FACT SHEET

He's a killer.

KIDS IN HOT CARS HEATSTROKE FACT SHEET

Vehicles heat up quickly. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and other safety advocates and academic institutions have recognized the safety threat heatstroke poses for leaving children in hot cars. Here are the key facts.

Heatstroke is the leading cause of non-crash-related fatalities for children 14 and younger.

- From 1998-2013 606 children died due to heatstroke, representing 61 percent of total non-crash fatalities in this age group. Of the 606 deaths:
  - 52% were forgotten in the vehicle.
  - 29% gained access by themselves and became trapped
  - 18% were left intentionally
  - 1% were unknown cases
- In 2013 44 children died of heatstroke in the U.S.
- Children are at a higher risk than adults of dying from heatstroke in a hot vehicle especially when they are too young to communicate.
- A child's temperature heats up 3 to 5 times faster than that of an adult's.

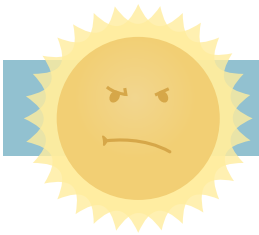
High body temperatures can cause permanent injury or even death.

- Heatstroke begins when the core body temperature reaches about 104 degrees and the thermoregulatory system is overwhelmed. A core temperature of about 107 degrees is lethal.
- In 10 minutes a car can heat up 20 degrees. Rolling down a window does little to keep it cool.
- Heatstroke fatalities have occurred even in vehicles parked in shaded areas and when the air temperatures were 80 degrees F or less.
- Heatstroke can occur in temperatures as low as 57 degrees.
- The warning signs vary, but may include:
  - Red, hot, and moist or dry skin
  - No sweating
  - A strong rapid pulse or a slow weak pulse
  - A throbbing headache
  - Dizziness
  - Nausea
  - Confusion
  - Being grouchy or acting strangely

It can happen to anyone.

- In 52 percent of cases the child was "forgotten" by the caregiver.
- In more than 29 percent of cases, a child got into the vehicle on their own.

where's baby?
Look before you lock.



He's a killer.

Additional Resources

- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration - www.safercar.gov/heatstroke
- San Francisco State University, Department of Earth & Climate Sciences - www.ggweather.com/heat
- Safe Kids - www.safekids.org
- Children's Hospital of Philadelphia - www.chop.edu

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