



News Release

Contact: Anne Biswell
(816) 283-6242 ext. 226

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 7, 2012

SAFE KIDS METRO KC STATEMENT ON THE DEATH OF LEE'S SUMMIT CHILD

Kansas City, MO- Statement may be attributed to Regina A. Weir, Safe Kids Metro KC Coordinator, a program of Mother & Child Health Coalition, www.mchc.net.

We join the community in mourning the loss of the child who died of hyperthermia last Thursday in Lee's Summit. Our hearts go out to the family suffering in the wake of this tragic loss.

Here's what parents and caregivers need to know about hyperthermia/child heat stroke and why:

- **Never leave a child in a car even for a few minutes.** The consequences if you wait too long can be too great.
- **Take Immediate Action.** The body temperature of children rises 3 - 5 times faster than adults, and as a result, children are much more vulnerable to heat stroke.
- **Dial 911 Immediately** if you see an unattended child in a car. EMS professionals are trained to determine if a child is in trouble. Check vehicles and trunks **FIRST** if a child is missing.
- **Lock Vehicles and Trunks.** Thirty percent of the recorded heat stroke deaths in the U.S. occur because a child was playing in an unattended vehicle. These deaths can be prevented by simply locking the vehicles to assure that kids don't enter and become trapped.
- **Create Reminders.** Many child heat stroke deaths occur because parents and caregivers become distracted and exit their vehicle without their child. To help prevent these tragedies parents can:
 - Place a cell phone, PDA, purse, briefcase, gym bag or something that is needed at your next stop on the floor in front of a child in a backseat. This will help you see your child when you open the rear door and reach for your belongings.
 - Set the alarm on your cell phone/smartphone as a reminder to you to drop your child off at day care. Check out the [Baby Reminder](#) application which automatically monitors and determines when you are driving and when not.
 - Set your computer calendar program to ask, "Did you drop off at daycare today?" Establish a plan with your daycare that if your child fails to arrive within an agreed upon time that you will be called within a few minutes.
 - Be especially mindful of your child if you change your routine for daycare.
- **Get Involved.** Free educational materials are available at www.Safekids.org. Post them at your child care center, place of business, church - let's help each other prevent further tragedies!

Safe Kids **Metro KC** is working to reverse the increasing trend in child heat stroke deaths from being trapped in vehicles. We're participating in a education and awareness program that provides handouts and tip sheets at child care centers, hospitals, police and fire stations.

Since 1991, over 613 children have died from heat stroke while unattended in cars. You can help us spread the word to your community to stop these preventable tragedies. Additional prevention information can be found at <http://www.kidsandcars.org> or at www.safekids.org/nlyca, and statistics on child heat stroke deaths can be found at www.ggweather.com/heat.

Photo and interviews are available upon request.

FACTS ABOUT HYPERTHERMIA

1. Since 1991, over 613 children have died due to heat stroke or hyperthermia while unattended in cars. That is an average of 29 deaths per year.
2. Some fatalities have occurred as early as February and in temperatures as low as 57 degrees F. A vehicle interior warms very quickly in the sunshine.
3. A child's body heats up 3 to 5 times faster than an adult's. That makes them susceptible to heat stroke.
4. Children unattended in cars die in one of three ways:
 1. They are overlooked by a distracted driver when the destination is reached. The driver goes about their regular routine without remembering there is a child in the car.
 2. Children gain access to an unlocked and unattended vehicle or trunk. They are overcome by heat and cannot escape the vehicle.
 3. They are left intentionally by an adult as they tend to an errand or other activity.
5. Drivers are encouraged to leave something they will need at their final destination in the back seat to require them to open the back door to retrieve it and see child occupants. That could be a briefcase, purse or cell phone.
6. Many children are forgotten when a change in routine occurs and someone not used to transporting the child is the driver. Drivers are encouraged to place a reminder on their telephone or calendar to remind them to check for the child.
7. Meteorologists project that warm weather months will increase in duration and intensity due to climate changes.

Photo and interviews are available upon request.

6400 Prospect Ave., Suite 216 Kansas City MO 64132 (816) 283-MCHC (6242) info@mchc.net

www.mchc.net

###