



**Suggested tweet:** Prevent child #heatstroke deaths in vehicles! Sign & retweet #KidsAndCars petition:  
<http://wh.gov/IL8nX>

## News Release

KidsAndCars.org  
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## KidsAndCars.org launches White House petition drive to prevent needless child deaths in hot vehicles

**Kansas City, MO – July 14, 2014** – KidsAndCars.org launched a “We the People” petition drive today on the White House petition website (<http://wh.gov/IL8nX>). The petition will push the Obama Administration to authorize the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to provide funding for research and development of innovative technology to detect a child left alone in the rear seat of a vehicle. In the past 20 years more than 670 U.S. children have died in hot cars. Already in 2014 at least 17 children have died in hot cars, reports KidsAndCars.org, the only and leading national nonprofit group dedicated solely to preventing injuries and deaths of children in and around motor vehicles

KidsandCars.org works with David Diamond, Ph.D., a neuroscientist at the University of South Florida who studies the brain and memory, including people who have unknowingly forgotten children. He finds that, “These memory errors are committed by normal, attentive and loving parents. Many of these parents had believed that they could never forget their children, until their children died,” he said. “Scientific studies confirm that you can’t assume your memory will never fail, and the consequences of a memory failure can be tragic.”

Specifically, the petition urges the Obama Administration to authorize the Department of Transportation to:

- Provide funding for research and development of innovative technology.
- Identify, evaluate and test new technology to accelerate implementation of the most feasible and effective solutions.
- Require installation of technology in ALL vehicles and/or child safety seats to prevent children from being left alone in vehicles.

“The auto industry already recognizes we’re human and our memories often fail us. You get a warning if you don’t buckle your seatbelt, leave a car door open, your gas is low or you leave your headlights on,” explains Janette Fennell, founder and president of KidsAndCars.org. “If you forget your keys in the ignition, you get a warning. If a child is left behind, you absolutely need a warning. The federal government and automakers have the ability to solve this problem, and we need action now.”

KidsAndCars.org needs 100,000 signatures on its petition in 30 days (July 15-Aug. 12). “We believe the public wants action now,” Fennell said. “These deaths are happening too frequently in communities across the country and the petition will ensure White House attention and a response.”

Other successful child safety initiatives promoted by KidsAndCars.org include adoption of federal safety standards requiring all vehicles be equipped with trunk release latches to prevent trunk entrapment, safer power window switches

to prevent children from being strangled, and brake transmission shift interlock systems so children cannot inadvertently knock a vehicle into gear. Most recently a federal DOT rule was issued requiring rear visibility systems as standard equipment on all new passenger vehicles by May 2018.

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About KidsAndCars.org: Founded in 1996, KidsAndCars.org is the only and leading national nonprofit child safety organization dedicated solely to preventing injuries and deaths of children in and around vehicles. KidAndCars.org promotes awareness among parents, caregivers and the general public about the dangers to children, including backover and frontover incidents, and heat stroke from being inadvertently left in a vehicle. The organization works to prevent tragedies through data collection, education and public awareness, policy change, product redesign and survivor advocacy.