

NOUS41 KWBC 191605
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Public Information Notice 16-14
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC
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From: Eli Jacks
 Chief, Forecast Services Division

Subject: Child Vehicular Heatstroke Awareness and Prevention
 Safety Guidance for 2016

In 2015, there were 24 heatstroke deaths of children left unattended in vehicles. Already this year, six children have died after being left in vehicles. To help prevent more tragedies such as these from occurring, the NWS and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) are asking the media and others to spread the word about the dangers of leaving children unattended in vehicles.

Studies show the temperature inside a vehicle can rapidly rise to lethal levels, even on a relatively mild spring day with an outside temperature of less than 70 degrees Fahrenheit.

Heatstroke is the leading cause of all non-crash-related vehicle fatalities involving children under 15 years old. During the period from 1998 to the present, 667 children died from excessive heat as a result of being left enclosed in parked vehicles. That's an average 37 children per year. In most of these cases, about 54 percent, these children were forgotten in vehicles as a result of parents or caregivers being distracted.

The NWS and NHTSA offer 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 911.
- Make removing your child from the vehicle your first priority once you have parked.
- Routinely look in the back and front of your vehicle before locking and leaving your vehicle.
- 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 educate parents and caregivers of the dangers of leaving children unattended in vehicles. NWS and NHTSA urge you to "Look before you lock." For more information and free downloadable resources, go to:

<http://www.weather.gov/heatsafety>

<http://www.safercar.gov/parents/InandAroundtheCar/heatstroke.htm>

<http://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/CAMPAIGNS/Child+Safety/Heatstroke+Prevention>

(will be available by May 25)

For more information, contact:

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National Public Information Notices are online at:

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

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