

## Jackson County Department of Public Health

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### PREVENT SUMMERTIME TRAGEDIES; NEVER LEAVE CHILDREN ALONE IN HOT CARS

As the weekend temperatures climb, Safe Kids Jackson County is reminding people of the dangers of leaving children unattended in hot cars, even for just a few minutes.

According to Safe Kids Worldwide, across the United States, more than 740 children have died since 1998 because they were trapped in a hot car. That's nearly 40 deaths per year that could have been prevented—if only some precautionary steps had been taken.

"It's never a good idea to leave children unattended in cars, especially as weather warms up," says Health Services Manager Anna Lippard, "One child's death is one too many, so I am asking all parents and caregivers to take a few simple steps to prevent an avoidable tragedy."

Children are at a greater risk for heatstroke than adults because their body heats up three to five times faster. According to Safe Kids Worldwide, when the body's temperature reaches 104 degrees, a child's internal organs start to shut down. When it reaches 107 degrees, the child can die. On an 80-degree day, the inside of a closed car can quickly exceed 100 degrees. Unfortunately, cracking a window does not keep the inside of a car cool.

To raise awareness about the dangers of heatstroke, Safe Kids Jackson County wants everyone to ACT:

- A: Avoid heatstroke-related injury and death by never leaving a child alone in a car, not even for a minute. Remember to keep your car locked when you're not in it so kids can't get in on their own.
- C: Create reminders so you don't mistakenly leave your child in the back by putting something with them that you'll need at your final destination such as a briefcase, purse, or a cell phone.
- T: Take action. If you see a child alone in a car, call 911. Emergency responders want you to call. They are trained to respond in situations such as this. One call could save a life.

For more information, call Anna Lippard at 828-587-8225.

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