



Kaitlyn's Law

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Did you know that it is illegal to leave a child under the age of six alone in a vehicle? State law mandates that any child left in a vehicle must have supervision from a person who is 12 years of age or older. Unfortunately, millions of children are left unsupervised in or around vehicles each year, and the results are often tragic. More than 282 incidents nationwide have been recorded in 2006 alone, resulting in 58 fatalities to children under the age of 16.

What is Kaitlyn's Law?

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 by a babysitter 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. **California Vehicle Code 15620** states a parent, legal guardian or other person responsible for a child who is 6 years of age or younger may not leave that child inside a motor vehicle without being subject to the supervision of a person who is 12 years of age or older, under either of the following circumstances:

- Where there are conditions that present a significant risk to the child's health or safety.
- When the vehicle's engine is running or the vehicle's keys are in the ignition, or both.

Dangers to children left unattended in cars include:

- Heat Stroke
- Hypothermia
- Carbon Monoxide Poisoning
- Body Parts Crushed by Power Windows and Sunroofs
- Trunk Entrapment
- Abduction or Carjacking
- Runaway Vehicles
- Car Crashes
- Burns or Fires From Cigarette Lighter

2006 Nationwide Statistics

There have been 282 incidents, involving 348 children, resulting in 58 fatalities

Fatalities by Type:

Back-overs – 27

Car Fires – 2

Hyperthermia – 13

Other – Strangulation – 1

Power Equipment – 1

Seat Belt Entanglement – 1

Struck by Vehicle – 7

Vehicle in Motion – 6

Safety Tips to Help Keep Children Safe:

- **Never** leave a child in a vehicle with the motor running or the key in the ignition.
- Check to make sure all children leave the vehicle when you reach your destination. Don't overlook sleeping children or infants.
- Keep a stuffed animal in your child's carseat when it's empty. When your child is in the car, place the stuffed animal on the front seat next to you as a visual reminder. As an alternative, place a reminder of your child's presence where you'll be sure to see it before leaving the vehicle.
- When running errands with children, remain together in the car by utilizing businesses with drive-through services. Check the yellow pages or the Internet for a list of businesses in your area with drive-through or curbside service.
- Use your debit or credit card at the gas pump instead of paying inside.
- Ask grocery store clerks to load your bags into your vehicle and return the cart instead of leaving a child alone, even for an instant.
- Always lock your car, even in the garage or driveway. If a child is missing, immediately check the car including the trunk.
- Never leave keys within the reach of children.
- Teach children never to play in, on or around cars.
- Make it a habit to "look before you leave" before exiting any vehicle.
- Never let children ride or play in the cargo area, trunk or bed of any vehicle.
- If a child is locked inside a vehicle, get him or her out as quickly as possible. Call 9-1-1 for assistance if necessary. If the child appears hot or sick, call 9-1-1 immediately.



Kaitlyn Russell

For More Information

www.4rkidssake.org
www.safekids.org
www.aap.org
www.kidsincars.org
www.kidsandcars.org

On a warm day, the temperature inside a parked car can reach as high as 140° in as little as two hours.

2002 Vehicle Heat Study

Time elapsed and temperature rise:

10 Minutes - 19°
20 Minutes - 29°
30 Minutes - 34°
60 Minutes - 43°
1 to 2 hours - 50°