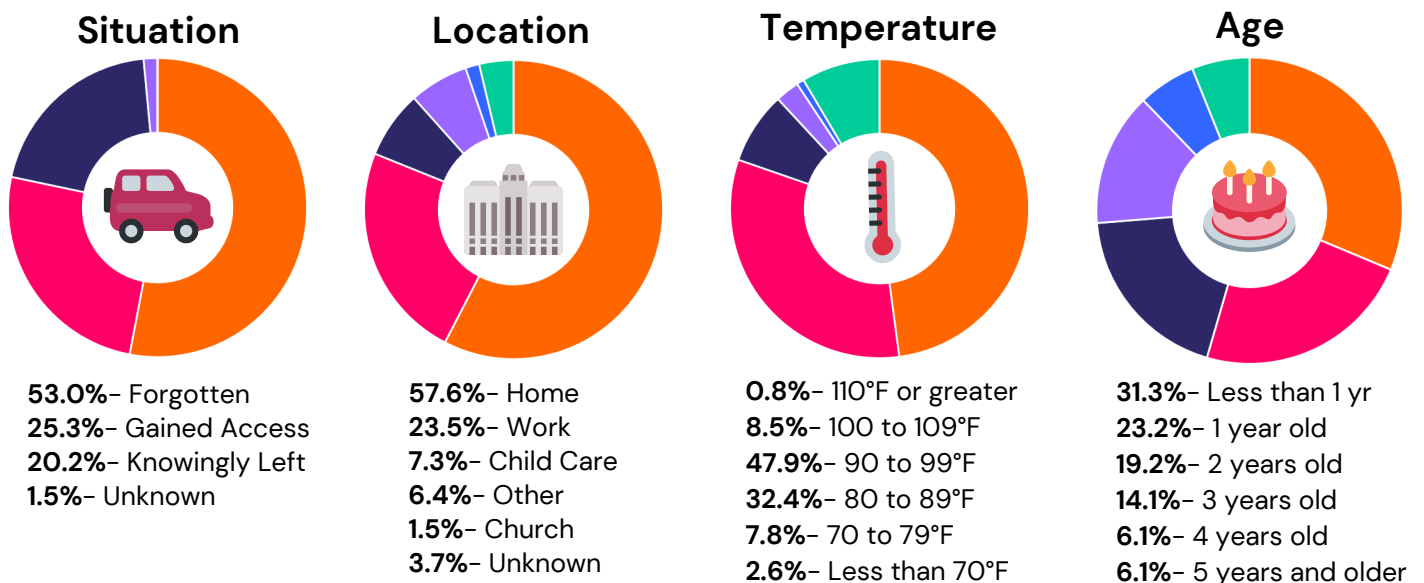


Pediatric Vehicular Heatstroke Death



- Over **900 children** have died inside hot vehicles since 1998.¹
- On average, **38 children** die each year from Pediatric Vehicular Heatstroke (PVH).¹
- PVH is the **leading cause** of death for non-crash vehicular deaths among children.²

The Circumstances¹



In many cases of PVH where a child is forgotten, their caregivers experienced a **change of routine**. The brain can easily go on auto pilot trying to stick to a routine, and because of this, important things can be easy to forget when you are out of routine. This is why many PVH deaths occur at **familiar locations** like home, work, and child care.

A lesser-known cause of PVH is **children gaining access to a parked car**. When children are playing, they could use car keys or find an unlocked car to gain access, whether it is the caregiver's or a stranger's vehicle.

34% of PVH deaths have occurred outside of the summer months (June, July, August) and a child has died of PVH each month of the year. PVH **deaths can and have occurred at temperatures in the 60s and 70s**, temperatures many incorrectly believe are too low for PVH to occur. The majority of PVH deaths involve **children under the age of 2 years old**, with the average age being 21 months old. This is because young children often fall asleep in their rear facing car seat, making it even easier to forget your child.

The Science



A child's body heats up **3 to 5 times** as fast as a healthy adult. A child's major organs begin to fail at 104°F and a child can die when their temperature reaches 107°F.²



Temperatures inside a car can **quickly become life threatening** regardless of the outside temperature. Leaving windows down or cracked has little to no effect on the temperature inside of a vehicle. Leaving the A/C on can still be dangerous as it might not be strong enough, could stop working, or accidentally be turned off.

Temperatures inside of a Vehicle over Time¹

Time	Temperature					
Outside Air Temp	70°F	75°F	80°F	85°F	90°F	95°F
10 min	89°F	94°F	99°F	104°F	109°F	114°F
20 min	99°F	104°F	109°F	114°F	119°F	124°F
30 min	104°F	109°F	114°F	119°F	124°F	129°F
60 min	113°F	118°F	123°F	128°F	133°F	138°F

Things You Can Do

You should never leave a child in a car for any period of time. When you get out of a routine or are exhausted, it can be easy for anyone who takes a child somewhere in a car, to forget someone important. Doctors, nurses, principals, and hardworking parents have all forgotten their child in a hot car. You should **give yourself audio and visual cues** to remember.



Move a belonging such as your bag or jacket to the backseat to remind you of any passengers after you park. This is a tool to break the brain's autopilot.



Keep a **stuffed animal** where your child sits when they are not in the car. Move the stuffed animal to the front seat when driving with a child. This will serve as a reminder to check for passengers when you leave.



Make sure that your **child care provider has a plan to call** you or other caregivers if your child does not show up at a certain time.



Always **check for passengers first, then make sure your car is locked** at all times. In addition, keep your keys away from children, especially those that would be able to access a car with them. If your child is missing, the car should be one of the **first places you check**.



Set a **location reminder** using a reminders app on your phone. Set it up to check the backseat when you get out of your car or arrive at a frequent location like home, work, etc.

Always Look Before You Lock

Sources

1. Jan Null, CCM, Department of Meteorology and Climate Science, San Jose State University, <http://noheatstroke.org>
2. NHTSA, Keeping Kids Safe, [nhtsa.gov/road-safety/child-safety#topic-heatstroke](https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/child-safety#topic-heatstroke)

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