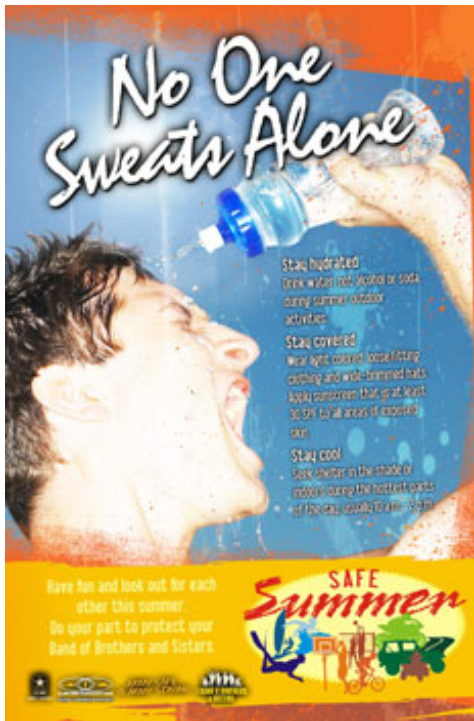


Auto heat injury prevention

IMCOM release

Auto heat injury prevention



June 2, 2009 -- We all have daily routines that help keep us on track. Be extra careful, though, if you have to change any part of that routine. This is more likely to happen when you, your spouse, or other caregiver who helps with your children, forgets that a child is in the back seat. This can and does happen when routines are changed or modified. At other times, you are on your way home and realize you need to stop in at the store and pick up one or two things for dinner. So, you leave your child unattended, thinking, "I'll just run into the store for a minute." Even cool temperatures in the 60s can cause the temperature to rise well above 110° Fahrenheit inside your car. These elevated temperatures can be dangerous to children, pets, or other passengers.

A car's windows act like a greenhouse, trapping sunlight and heat. A May 2004 report by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration indicated that approximately twenty-five children a year die as a result of being left or becoming trapped in hot vehicles. "Cars parked in direct sunlight can reach internal temperatures up to 131° F - 172° F when outside temperatures are 80° F – 100° F." When the outside temperature is 83° F, even with the window rolled down 2 inches, the temperature inside the car can reach 109° F in only 15 minutes. "Within the first 10 minutes the temperature in an enclosed vehicle will rise an average of 19 degrees or 82 percent of its eventual one hour rise." In warm weather, a vehicle can warm to dangerous, life-threatening levels in only 10 minutes.

Safety Tips:

- Teach children not to play in, on or around vehicles.
- Never leave a child unattended in a vehicle, even with the window slightly open.
- Always lock a vehicle's doors and trunk - especially at home. Keep keys and remote entry devices out of children's reach.
- Watch children closely around vehicles, particularly when loading and unloading. Check to ensure all children leave the vehicle when you reach your destination. Don't overlook sleeping

infants.

- Be especially careful if you're dropping off infants or children at day care and that's not part of your normal routine.
- Place something that you'll need at your next stop for example a purse, lunch, gym bag or briefcase on the floor of the backseat where the child is sitting. This simple act could help prevent you from accidentally forgetting a child.
- When you get home, bring your child/infant inside the house first and then carry in the groceries or other items so that you don't get distracted inside the house and forget your little one outside in the car
- Leave pets at home when running errands. They are susceptible to heat injuries too!

Be on alert for cars that might have an unattended child left inside. If you see a child alone in a car, be sure to call 911 immediately and help make sure the child gets out as soon as possible.

Working together, we can keep children safe and summer fun for everyone across the Northeast Region.

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