

## **NHTSA Reminds the Public of the Fatal Risk of Hot Cars to Children**

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In recognition of National Heatstroke Prevention Day, and as warmer temperatures set in across the country, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration encourages drivers to always check the back seat when walking away from their vehicle. NHTSA also reminds everyone to stay alert and call 911 if they see a child alone in a hot car.

“Every year, 38 children lose their lives in hot cars, and these are tragedies that can be prevented,” NHTSA Deputy Administrator Sophie Shulman said. “By never leaving a child alone in a car to checking the backseat before getting out of the vehicle, we are asking all Americans to understand the risks posed by hot cars and do their part to keep children safe.”

Soundbites from Deputy Administrator Shulman for social media, broadcast, radio and web use are [available for download](#).

Children can die in hot cars even if it’s not a hot summer day. Hot car deaths can happen in vehicles parked in shaded areas in temperatures as low as 57 degrees, even with the windows cracked. Heat can have devastating effects on a child’s body, as children’s bodies warm five times faster than adult bodies. Injury or death can happen very quickly in a hot car.

A change in routine is often to blame when a parent or caregiver forgets a child in a car.

NHTSA urges everyone to do their part to keep children safe:

- Lock your car when you aren’t using it.
  - Even if you don’t have a child of your own, a child in your neighborhood could get into your unlocked vehicle, with tragic consequences.
- Never leave your child alone in a car, even if you think you’ll only be gone for a minute.
  - Rolling down a window does little to keep a vehicle cool.
  - Heatstroke can happen even on a relatively cool day.
  - The inside of a vehicle can reach dangerous temperatures in as little as 10 minutes.
- When you’re driving with your child, remember to always look before you leave your vehicle to make sure your child has been dropped off at daycare or with a caregiver, not left behind in the car seat.
  - Keep an item in the back seat, like a teddy bear. Put the bear up front with you when your child is in the car seat to serve as a reminder.
  - Or, put your purse or phone in the back seat with the child.
  - Some new vehicles come with backseat reminder technology.
- And if you see a child in distress in a vehicle – ACT. Call 911 immediately and get help.

These deaths are heartbreaking, but they are also preventable. With your help, we can save lives. Remember to check the back seat before walking away and ask yourself, “Where’s baby?”

For more information, visit [NHTSA.gov/Heatstroke](https://www.nhtsa.gov/Heatstroke).

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