



Public Health
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Frederick County Health Department

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Safe Kids Frederick County Shares Tips to Prevent Vehicular Heatstroke Deaths in Children

FREDERICK, MD -- In 2018, 52 children died in hot cars, making it the deadliest year on record in the last 20 years. The National Safety Council stated that 14 children in Maryland have died due to hot cars since 1998.

As warmer weather fast approaches, Safe Kids Worldwide, Safe Kids Frederick County and the Association for the [Advancement of Automotive Medicine](#) (AAAM) are joining together to raise awareness about the importance of child reminder technology and the need for increased public education around the dangers of leaving children in hot cars.

“It is critical that parents and caregivers understand that it only takes a few minutes for a car to heat up and become deadly to a child in cold or hot weather,” said Jessica Dayal of Safe Kids Frederick County. “As summer temperatures rise, more kids are at risk. As a bystander, if you see a child alone in a car, take action and save a life.”

Important Facts

- Heatstroke, also known as hyperthermia, is the leading cause of non-crash, vehicle-related deaths for children.
- It occurs when the body can't cool itself quickly enough and the body temperature rises to dangerous levels.

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- Young children are particularly at risk since their bodies heat up three to five times faster than adults' bodies.
- When a child's internal temperature gets to 104 degrees, major organs begin to shut down. And when that child's temperature reaches 107 degrees, the child can die.
- A car can heat up 19 degrees in 10 minutes and cracking a window doesn't help.
- Symptoms can quickly progress from flushed, dry skin and vomiting to seizures, organ failure and death.

Top Safety Tips

- To help protect kids from this preventable tragedy, remember to **ACT**:
- **A: Avoid** heatstroke-related injury and death by never leaving a child alone in a car, not even for a minute. Make sure to keep your car locked when you're not inside so kids don't get in on their own.
- **C: Create reminders.** Keep a stuffed animal or other memento in your child's car seat when it's empty, and move it to the front seat as a visual reminder when your child is in the back seat. Or place and secure your phone, briefcase, or purse in the back seat when traveling with your child.
- **T: Take action.** If you see a child alone in a car, call 911. Emergency personnel want you to call. They are trained to respond to these situations. One call could save a life.

For more information on heatstroke prevention, visit [SafeKids.org](https://www.safekids.org).

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