

Summer heat wave brings the danger of children in hot cars

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With the hot weather and official start of summer, now is a good time for parents and caregivers to consider the dangers of leaving children in hot cars. In 2011, 33 children were killed due to hyperthermia, according to data from San Francisco State University Department of Geosciences. In 2010, that number was 49 children and most of the fatalities were children under 4 years old.

It may seem like an impossible thing to do, but clearly the unthinkable can and does happen. Often, such tragedies involve hurried parents and caregivers, especially those drivers who change their routine. Some knowingly leave children in a car "just for a minute" not realizing how quickly the temperature in a car can rise to dangerous levels. With temperatures in the 80s, just 10 minutes is all it takes, even with a window rolled down a few inches, for a vehicle's interior to heat up to over 100 degrees, a level that can cause a child's body to dangerously overheat.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has just announced a campaign to educate and urge parents to think "Where's baby? Look before you lock."

Here are some tips to help keep your children safe.

- Â· Never leave a child unattended in a vehicle, not even for a minute. In addition to being dangerous, it is the law in many states.
- Â· Check the car to make sure that all occupants leave the vehicle or are carried out when unloading. If you lock the door with a key, rather than with a remote, it would force that one last look in the car before leaving it.
- Â· Always lock your car and keep keys and remotes away from children.
- Â· Keep a stuffed animal in the front passenger seat as a reminder of a child in the backseat.
- Â· Place something in the backseat that you would need, such as a purse, briefcase or cell phone.
- Â· Have a plan that your childcare provider will call you if your child does not show up.
- Â· If you see a child alone in a car, especially if they seem hot, call 911 immediately to help get them out.

For additional information on keeping your children safe in and around motor vehicles, visit the Kids and Cars website and our special section on kids and car safety. Also read: "Hot cars: A deadly danger."

<http://www.onenewspage.us/n/Consumer/74rahfpvo/Summer-heat-wave-brings-the-danger-of-children.htm>