In the Fall of 2001 the Governor of California signed into law Senate Bill 255, also known as Kaitlyn’s Law. Named for Kaitlyn Russell, a six-month old who died after being left alone in a parked car for more than two hours, the law makes it illegal for a child to be left unattended in a motor vehicle.

What to do?

Never leave a child in a vehicle that is running or with a key in the ignition.

Keep car keys away from children.

Keep fold-down seats closed to prevent children from getting into the trunk.

Teach your children to not play in or around cars.

Check to make sure all children leave the vehicle particularly when loading and unloading.

Place a reminder, such as a diaper bag next to your briefcase.

In accordance with Kaitlyn’s Law, 70% of the proceeds from fines are used for the development and implementation of community education programs on the dangers of leaving children unattended in motor vehicles.

Dangers to children left unattended in cars include:

- Heat stroke (hyperthermia);
- Carbon monoxide poisoning;
- Runaway vehicles;
- Carjacking;
- Child abduction;
- Trunk entrapment;
- Self-release from car seat;
- Emotional trauma.

Between 1996 and 2002, 175+ children died of hyperthermia after being trapped in a motor vehicle. At least 19+ died this year in the United States. 1/3 were the result of children crawling into unlocked cars.

90%+ of age 3 and under children's body temperature rises 3 to 5 times faster than adults.

In the United States, at least 19+ children died this year from hyperthermia. Between 1996 and 2002, 175+ children died of hyperthermia after being trapped in a motor vehicle.

The U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the National SAFE KIDS Campaign recommend following these safety rules to avoid heat-related injuries or other vehicle dangers:

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The Orange County Fire Authority encourages all parents to follow these safety rules to avoid heat-related injuries or other vehicle dangers:

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