

June 25, 2015

Safe Kids Alamance County Urges YOU to Help Protect Children from Heatstroke

Hot Cars Can Quickly Become Deadly for Children.... Look Before You Lock

[Burlington, NC] – Hot summer days across the country have contributed to more than 8 child deaths so far this year from heatstroke when children were left unattended in vehicles, or as in the most recent case, a four year old climbed into an unlocked vehicle and was unable to get out. While there has not been a death in North Carolina, there has been a “near miss” incident in Orange County where a child was left in a daycare van for more than 6 hours. That is why Safe Kids Alamance County reminds caregivers to never leave children alone in cars, look before you lock, and lock unoccupied car doors when children are around.

Heatstroke, also known as hyperthermia, is the leading cause of non-crash, vehicle-related deaths for children. It occurs when the body isn’t able to cool itself quickly enough and the body temperature rises to dangerous levels. Young children are particularly at risk as their bodies heat up three to five times faster than an adult’s. Since 1998, more than 636 children across the United States have died from heatstroke when unattended in a vehicle.

"A car can heat up 19 degrees in 10 minutes. And cracking a window doesn’t help," said Kelley Kimrey, Safe Kids Alamance County Coordinator. "Heatstroke can happen anytime, anywhere. We don’t want to see this happen to any family. That’s why Safe Kids is asking everyone to help protect kids from this very preventable tragedy by never leaving your child alone in a car, not even for a minute."

Together, we can cut down the number of deaths and near misses by remembering to **ACT**.

- **A:** Avoid heatstroke-related injury and death by never leaving your child alone in a car, not even for a minute. And make sure to keep your car locked when you’re not in it so kids don’t get in on their own.
- **C:** Create reminders by putting something in the back of your car next to your child such as a briefcase, a purse or a cell phone that is needed at your final destination. This is especially important if you’re not following your normal routine.
- **T:** Take action. If you see a child alone in a car, call 911. Emergency personnel want you to call. They are trained to respond to these situations. One call could save a life.



Never leave your child alone in a car.

The Never Leave Your Child Alone in a Car program is made possible through a grant from the General Motors Foundation. For more information on preventing child heatstroke deaths, please visit www.ggweather.com/heat and www.safekids.org/heatstroke.

About Safe Kids Alamance County

Safe Kids Alamance County works to prevent unintentional childhood injury, the leading cause of death and disability to children. Its members include community partners, healthcare professionals, parks and rec. employees, local police and fire departments, and child advocates. Safe Kids Alamance County is a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global organization dedicated to preventing unintentional injury, the number one cause of death to children in the United States. Throughout the world, almost 1 million children die of injuries each year, and every one of these tragedies is preventable. Safe Kids Alamance County was founded in 2000 and is led by Alamance County Health Department

About the General Motors Foundation and Safe Kids Buckle Up

Beginning in 1997, General Motors and the GM Foundation have served as Safe Kids Worldwide's exclusive funding source and helped build the Safe Kids Buckle Up program into a multifaceted national initiative, bringing motor vehicle safety messages to children and families through community and dealer partnerships. To date, more than 23 million people have been exposed to Safe Kids Worldwide events and community outreach efforts. Certified child passenger safety technicians working through Safe Kids coalitions have examined over 1.77 million child safety seats at over 90,000 events, and the program has donated over 633,000 seats to families in need.

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ACT

Avoid. Create reminders. Take action.