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Public Information Statement
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From: Eli Jacks
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Subject: Child Vehicular Heatstroke Awareness and Prevention Safety
Guidance for 2014

In 2013, 43 children died from heatstroke because they were left unattended in a vehicle. To help prevent these tragedies from occurring this year, NWS is asking the media to spread the word about the dangers of leaving children or pets unattended in vehicles.

Summer is only a month away with many areas already recording temperatures at summertime levels. Now is the time to highlight the danger of leaving children or pets unattended in vehicles. Studies show the temperature inside a vehicle can rapidly rise to lethal levels even on a relatively mild spring day with outside temperature less than 70 degrees Fahrenheit.

Heatstroke is the leading cause of all non-crash-related vehicle 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, caregivers intentionally leave a child in a car for what they think is a few minutes but more often, it is unintentional with caregivers forgetting the child is in the backseat. Since 1998, over 600 children have died in automobiles as a result of heatstroke, an average of 38 children per year, or almost two children per week from May to September.

The NWS offers the following safety precautions to help avoid tragic deaths of babies and young children and pets.

- Never leave a child or pet unattended in a vehicle, not even for a minute.
- If you see a child unattended in a vehicle, call 9-1-1.
- Routinely look in the back and front of your vehicle before locking and leaving your vehicle.
- Always lock your car even at home and ensure children do not have access to keys or remote entry devices. Teach your children that vehicles are

never to be used as a play area.

- Be sure that all occupants leave the vehicle when unloading, including pets. Don't overlook a sleeping baby.

- As a visual reminder, keep a stuffed animal in the car seat. When the child is placed in the car seat, move the stuffed animal to the front so the driver see it.

- Place your purse or briefcase in the back seat as a reminder that you have your child in the car.

- Ask your childcare provider to call you if your child does not show up for childcare.

Help spread the word: "Beat the Heat, Check the Backseat". For more free resources, go to:

www.weather.gov/om/heat

Remember: never leave a child or pet in an unattended vehicle. Vehicular heatstroke of children is preventable.

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