



Twittercue: KidsAndCars.org speaks at #NHTSA event 8/22, #ChildrensMercyHospital in KC. www.KidsAndCars.org

News Release

KidsAndCars.org

7532 Wyoming St., Kansas City, Mo. 64114

Office: 816-216-7085, www.KidsAndCars.org

Contacts:

Janette Fennell, 816-216-7085, cell 415-336-9279 or Janette@KidsAndCars.org

Amber Rollins, 816-216-7085, cell 913-205-6973, or Amber@KidsAndCars.org

Susan Pepperdine, 913-262-7414, cell 913-205-5304 or susan@pepperdinepr.com

KidsAndCars.org founder speaks at NHTSA press conference Aug. 22 at Children's Mercy Hospital

Speakers also include mother whose child died of heatstroke in hot car

KANSAS CITY, MO.- Aug. 22, 2012...Janette Fennell, president of KidsAndCars.org, a national nonprofit child safety organization working to prevent injuries and deaths of children in and around motor vehicles, spoke Wednesday, Aug. 22, at a press conference sponsored by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, Mo.

The event focused on programs to prevent child heatstroke deaths and injuries in hot cars and to urge parents and caregivers to think, "Where's baby? Look before you lock."

Speakers also included Jodie Edwards, Ph.D., whose family suffered a tragedy when she unknowingly left her daughter Jenna, nearly 11 months old, in a hot car while she was at work as a professor at a small Christian university in Ohio. She thought she had taken every precaution possible to protect her daughter and her older brother. Yet her brain 'flipped a switch,' causing her to mistakenly believe she had dropped off Jenna at the babysitter's on the way to work. "I have talked to dozens of families who have lost children to vehicular heatstroke," Edwards said. "The only thing we all have in common is that none of us realized our love wasn't enough to protect our children from our imperfect brains."

KidsAndCars.org reported last week that in the six-day period from Aug. 2 to 7 eight children from 5 months to 4 years old died of heat stroke in vehicles in four states: Arkansas, Tennessee, Florida and New Mexico.

To educate parents and caregivers, KidsAndCars.org introduced the "Look before you lock" program, the first of its kind, and has distributed over 150,000 information cards to hospitals

nationwide. "We want parents to understand from Day One that this is something they need to know in order to protect their baby," Fennell said. "Sadly, these tragedies can and do happen to anyone, even the most conscientious parents."

In 2005, KidsAndCars.org was successful in getting a provision included in the omnibus federal transportation bill that requires data collection of incidents that are vehicle-related, but take place off of our public roads and highways. In January 2009, the first report was issued stating that more than 1,700 children and adults are killed and more than 840,000 injured every year. "Though significant, we believe the actual numbers are much higher," Fennell said. "KidsAndCars.org is working to collect statistics on near misses, which traditionally have not been reported."

"After so many years of carrying this torch, KidsAndCars.org is gratified to see the muscle and tremendous outreach efforts of NHTSA to take on a leadership role in working to end these preventable tragedies."

Based on incidents documented by KidsAndCars.org:
54 percent of the time children die after being unknowingly left inside a hot vehicle.
32 percent when children got into a vehicle on their own, similar to the situation that Hays described.[U1]
12 percent when they were knowingly left in vehicle
2 percent of the circumstances were not clear.

Safety Tips from KidsAndCars.org

KidsAndCars.org provides these **BE SAFE** tips on a card being distributed to new parents:

Back seat - Put something in the back seat so you have to open the door when leaving the vehicle - cell phone, employee badge, handbag, etc.

Every child should be correctly restrained in the back seat.

Stuffed animal - Move it from the car seat to the front seat to remind you when your baby is in the back seat.

Ask your babysitter or child-care provider to call you within 10 minutes if your child hasn't arrived on time.

Focus on driving - Avoid cell phone calls and texting while driving.

Every time you park your vehicle open the back door to make sure no one has been left behind.

For additional information about ways to keep children safe in and around vehicles, visit www.KidsAndCars.org
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About KidsAndCars.org: Founded in 1996, KidsAndCars.org is a national nonprofit child safety organization dedicated to preventing injuries and deaths of children in and around motor vehicles. KidAndCars.org promotes awareness among parents, caregivers and the general public about the dangers to children, including backover and frontover incidents, and heatstroke from being inadvertently left in a vehicle. The organization works to prevent tragedies through data collection, education and public awareness, policy change and survivor advocacy.