

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – SHERIFF'S OFFICE WARNS ABOUT THE DANGER OF HEATSTROKE

[Lancaster, Ohio, June 6, 2014] Heatstroke is the number one killer of children, outside of car crashes. That's why the Fairfield County Sheriff's Office has joined with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to attempt to reduce these deaths by reminding parents and caregivers about the dangers of heatstroke and leaving children in hot cars. Last year 44 children lost their lives nationwide.

"As outside temperatures rise, the risks of children dying from being left alone inside a hot vehicle also rises," said Sheriff Phalen. "One child dies from heatstroke nearly every 10 days from being left in a hot vehicle, but what is most tragic is that the majority of these deaths could have been prevented."

The Fairfield County Sheriff's Office urges all parents and caregivers to do these three things:

1. NEVER leave a child in a vehicle unattended;
2. Make it a habit to look in the backseat EVERY time you exit the car;
3. ALWAYS lock the car and put the keys out of reach. And, if you ever see a child left alone in a hot vehicle, call 911 right away.

Know the warning signs of heatstroke, which include: red, hot, and moist or dry skin; no sweating; a strong rapid pulse or a slow weak pulse; nausea; confusion; or acting strangely. If a child exhibits any of these signs after being in a hot vehicle, cool the child rapidly by spraying them with cool water or with a garden hose, NEVER an ice bath. Call 911 or your local emergency number immediately.

Children's body temperatures can rise up to five times faster than that of an adult, and heatstroke can occur in temperatures as low as 57 degrees. On an 80-degree day, a car can reach deadly levels in just 10 minutes.

"More than half of all vehicle-related heatstroke deaths in children are caused by a child accidentally being left in the car, and 29 percent are from a child getting into a hot car on their own," said Sheriff Phalen. "We want to get the word out to parents and caregivers, please look before you lock."