

Jackson County Department of Public Health

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LOOK BEFORE YOU LOCK: SAFE KIDS JACKSON COUNTY REMINDS CAREGIVERS ABOUT THE DANGERS OF HOT CARS

As temperatures soar during July, Safe Kids Jackson County reminds people of the dangers of leaving children unattended in hot cars, even for a just a few minutes.

“Don’t forget to ‘look before you lock,’” said Anna Lippard, Safe Kids Coordinator. “The dangers of heatstroke are very real, especially in young children. Taking that one extra second to look in the backseat could save a child’s life.”

2018 was the worst year on record for child vehicular heatstroke deaths with 52 children dying, including one in North Carolina when a 7-month-old boy in Raleigh was left in the car for at least two hours. 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.

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 reached 104 degrees, a child’s internal organs start to shut down. When it reached 107 degrees, the child can die. On an 80-degree day, the inside of a closed car can quickly exceed 100 degrees and cracking a window does not help keep the inside of a car cool.

Safe Kids Jackson County is raising awareness about the dangers of heatstroke and asks parents and caregivers 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 cell phone.
- T: Take action. If you see a child alone in a car, call 911. Emergency personnel want you to call. They are trained to respond in these situations.

Safe Kids Jackson County will set up the Hot Car Display on August 3, 2019 at 9 AM at Bridge Park in Sylva during the Big Latch On. The Display will also be set up on August 6, 2019 at 4 PM at Bridge Park in Sylva during the Night Out with the Sylva Police.

For more information about Safe Kids Jackson County or about the events listed above, call Anna Lippard at 828-587-8225.

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