the amount of heat."

Fennell said Kids And Cars offers some simple tips parents can learn on how to keep your children safe in and around vehicles.

- Never leave children alone in or around cars; not even for a minute.
- Cracking the windows of your vehicles has very little effect on the temperature of your car.
- Put something you'll need like your cell phone, purse, employee ID or brief case on the floor board in the back seat.
- Look before you lock. 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.
- 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 animal in the front passenger seat. It's a visual reminder 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 remote openers should never be left within reach of children.
- Make sure all child passengers have left the vehicle.
- 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.

For more information on Kids And Cars visit their website [www.kidsandcars.org](http://www.kidsandcars.org).

<http://blog.newsok.com/knowit/2012/06/11/heatstroke-prevention-tips-for-parents/>