



where's baby?
Look before you lock.

Courtesy of U.S Dept. of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children and Families, Office of Child Care

As temperatures across the country continue to escalate above average highs, it is more important than ever to understand the health effects for children. Infants and young children are particularly sensitive to the effects of extreme heat and must rely on others to keep them safe. When left in a hot vehicle, a young child's body temperature can increase three to five times as quickly as an adult's.

On average, every 10 days a child dies from heatstroke in a vehicle (<http://www.safekids.org/heatstroke>). These deaths are **preventable**, and everyone in the community, especially Head Start and child care providers, has a role to play in protecting our children.

Here are a few simple things you can do:

- ☑ Make it part of your everyday routine to account for all children in your care. Set up backup systems to check and double-check that no child is left in the vehicle. Never leave a child unattended in a vehicle—even if the windows are partially open or the engine is running with the air conditioning on. Vehicles heat up quickly; if the outside temperature is in the low 80s, the temperature inside a vehicle can reach deadly levels in only 10 minutes, even with a window rolled down 2 inches.
- ☑ Always make a habit of looking in the vehicle—front and back—before locking the door and walking away.
- ☑ Get in touch with designated family members if a child who is regularly in your care does not arrive as expected.
- ☑ Use the child safety alarm if available, or create reminders to ensure that no child is accidentally left behind in the vehicle. Place an item that is needed at your final destination in the back of the vehicle next to the child or place a stuffed animal in the driver's view to indicate that a child is in the car seat.
- ☑ Call 911 or your local emergency number immediately if you see a child alone in a hot vehicle. If he or she is in distress due to heat, get the child out as soon as possible and cool him or her down rapidly.

Take [Ray Ray's voluntary pledge](#) for providers and parents to make a commitment to working together to keep children safe.