



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Department of Public Health

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Health Department Reminds Parents, Caregivers Not To Leave Children Alone Inside Vehicles

FAYETTEVILLE – The Cumberland County Department of Public Health, in conjunction with Safe Kids Coalition, is reminding parents to never leave their children in the car, not even for a minute. Leaving a child in a car can cause death by heatstroke, especially during the summer months.

Heatstroke, also known as hyperthermia, is the leading cause of non-crash, vehicle-related deaths for children. It occurs when the body isn't able to cool itself quickly enough and the body temperature rises to dangerous levels.

The following tips and information are intended to illustrate the danger of leaving children in a hot car:

- Young children are particularly at risk because their bodies heat up to three to five times faster than an adult.
- When a child's internal temperature gets to 104 degrees, major organs begin to shut down. And when a child's temperature reaches 107 degrees, the child can die.
- Cars can heat up so quickly – 19 degrees in 10 minutes – tragedies can happen faster than you think.
- Symptoms can quickly progress from flushed, dry skin and vomiting to seizures, organ failure and death.
- Keep your car locked when it is unoccupied so that children can't get inside.
- Create reminders by putting something on the backseat of your car next to your child, such as a briefcase, a purse or a cell phone that is needed at your final destination. This is especially important if you are not following your normal routine.
- Take action. If you see a child alone in a car, call 911. Emergency personnel are trained to respond to these situations. One call could save a life.

Cumberland County Department of Public Health is lead agency for Safe Kids Cumberland County, a member of Safe Kids Worldwide. Safe Kids, works to prevented unintended childhood injury, the leading cause of death and disability to children.

For more information or tips, call Kassie Howard, Public Health Educator, at 910-433-3858.

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