

## Greenfield dad's 911 call reveals steps after finding his baby in hot car

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Right before he left for his parents' Greenfield home on Saturday afternoon, 18-year-old Joshua Stryzinski helped change his 4-month-old daughter into a one-piece outfit. It left her legs and arms exposed, a way to help keep her cool in the triple-digit heat.

He arrived to a busy home, his brother outside painting and the family preparing to go on vacation. He chatted with his father, Ronald, about maybe buying a car from him. About a couple of hours later, he realized it was time to pick his baby's mother up from her shift at Arby's.

When he got back to his 2002 Saturn SL1, the doors closed and the windows rolled up, he screamed when he realized what was inside -- his daughter. He ripped her out and rushed her inside, still in her car seat.

She wasn't breathing. Joshua's father tried CPR as they rushed her to the hospital, only a block or two away.

But it was too late. Emergency-room doctors pronounced her dead. Her arms and legs had suffered third-degree burns.

These details emerged Monday in a 911 call and police probable-cause affidavit used to charge Stryzinski with neglect of a dependent leading to death. He has pleaded not guilty and was released from Hancock County Jail on Monday afternoon on a \$50,000 cash bond.

**See:** [Greenfield dad pleads not guilty in baby's death in hot car](#)

He is one of two parents who, at around the same time Saturday on one of the hottest days in Central Indiana history, left a baby daughter in the car for an hour or more.

The other, 30-year-old Meg Trueblood, was shopping at a Fishers clothing store while her 16-month-old was in the parking lot. That child suffered a seizure and was taken to the hospital but survived. Trueblood also has been charged with neglect of a dependent.

The news has stirred outrage at the idea that not one but two parents could be so careless during a record heat wave. But national child car-safety advocates say that, in reality, it happens more often than people realize and it happens to all kinds of parents.

Janette Fennell tracks these cases as the president and founder of [KidsAndCars.org](#). She says that perhaps 90 percent of the time, the parent is the type to put latches on their doors and padding around the coffee table.

She has met college professors, lawyers and ministers who have done it. Only a small percentage, she said, have drug problems or have had interactions with child protective services. "It's the exact opposite of the stereotype," she said. Several who knew the Stryzinskis said they left no impression that they were anything but upstanding citizens.

"This is a good family that has lost a child they loved," said 39-year-old next-door neighbor Cherie Sirosky,

The 911 call -- made by Stryzinski's brother and with audible screaming and wailing in the background -- captures a family overcome with grief, desperation and panic.

Attempts to reach the Stryzinskis at their home Monday were unsuccessful.

Stryzinski told police he had just dropped off the baby's 17-year-old mother at work and had stopped by a friend's home to show the baby to the friend's parents. That was when he and the friend changed her outfit.

Stryzinski also told police he had watched his friend buckle his daughter into her car seat before leaving for his parents' home. But for some reason, when he got to his parents' house, he had forgotten that and instead thought the friend was looking after his baby. He told police he could not believe his daughter was in the car.

"The normal routine," Stryzinski told police, "is that someone is always watching my kid."

Statistically, what Stryzinski described fits what typically happens in such cases, according to the organization [Safe Kids Worldwide](#).

The organization has been tallying fatal incidents where children have been left in cars since 1998. They count 550 cases nationwide where a child has died from hyperthermia or heat stroke while in a car. In 2010, at least 51 children died; in 2011, there were 33. The children have ranged in age from 5 days to 14 years old, though more than half of the dead are 2 years old or younger.

Of those cases, 52 percent of the parents didn't realize they had left the children there; 17 percent left the kids there knowingly. In 30 percent of the cases, the child managed to get into the car alone.

But how does it happen? How does a parent forget his or her child?

Kate Carr, president and CEO of Safe Kids Worldwide, said so many factors can contribute to such a scenario -- a change in routine, stress, lack of sleep. That might be especially true with a young, new parent.

"We can't rush to judgment," Carr said.

If Stryzinski simply forgot or became confused, less is known about the mother in the Fishers case.

Police detained Meg Trueblood, 30, but records released to the media do not say what she told police as to why she left the child there.

According to police reports, Trueblood was shopping at Simply Chic clothing store in Fishers, leaving her 16-month-old in the back of her silver 2004 Ford Explorer.

A Simply Chic customer had noticed the child in the parking lot and returned inside to tell the store's manager. The customer and manager went outside, noticed the windows were up, tried to open the door -- it was locked -- and eventually called 911.

"The baby is drenching sweat," the manager tells the dispatcher in the call.

The store manager says the girl is breathing. But it's labored, and she is no longer moving.

"Knock on the window," the dispatcher tells her, "and see if she responds to you."

The store manager knocks loudly. "No."

The baby's eyes are closed, and she's making a breathing motion like she has just been crying for a while.

About 5 1/2 minutes into the call, a Fishers police officer arrived. He went inside Simply Chic and asked if anyone owned the Ford Explorer, according to police records. No one responded.

He went back outside and smashed the window in. He carried the child, limp and unconscious in his arms, inside.

Employees wetted some fabric and started blotting her body with it. The police officer tried unsuccessfully to get her to drink some water. As medics arrived, she began to convulse.

[http://www.iiconline.com/article/20120710/NEWS/307100010/Greenfield-Dad-s-911-call-reveals-steps-to-discovering-his-baby-in-car?odyssey=tab%7Ctopnews%7Ctext%7CFRONTPAGE&nclick\\_check=1](http://www.iiconline.com/article/20120710/NEWS/307100010/Greenfield-Dad-s-911-call-reveals-steps-to-discovering-his-baby-in-car?odyssey=tab%7Ctopnews%7Ctext%7CFRONTPAGE&nclick_check=1)