



PARK. LOOK. LOCK.

HEATSTROKE PREVENTION NEWSLETTER

JUNE 17, 2020

Thank you for joining [Safe Kids Worldwide](#), [KidsAndCars.org](#), [noheatstroke.org](#) and the [National Safety Council](#) in our mission to prevent hot car deaths.

This month's newsletter is focused on the potential danger when families have a change in their normal routines. As states reopen, parents head back to work, and summer break is upon us, parents and caregivers will naturally change their routines to accommodate new schedules. Historically, more than half of reported heatstroke deaths occur when a child is unknowingly left in a car. A 10-month-old girl in Florida recently died this way. As you'll read in this newsletter, creating reminders when transporting children, could save a life.

We also recently learned about 3- and 4-year-old siblings who tragically died after getting into a truck on their own, but they couldn't get out. Please review our [May Newsletter](#) for more information, which focuses on the dangers of children gaining access to vehicles.

Let's keep working together to prevent another tragedy. Please share this newsletter with others in your network and encourage them to [subscribe today](#).

TAKE ACTION: NATIONAL DAYS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Please schedule today and help amplify the message.

Sample Posts and Images

Heatstroke deaths can happen to anyone. As states reopen and your schedule changes, create reminders by placing your phone, briefcase or purse in the backseat when traveling with your child. These types of reminders could save a life. #CheckForBaby #HeatstrokeKills <https://www.safekids.org/heatstroke>

Going to the store? Remember to call ahead to make sure they allow children. It's not safe to leave a young child alone in a car, even on a quick errand. #CheckForBaby #HeatstrokeKills <https://bit.ly/37qEXyM>

Take action to prevent #heatstroke. If you see a young child alone in a car, call 911. Emergency personnel are trained to respond to these situations. One call can save a child's life. #CheckForBaby #HeatstrokeKills

3- and 4-year-old siblings died on June 13 in a hot vehicle because they got in on their own but couldn't get out. Help prevent these tragedies by keeping car doors and trunks locked and key fobs out of reach. #CheckForBaby #HeatstrokeKills <https://bit.ly/2YEeLNj>

Submitted by [Safe Kids Worldwide](#)

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TRENDS

Should it take a pandemic to lower the number of Pediatric Vehicular Heatstroke (PVH) deaths in the United States? Of course not. But under this extreme case of the "law of unintended consequences" that is exactly what is happening.

During an average year, there are nine PVH deaths across the U.S. by June 14. This year, there have been four deaths, which is the lowest total for that period of time going back to 1998. Three of these deaths involved young children who gained access to a vehicle on their own and another was a 10-month-old girl who was forgotten by a caregiver.

As we get into the warmer months, the frequency of PVH deaths increases. Between Memorial Day and Labor Day, about a 14-week period, there are an average of 28 PVH tragedies, 72% of the annual average. That's two deaths of an infant or small child every week!

During this pandemic, parents and caregivers may think that it is safer to leave a child inside a vehicle as opposed to taking them to an area where there is a risk of infection. It's not! Beside the risk of heatstroke, each year children (and others) are hurt and injured from putting a car into gear, strangled by a power window or kidnapped because the car they were in was stolen. The bottom line is there is no safe amount of time to leave a child unattended in a vehicle.

Submitted by noheatstroke.org

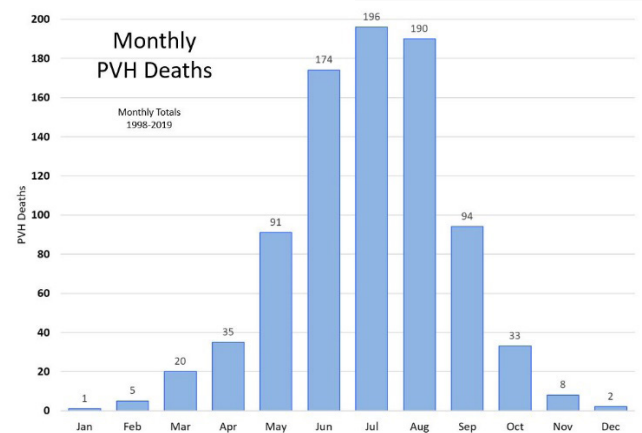
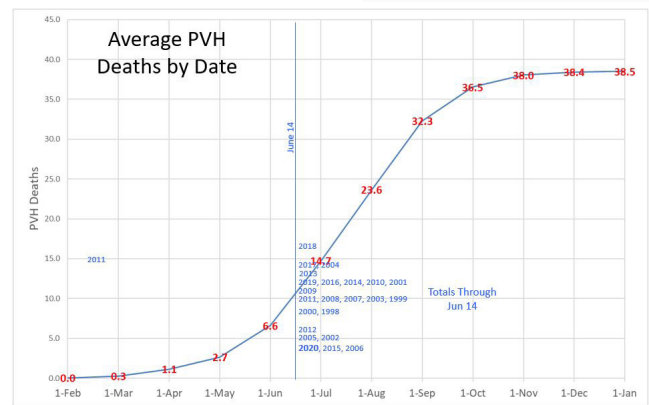
RESOURCES

As cities and states across America begin to open up and COVID-19 restrictions are loosened, moms and dads are returning to work. Children are returning to childcare and daycare centers. Parents and caregivers are advised to be especially careful while transporting children.

Parents and caregivers are urged to use extra caution during this transitional time period. According to KidsAndCars.org, a change in routine is the No. 1 reason children are unknowingly left in vehicles.

For many, these are times of increased stress and constantly changing routines, two factors commonly linked to hot car deaths. Children are more vulnerable to heatstroke than adults. But children dying in hot cars? Few parents give this notion much thought. Even if they do, they quickly dismiss this danger because they are of the mindset, "Not going to happen. Not to me. Not to my kids."

They cannot imagine their children will become statistics of what always is a painful tragedy. They don't believe their children could be forgotten, or unknowingly left, in vehicles.



Sadly, many parents who have experienced losing a child to vehicular heatstroke are among those of the “not me” mindset. Research tells us when children are unknowingly left in vehicles, parents and caregivers are often operating outside of their regular routines, under increased stress, and/or sleep-deprived.

Because the new normal can be so much different than the old normal, parents and caregivers are urged to take extra precautions:

- Always “Look Before You Lock” by opening the back door and checking the back seat before locking vehicle doors and walking away
- Create reminders for yourself: Leave a bag or your cellphone in the back seat
- Call 911 if you see a child left alone in a vehicle
- In addition, all workplace employees and visitors are asked to be on the lookout for children left unattended in vehicles upon entering places of business. According to KidsAndCars.org, 41% of hot car deaths happen in some type of parking lot, with 6% of incidents occurring in the parking lot of a childcare facility.

KidsAndCars.org, one of the partner organizations featured on cpsboard.org/heatstroke, has a multitude of resources parents and caregivers can use to share information and educate others in an effort to prevent further hot car deaths. KidsAndCars.org offers fact sheets, education cards, [downloadable charts, graphics, statistics](#), PSAs and more. In addition to [English](#), some resources are also available in [Spanish](#), [Mandarin Chinese](#) and [Arabic](#). Information is also available about [what to do](#) if you see a child or pet alone in a vehicle.

Visit cpsboard.org/heatstroke to find resources from KidsAndCars.org and other organizations committed to ending hot car deaths.

Submitted by the [National Safety Council](#)



FAMILY STORY

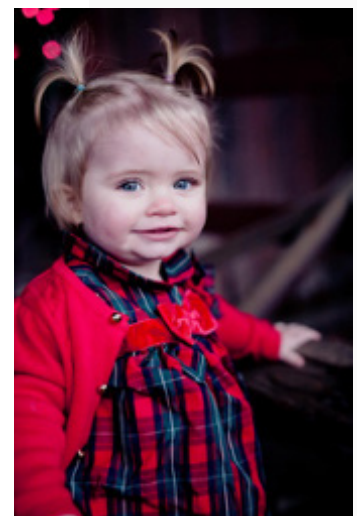
A simple change in routine can have fatal consequences.

Remi Engler’s Story

Written by: Nicole Engler, Remi’s Mommy

On June 21, 2018, I lost my beautiful, spunky daughter, Remi. In the weeks prior to her passing, she had been sick and not going to daycare. Remi’s father usually took her to daycare, but had fallen asleep after a night shift in the ER. So, I decided to take her. Exhausted from a sleepless night with a sick baby and running late, I drove straight to work on auto-pilot like I do on any given day, losing awareness that Remi was asleep in her rear-facing car seat.

I talked about Remi to coworkers all day. I spent my time in between patients shopping for a picnic table, sandbox and outdoor umbrella for her new play yard. I remember someone asking if I planned to have more children. “How could I improve on the one I have now?” was my reply.



It wasn't until the end of my shift as a family nurse practitioner that I realized I never dropped Remi off. Remi died that day from heatstroke in the back seat of my car. She was only 21 months old.

There were numerous aspects of that morning that were not normal. Perhaps had one of them not happened, I would not be writing this today. A simple change of routine under the right set of circumstances can have devastating, fatal consequences, even for the best of parents.

I was a loving, responsible and educated mother. I baby-proofed my house and yard, spent hours researching car seats and baby food recipes as well as crib mattresses and video monitors. Not once in all my preparation did I pause to think that I could unintentionally leave my child in a car.

If you take anything away from my story, PLEASE don't think this could never happen to you. I truly believed that I was simply not capable of doing such a thing, which meant I never took steps to prevent the worst thing that has ever happened to me.

I will never be the same, but today I am hopeful. I am honoring Remi by fighting for technology that can detect the presence of a child to be standard equipment in all vehicles. Until that day comes, I would encourage all parents and caregivers to Look Before You Lock. Make it a habit to open the back door and check the back seat every single time you park.

Submitted by KidsAndCars.org

WASH YOUR HANDS, WASH YOUR HANDLES

As the coronavirus crisis continues, we are amazed at the resilience and dedication of our nonprofit partners. During this ever-changing landscape, we want to make sure everyone remembers that vehicles should also be thoroughly sanitized to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

