

“Kids and Cars” works to prevent heat stroke deaths with petition drive, stuffed animals

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Seventeen children have died of heat stroke in vehicles in the United States this year. On a steaming Tuesday, the group “[Kids and Cars](#)” worked to see that other children don’t die that way.

Tracy Delaney is a responsible, loving parent of Gabby, a nine-month-old. Delaney says any responsible, loving parent could leave her baby in a car.

“I could see it would be easy to go into autopilot and just forget a few things, even things as important as your baby,” said Delaney.

Dr. Leonard Pittala, a pediatrician at North Kansas City Hospital, says at this time of year, a baby doesn’t stand a chance. The temperature inside a vehicle can rise 10 degrees in 10 minutes.

“Children who have been found in vehicles, their body temperature has been found to be 107 in a car in ten minutes,” said Dr. Pittala.

So on this hot day, “Kids and Cars” used a warm and fuzzy approach to raise awareness. The Leawood-based group delivered dozens of stuffed animals to the Children’s Learning Center at North Kansas City Hospital.

Cards attached to the stuffed animals have a checklist for parents. It includes keeping the stuffed animal in the car seat.

“Then when you put baby in the car seat, you move the stuffed animal up front as a visual reminder that baby’s in the back,” said Amber Rollins, the group’s director.

The checklist says to also put something in the backseat that requires you to open the back door every time.

“Maybe it’s your cell phone or your laptop,” Rollins said.

But Rollins says the checklist still isn’t enough because parents’ brains can fail them.

“That’s why it’s so important we have technology that could prevent a child from being left behind,” she said.

“Kids and Cars” has started a petition drive asking the President to authorize the Department of Transportation to research and develop technology for vehicles that would remind parents to not leave their most precious cargo behind.

The petition needs 100,000 signatures by August 14th. To see the petition and the checklist for parents, go to www.KidsAndCars.org.

RELATED: [Organization aims to stop death by heatstroke for children left in hot cars](#)

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