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Public Information Notice
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC
1015 AM EDT Wed May 15 2013

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From: Eli Jacks
Chief, Fire and Public Weather Services Branch

Subject: Child Vehicular Heatstroke Awareness and Prevention
Safety Guidance for 2013

Temperatures inside vehicles can rapidly heat to lethal levels during any season. NOAA's NWS is seeking assistance from the media to help educate the public about the danger of leaving children unattended in vehicles.

The start of the heat season for most of the country is about a month away, but it is not too early to be concerned about the danger of leaving children or pets unattended in vehicles. In fact, studies show that heatstroke can occur on days with relatively mild temperatures, about 70 degrees.

This year, NWS is partnering with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to heighten child vehicular heatstroke awareness and prevention.

Heatstroke in vehicles is the leading cause of all non-crash-related fatalities involving children 14 and younger (61 percent). Each year children die from excessive heat as a result of being left enclosed in parked vehicles, sometimes intentionally but most times unintentionally. Since 1998, an average of 38 children per year, or about one every 10 days, have died in automobiles as a result of heatstroke.

The NHTSA and NWS offer the following safety guidelines to help avoid tragic deaths of babies and young children:

1. NEVER LEAVE A CHILD OR YOUNG CHILDREN UNATTENDED IN A VEHICLE--NOT EVEN FOR A MINUTE.
2. IF YOU SEE A CHILD UNATTENDED IN A VEHICLE, CALL 9-1-1.
3. Check to make sure seating surfaces and equipment (child safety seat and safety belt buckles) aren't hot when

securing your child in a safety restraint system in a car that has been parked in the heat.

4. Be sure that all occupants leave the vehicle when unloading. Don't overlook sleeping babies or pets.
5. Always lock your car and ensure children do not have access to keys or remote entry devices. **IF A CHILD IS MISSING, ALWAYS CHECK THE CAR FIRST--INCLUDING THE TRUNK.** Teach your children that vehicles are never to be used as a play area.
6. As a visual reminder keep a stuffed animal in the car seat, and, when the child is placed in the seat, place the animal in the front with the driver.
7. Place your purse or briefcase in the back seat as a reminder that you have your child in the car.
8. Have a plan that your childcare provider will call you if your child does not show up for childcare.
9. Use the slogan "Beat the Heat, Check the Backseat", or "Where's Baby? Look Before You Lock" to educate the public.

REMEMBER--NEVER LEAVE A CHILD IN AN UNATTENDED VEHICLE!

Children are much more sensitive to rising temperatures than adults so pay close attention to the above tips during ALL seasons.

NWS and NHTSA offer outreach and media toolkits as follows:

NHTSA's "Get Involved" and "Where's Baby?" media templates and other materials:

www.safercar.gov/parents/heat-involved.htm

NWS's "Beat the Heat, Check the Back Seat" logos can be downloaded from the following heat safety web site:

www.nws.noaa.gov/om/heat/index.shtml

For more information, please contact:

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NWS Public Information Notices are online:

<http://www.weather.gov/os/notif.htm>

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