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Public Information Statement  
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC  
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From:     Eli Jacks  
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Subject: Child Vehicular Heatstroke Awareness and Prevention Safety  
Guidance for 2015

In 2014, there were 30 heatstroke deaths of children left unattended in vehicles; the first seven occurred in April and May. Though this figure is down from 44 reported in 2013, much awareness is still needed. A child died in March of this year after being left in a hot car. To help prevent more tragedies such as this from occurring, the NWS once again is asking the media to spread the word about the dangers 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. On average, 37 children die each year from excessive heat as a result of being left enclosed in parked vehicles. That's almost two children per week from May to September. Most often, it is as a result of parents or caregivers being distracted.

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

- Never leave a child 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 sees 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 free resources, go to:

[www.weather.gov/heatsafety](http://www.weather.gov/heatsafety)

For more information, please contact:

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