



HYPERTHERMIA RISKS FOR CHILDREN

In the United States, an average of 38 children die of Hyperthermia after being left alone in a vehicle. According to the Department of Geosciences at the San Francisco State University, since 1998, there has been a staggering **550** children who have lost their lives, in the United States, after being left in a vehicle. There have been **23** such deaths to date for 2012 and a total of **33** deaths for 2011. Vehicles heat up quickly - even with a window rolled down two inches, if the outside temperature is in the low 80s° Fahrenheit, the temperature inside a vehicle can reach deadly levels in only 10 minutes. Even cool temperatures in the 60s can cause the temperature to rise well above 110° Fahrenheit inside your car. The inside temperature can rise almost 20 degrees within the first 10 minutes. Children's bodies overheat easily, with infants and children under four years of age are among those at greatest risk for heat-related illness. Children's bodies absorb more heat on a hot day than an adult and children are less able to lower their body heat by sweating. When a body cannot sweat enough, the body temperature rises rapidly. In fact, [Safe Kids USA](#) indicates, when left in a hot vehicle, a young child's body temperature may increase three to five times as fast as an adult. High body temperatures can cause permanent injury or even death.

Never leave infants or children in a parked vehicle, even if the windows are partially open. If you see a child alone in a hot vehicle, call 911 or your local emergency number immediately. If the child is in distress due to heat, get him/her out as quickly as possible and cool the child rapidly.

Symptoms of heatstroke: Warning signs vary but may include: red, hot, and moist or dry skin, no sweating, a strong rapid pulse or a slow weak pulse, a throbbing headache, dizziness, nausea, confusion, being grouchy, or acting strangely.

Prevention Tips: Never leave a child alone in a vehicle. Check to make sure all children exit the vehicle when you reach your destination. Lock the doors when your vehicle is parked. Teach children that cars are not places to play. Give yourself a reminder by placing your purse, briefcase or other important items in the backseat next to your child's car seat to help you remember to look in the back before leaving the car. Set a reminder on your cell phone or other mobile device to remind you to drop off children at school or daycare when routines change. Make an agreement with your child's school or daycare that you will be notified if your child is not dropped off at the normal time. Check vehicles and trunks first if a child goes missing.