

Child deaths in hot cars double average in May

Jayne O'Donnell, USA TODAY 5:04 p.m. EDT May 31, 2013



(Photo: SAMUEL M. SIMPKINS GANNETT)

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Death toll in hot cars already breaking records**
- **Seven kids in 16 days die.**
- **Cars reach dangerous temperatures in just minutes**

Summer hasn't even arrived and the number of children who died when left in hot cars is nearly double the average for May, the advocacy group Kids and Cars said Friday.

Seven children died in hot cars during a 16-day period in four states.

All but one was left by a family member, the group says.

Among the deaths:

- A five-month-old girl died May 10 in El Paso, Texas, after her mother left her in her SUV without realizing it.
- A boy, 4, died May 15 in Transylvania County, N.C., His grandmother forgot to drop him off at his daycare facility.
- A boy, 18 months, and a two-month-old girl died May 26 in Glen Allen, Va., when they were left in the car while their mother was at work.

"The worst thing any parent or caregiver can do is think that this could never happen to them, that they are not capable of inadvertently leaving their child behind," says Kids and Cars founder Janette Fennell. "This can and does happen to the most loving, responsible and attentive parents.

Fennell recommends putting something in the back seat so you have to open the back door when leaving the vehicle.

Another option: Put a stuffed animal in the child seat when it's not in use and move it to the front seat when your child is in the car. It will serve as a reminder that the child seat is in use.

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/cars/2013/05/31/child-deaths-hot-cars-double-in-may/2377989/>