

ECELS EMAIL ALERT – Danger: Children Left in Hot Cars

ECELS joins the PA Secretary of Human Services in warning about the danger of leaving children unattended in cars. It is both risky and illegal, as the Secretary states in the message below: 'In Pennsylvania it is a summary offense to leave a child under the age of six unattended in a vehicle that is out of the adult's sight under the Leaving an Unattended Child in a Motor Vehicle law. Additionally, leaving a child in a hot car can rise to the level of endangering the welfare of a child, which is a misdemeanor of the first degree. Anyone who sees a child unattended in a car should call 911 immediately and stay with the vehicle.'

ECELS
PA Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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State Departments Urge Vigilance to Prevent Harming Children in Hot Vehicles

Leaving children in cars is dangerous and illegal

Harrisburg, PA – The departments of Human Services (DHS) and Health today reminded Pennsylvanians to never leave children alone in cars, which could prove deadly after only a few minutes.

“Every year children die in cars, but these tragedies are preventable,” said DHS Acting Secretary Ted Dallas. “While it may be tempting for some busy parents to leave children unattended in the car for just a few minutes while running errands, it is extremely dangerous to do so.”;

It's never safe to leave children alone in a car, but especially in summer and winter. Heatstroke is one of the leading causes of death among children. In 10 minutes, a car's temperature can rise more than 20 degrees, according to The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Even at an outside temperature of 60 degrees, the temperature inside a car can reach 110 degrees, causing severe injury or death to a child.

“There is no ‘safe’ amount of time to leave a child unattended in a car,” said Secretary of Health Dr. Karen Murphy. “Children are at a higher risk for heat stroke than adults. Even minutes can mean the difference between life or death.”;

Follow these important rules to protect children from heatstroke:

- Always check the back seats of a vehicle before locking it or walking away.
- Keep a stuffed animal in a child's car seat when it's empty, and move the toy to the front seat as a reminder when a child is in the back seat.
- If someone else is driving a child or daily routines have been altered, always check to make sure a child has arrived safely.

