



FACTS

- **Hot car deaths are widely misunderstood;** they can happen to any caregiver, and over half occur when a child is unknowingly left in the vehicle
- An average of **38 children die each year in the U.S.** (about one every 9 days), and 88% are age 3 or younger
- **Cars heat up dangerously fast.** Temperatures can reach **125°F within minutes**, with 80% of the increase happening in the first 10 minutes, **even if windows are cracked.**
- Heatstroke can occur even in mild weather (as low as 60°F), and **children's bodies overheat 3-5 times faster than adults.**
- **Common risk factors include:** changes in routine, stress, fatigue, lack of sleep, and distractions.
- **Rear-facing car seats** and quiet, sleeping children make it easy to miss a child in the back seat, **increasing risk**



SAFETY TIPS

Cues & Reminders

- Place the child's diaper bag or item in the front passenger seat.
- Make it a habit of opening the back door every time you park to ensure no one is left behind. To enforce this habit, place an item that you can't start your day without in the back seat (employee badge, laptop, phone, handbag, etc.)
- Ask your childcare provider to call you right away if your child hasn't arrived as scheduled.
- Clearly announce and confirm who is getting each child out of the vehicle. Miscommunication can lead to thinking someone else removed the child.

SAFETY TIPS CONT'D

Prevention

- Keep vehicles locked at all times, especially in the garage or driveway. Ask neighbors and visitors to do the same.
- Never leave car keys within reach of children.
- Use childproofing knob covers and door alarms to prevent children from exiting your home unnoticed.
- Teach children to honk the horn or turn on hazard lights if they become stuck inside a car.
- Use drive-thru services when available (restaurant, bank, pharmacy, dry cleaner) and pay for gas at the pump.
- Be especially cautious during busy times, schedule changes and periods of crisis or holidays. This is when many tragedies occur.

Action Steps

- Never leave children alone in or around cars; not even for a minute.
- If a child is missing, immediately check the inside, floorboards and trunk of all vehicles in the area carefully, even if they're locked.
- If you see a child alone in a vehicle, get involved. Call 911 immediately. If the child seems hot or sick, get them out of the vehicle as quickly as possible.

