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Help! Too Many Children Are Dying in Hot Cars

Tips for Keeping Kids Safe

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Children dying from [heatstroke in cars](#), either because they were left or became trapped, have reached a record number. In 2018, 52 children lost their lives—the most in over 20 years. And this year is off to a sad start with the sixth such death reported on May 6 in New Jersey, where the temperature that day was 69 degrees.

More than half of vehicular heatstroke cases from 1998 to 2018 were because an adult forgot about a child, according to [NoHeatstroke.org](#). Among the trends the group discovered in these incidents:

- About 44% of the time, the caregiver meant to drop the child off at daycare or preschool.
- The end of the workweek—Thursdays and Fridays—saw the highest number of deaths.

You may be asking yourself: How does this happen? [Families who lost a loved one](#) thought the same thing at one point, but then the tragedy happened to them. Let this be your reminder to keep alert, avoid distractions, and put safeguards in place so your child is never left in the backseat.

Vehicular heatstroke deaths don't just happen when a child is forgotten. The second leading cause (26%) of such deaths are children getting into unattended vehicles. Get in the habit of always locking your car doors and trunk, year-round. The temperature inside a car can reach 110 degrees, even when the temperature outside is as low as 57 degrees.

Tips for Keeping Kids Out of Cars



While all types of vehicular heatstroke deaths are preventable, the third leading cause of these deaths—knowingly leaving a child—is the most preventable. Never leave a child alone in a parked car, even with the windows rolled down or the air conditioning on. A child's body temperature can rise three to five times faster than an adult's.

If you see a child alone in a vehicle:

- Make sure the child is okay and responsive. If not, call 911 immediately.
- If the child appears to be okay, attempt to locate the parents or have the facility's security or management page the car owner over an intercom system.
- If the child is not responsive and appears to be in distress, attempt to get into the car to assist the child—even if that means breaking a window. Many states have "Good Samaritan" laws that protect people from lawsuits for getting involved to help a person in an emergency.

Remember: Kids and hot cars can be a deadly combination. Don't take the chance. **Always look in the front and back of the vehicle before locking the door and walking away.** Help spread the word on social media, [#HeatstrokeKills](#) [#CheckforBaby](#).

Child Safety