



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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HOT CARS – NO PLACE FOR KIDS!

Boise, ID (July 2, 2007) – Boise Police are teaming with physicians from St. Luke's Hospital to remind parents and caregivers of the dangers of leaving children in hot cars. Leaving children unattended in a hot car may not only result in tragedy, it may be criminal.

Boise Police will respond Code 3 (lights and sirens) to a call of a child left in a vehicle because of the possibility of injury to the child. Typically, Boise Police respond to about ten calls such calls each summer. One case in Boise in 2003 was fatal for the child. Charges of Felony Injury to a Child may be filed against anyone who leaves a child in a car and the child is injured. Misdemeanor Injury to a Child charges may result if the child is left in a vehicle but not hurt.

In the past two weeks, Boise Police have responded to two calls of children accidentally locked inside a hot car. Both were cases involving the parents or caregiver and both called 9-1-1 immediately. In one case last Friday, a two year old was already showing signs of distress when officers arrived. The officer broke out a window of the car to get access to the child.

"We're concerned with preventing any type of injury to a child," said Det. Matt Brechwald with the Boise Police Special Victim's Unit, a group of detectives who specialize, in part, in investigating child abuse. "Children left in a hot car even for a short period of time can suffer, and parents or caregivers need to remember kids are especially vulnerable."

"Most of these cases are accidental," said Dr. Mike Ross, an emergency room specialist at St. Luke's. "Parents should be aware that a child's core body temperature can increase three to five times faster than that of an adult. That increase in temperature can cause permanent brain or neurological injury, or even death in a very short time."

During a media briefing today at St. Luke's Regional Medical Center in Boise, Det. Brechwald demonstrated an infrared laser thermometer, carried by Boise Police Crime Scene Investigators. The thermometer read a temperature of 112 - 115 degrees inside a vehicle that had been parked approx. 30 minutes with temperatures near 80 degrees.

Tips for Protecting Your Family

Heat

- Never leave your child in an unattended car, even with the windows down.
- Check to make sure all children leave the vehicle when you reach your destination, particularly when loading and unloading.
- Don't overlook sleeping infants.
- Make sure you check the temperature of the child safety seat surface and safety belt buckles before restraining your children in the car.
- Use a light covering to shade the seat of your parked car.
- Consider using windshield shades in front and back windows.

Other helpful car safety tips

- Teach children not to play in or around cars.
- Keep car keys out of reach and sight.
- Always lock car doors and trunks, especially when parked in the driveway or near the home.
- Keep the rear fold-down seats closed to help prevent kids from getting into the trunk from inside the car.
- Be wary of child-resistant locks. Teach older children how to disable the driver's door locks if they unintentionally become entrapped in a motor vehicle.
- Contact your automobile dealership about getting your vehicle retrofitted with a trunk release mechanism.
- If your child gets locked inside a car, get him out and dial 9-1-1 or your local emergency number immediately

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