

# JBM-HH *Safety Gram*

## *Leading on the Edge for Safety Excellence*

10-20

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### **Keeping Children and Pets Safe In Vehicles During Summer Heat**

Summer heat is much more dangerous to children than it is to adults. 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. {From 1999 through 2000 more than 130 children – most of them ages 3 and younger died from heat stroke after being left & trapped in a vehicle.}

Cars that are parked in direct sunlight can reach internal temperatures up to 131° F - 172° F when outside temperatures are 80° F – 100° F. Even with the window rolled down 2 inches, the temperature inside a car can reach 109° F very quickly. When temperatures are as mild as 60 degrees Fahrenheit, an enclosed vehicle can heat up to dangerous, life-threatening levels in only 10 minutes. Children [and pets] left in this environment can face serious injury or even death.

Because heat affects children more quickly and severely than adults, they are especially vulnerable. When left in a hot vehicle a young child's core body temperature can increase three to five times faster than that of an adult causing permanent injury and in most cases death. Heat rapidly overwhelms the body's ability to regulate temperature. In a closed environment, the body can go into shock and circulation to vital organs will begin to fail.

The Humane Society says the number of pets that die the same way is far greater. Remember many pets keep their winter coats on all year and the enclosed vehicle heat makes them feel the heat even more; and they too can go into shock & organ failure.

**Never Leave Your Children & Pets Unattended In A Vehicle –  
Not Even For A Minute!**



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