



**Public Health**  
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Frederick County Health Department

# News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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## National Heatstroke Prevention Day *Help Prevent Heatstroke Deaths in Children*

**FREDERICK, MD --** The Safe Kids Frederick County Coalition would like to raise awareness on National Heatstroke Prevention Day about the dangers of leaving children, pets, and adults in hot cars. According to the National Safety Council, 52 children died in hot cars in 2018, making it the deadliest year on record. In 2019, there have already been 24 deaths nationwide. Fourteen children in Maryland have died due to hot cars since 1998.

"It is critical that parents and caregivers understand that it only takes a few minutes for the inside of the car to heat up and become deadly to a child in cold or hot weather. A partially opened window does not help cool down the temperature in the car," said Jessica Dayal of Safe Kids Frederick County. "As summer temperatures rise, more people are at risk for heatstroke. If you see someone with flushed and dry skin, please check on them and call 911. Drink fluids and stay out of the sun for long periods."



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Barbara A. Brookmyer, M.D., M.P.H. ▪ Health Officer

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### Important Facts

- Heatstroke, also known as hyperthermia, is the leading cause of non-crash, vehicle-related deaths for children.
- Heatstroke occurs when the body can't cool itself quickly enough and the body temperature rises to dangerous levels.
- Young children's bodies heat up 3 to 5 times faster than adults' bodies.
- When a child's internal temperature gets to 104 degrees, major organs begin to shut down. If a child's temperature reaches 107 degrees, the child can die.
- A car can heat up 19 degrees in 10 minutes. Opening a window does not 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 responders 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](http://SafeKids.org). To learn more about Safe Kids Frederick County, visit [health.frederickcountymd.gov/safekids](http://health.frederickcountymd.gov/safekids).

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