



“Minutes Matter: Never Leave a Child Alone in a Car”

The dog days of summer have arrived! It’s critically important during these hot weather months to remember that a child should *never* be left alone in a vehicle – not even for “just a minute.”

The temperature in vehicles can rise to deadly levels within a few minutes, and a child’s internal temperature increases three to five times as quickly as adults. Parents and caregivers need to ensure that they take their children with them *every* time they exit the car to prevent serious injury and possible death.

Key safety tips include the following:

- Never leave a child in an unattended car, even with the windows down.
- If you see a child unattended in a car... Call 911.
- Adopt a “Look before you leave” routine: Be sure that *all* occupants leave the vehicle when unloading.
- Place your purse, wallet or cell phone on the back seat as a reminder that you have a child in the car. (Some safety organizations have even suggested taking off and leaving your left shoe next to the car seat.)
- Keep a stuffed animal in the car seat; when the child is put in the car seat, place the animal in the front with the driver.
- Arrange for your childcare provider to call you if your child does not show up for daycare.
- Look into new child reminder technologies that connect wireless car seat alarms to key rings, etc.

Store “greeters” and others whose work brings them in contact with the community can also reinforce this crucial message with a simple inquiry of, “It’s hot outside today, is everyone out of your car?”

By working together, we can reduce or eliminate these completely preventable deaths in our community.