233rd Safety Gram

Don't leave children unattended in cars

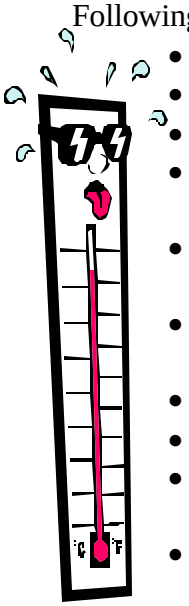
More than 110 children died in unattended cars in 2002

Some children were left in cars by their parents, while others climbed into the family's unlocked vehicle and could not get out.

When the thermometer reads 93 degrees, the temperature inside a closed car – even with the window cracked – can reach *125 degrees in just 20 minutes*. In very hot weather, trapped children can suffer heat stoke, which may lead to permanent disability or death in a matter of minutes.

In a recent survey, 10 percent of parents report that it's acceptable for young children to be left unattached in a car and one-fifth of parents between the ages of 18 and 24 say that it's OK to leave children alone in a vehicle. The survey also found that only half of parents always lock their cars at home. Unlocked cars, and especially open car trunks, pose serious risk to young children.

Following these tips will help to prevent heat-related injuries:



- Keep cars locked at all times, even in the garage or driveway.
- Teach children not to play in or around cars.
- Never leave your child in an unattended car, even with the window down.
- If your child gets locked inside a car and is exhibiting heat-related symptoms, get him out and seek medical attention immediately.
- Use a light-colored covering to shade the seat while your car is parked. Consider using windshield shades in front and back windows.
- Keep the trunk of your car closed, especially when parked in the driveway or near your house. Children often think trunks are great for "Hide & Seek".
- Keep rear folding seats closed to prevent children from getting into the trunk.
- Store car keys out of children's sight and reach.
- Be wary of child-resistant locks. Teach older children how to disable the driver's door locks if they unintentionally become trapped.
- Contact your auto dealership to get your vehicle retrofitted with an internal trunk-release mechanism.

Source: **(Advocates for Traffic Safety group "Kids in Cars" program)**

A "Heat Injury Prevention" Safety Tip from your BSB Safety Office

YOUR COMMUNITY CONNECTION TO SAFETY

SAFETY live with it