

Talking Points

Statistics: (www.noheatstroke.org)

Since 1998, over 1010 children in the United States have tragically died from heatstroke alone in a vehicle. On average of 37 children die each year from vehicular heatstroke.

Circumstances:

- Forgotten: 53%
- Gained Access: 25%
- Knowingly Left: 21%

What is Heatstroke?

Heatstroke is a life-threatening condition that happens when the body overheats and can no longer cool itself down. It occurs when a person's body temperature reaches 104°F (40°C) or higher, leading to potential organ failure and even death if not treated quickly.

Symptoms of Heatstroke:

- Hot, red, or dry skin (or damp skin if heatstroke is from exertion)
- Rapid heartbeat and breathing
- Dizziness, confusion, or disorientation
- Extreme fatigue or weakness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Loss of consciousness or seizures

Why Cars Are Especially Dangerous? (www.noheatstroke.org)

A parked car can heat up by 19°F in just 10 minutes, even with the windows cracked.

- Cars heat up fast – even on a 70°F Day, the inside of a car can reach 100°F in just 19 minutes.
- Cracking a window does not help – temperatures inside still rise to dangerous levels.
- Cars heat up fast – even on cloudy and mild days, the inside of a car can become dangerously hot in minutes. It heats up like a greenhouse.

Children's body temperature rises 3 to 5 times faster than an adult. A child's ability to regulate their body temperature has not fully developed. As a bystander you do not know how long the child has been in the car alone, so every second counts.

Tips to Prevent Vehicular Heatstroke

Heatstroke in parked cars is 100% preventable with simple steps. Creating layers of protection can help ensure no child, pet, or vulnerable person is left behind.

Create Barriers of Protection:

- Look Before You Lock. Always check the back seat before leaving your vehicle. Make it a habit every time.
- Keep a Reminder in the Front Seat. Place a diaper bag, purse, or even a shoe in the front seat to remind you a child or pet is in the back.
- Use Technology. Set a phone alarm or use vehicle alert systems that notify you if someone is in the back seat.
- Communicate with Caregivers. If there is a schedule change, always confirm that a child or pet has arrived safely at their destination.
- Keep Your Car Locked. Prevent children from climbing inside an unattended vehicle by locking your car every time, even at home.
- Store Keys Out of Reach. Keep car keys and fobs out of children's reach to prevent them from accidentally entering a car.
- Teach Kids Cars Are Not Playgrounds. Talk to children about the dangers of playing inside parked cars.

Act - Quick Action Can Save a Life

Be aware of your surroundings when walking next to cars or through a parking lot. Heatstroke can happen in minutes. If you see someone in distress inside a parked car, do not wait—take action.

Steps to Take Action:

- Assess the Situation
 - Is the person or pet showing signs of heat distress (panting, sweating, unresponsive, or crying)?
 - Check if the car is locked and if all windows are rolled up.
- Call 911 Immediately
 - Provide the location, vehicle details, and the condition of the person or pet inside.
 - Follow the dispatcher's instructions. Emergency responders can guide you on what to do next.
- Find the Vehicle Owner
 - If near a business, notify an employee or have them make an announcement.
 - Look for identifying stickers or parking permits that might help locate the driver.
- Stay Until Help Arrives - Following 911 Dispatcher Instructions