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## **WHERE'S BABY?**

# **CHILDREN LEFT IN CARS & HEATSTROKE**

**Heatstroke in vehicles is the leading cause of all non-crash related fatalities involving children 14 and younger, according to NHTSA, representing 61 percent of total non-crash fatalities in this age group.**

As outside temperatures rise, the dangers for children being seriously injured or even dying from being left alone inside a hot car also rise.

More than half of all vehicle-related heatstroke deaths in children are caused by a child accidentally being left in the car and more than 30 percent are from a child getting into a hot car on their own. In an effort to prevent these needless tragedies, we want to urge all parents and caregivers to do three things:

- NEVER leave a child in a vehicle unattended;
- Make it a habit to look in the backseat EVERY time you exit the car;
- ALWAYS lock the car and put the keys out of reach. And, if you ever see a child left alone in a hot vehicle, call 911 right away.

**Children's bodies overheat easily, and infants and children under 3 years old are at greatest risk for heat-related illness.**

- KidsandCars.org shows that 87 percent of children who died from vehicular heatstroke are age 3 and younger.
- Children's body temperatures can rise up to five times faster than that of an adult, and heatstroke can occur in temperatures as low as 57 degrees. On an 80° day, a car can reach deadly levels in just 10 minutes.
- High body temperatures can cause permanent injury or even death.
- Heatstroke begins when the core body temperature reaches about 104° and the thermoregulatory system is overwhelmed. A core temperature of about 107° is lethal.
- Symptoms of heatstroke: warning signs vary, but may include:
  - Red, hot, and moist or dry skin
  - No sweating
  - A strong rapid pulse or a slow weak pulse
  - A throbbing headache
  - Dizziness
  - Nausea
  - Confusion
  - Being grouchy or acting strangely

[www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov)

