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SAFE KIDS IN THE NEWS

Wendi C. Thomas: Pooling Efforts at Summer of Safety (The Commercial Appeal, Tennessee) | [TOP](#)

May 20 / Wendi C. Thomas

The idea was sparked by a desperate 911 call broadcast on the local TV news last month.

A toddler had fallen into the family's backyard pool, and the mother was frantic.

"Help me, I don't know how to do CPR!" the mother said again and again, remembers Susan Helms, director of injury prevention and Safe Kids Mid-South at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital.

The toddler survived, but if Helms and the water safety organization Make A Splash Mid-South have their way, by Saturday afternoon 300 fewer people will ever have to make such a desperate declaration.

On Saturday at Christ Methodist Church on Poplar, Le Bonheur and Make A Splash will offer free CPR training.

The one-hour sessions will be at 9 and 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Each of the three sessions can accommodate 100 participants.

Certified CPR instructors from agencies including the University of Tennessee College of Pharmacy, Methodist Healthcare and Memphis and Bartlett fire departments will lead the training.

"It just takes a matter of a few seconds for a toddler to escape the eyes of parents and get into mischief," Helms said.

On the same weekend that the toddler got into the pool, another child nearly drowned at a hotel pool -- and might have died, if not for the help of a New Orleans nurse who happened to be at the pool and knew CPR, Helms said.

"We would prefer not to have these accidents happening in the first place, but if the accidents happen, we want family and friends to be prepared," Helms said.

Each year, according to Safe Kids USA, 3,600 injuries happen to children because of a near-drowning incident.





Each year, 830 children ages 14 and under drown.

Between May and August, drowning deaths among children increase 89 percent over the rest of the year.

The goal is to reduce, if not eliminate, the number of children who show up at Le Bonheur after a near-drowning at a private or public pool.

Make A Splash was born in response to the pool drowning deaths of two children on the opening day for public pools in the summer of 2008.

Since then, Make A Splash has taught dozens of children to swim, and in the process, exposed kids to the competitive sport of swimming.

Since that fatal day in May 2008, there have been no drownings in the city's public pools.

Yet drowning deaths remain a concern. Between 2004 and 2008, 19 drowning deaths and 113 near-drowning cases came into Le Bonheur.

In a city that is predominately black, a University of Memphis study showing that 58 percent of black children can't swim is troubling. No wonder black children drown at a rate triple that of white children.

All children, regardless of color, should learn to swim. And all adults, especially those who supervise children in pools, should know CPR.

There are few things in life that can be prevented, but drowning deaths in pools is one of them.

"As the swimming pools open for the summer, we want to remind parents how important it is to do a few simple things to protect children. The first is to learn CPR. It can truly save a life," Helms said.

"The second is to designate a water watcher. Make sure someone always has their eyes on the children."

And always means always.

Safe Kids USA reports that a study of drownings revealed that a parent or caregiver claimed to be supervising the child in almost nine out of 10 child drownings.

Let's make the summer of 2010 like no other -- a summer in which no child dies in any Mid-South pools.

Contact Wendi C. Thomas at (901) 529-5896 or e-mail thomasw@commercialappeal.com.





Free CPR training

For Saturday's free CPR training, register in advance by e-mailing helms@lebonheur.org or calling (901) 287-5992. Walk-ins are welcome.

Dress comfortably for the training and bring something, like a towel, to kneel on.

<http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2010/may/20/pooling-efforts-at-summer-of-02/>

Summer Swim Season: Collier, Lee Among Top-Ranked in Florida Child Drownings (Naplesnews.com, Florida) | [TOP](#)

May 19 / Aaron Hale

NAPLES — The tragic story is becoming too familiar.

A toddler escapes the supervision of a parent or guardian for a moment and, before anyone even realizes, that child is at the bottom of a pool or lake.

The latest version of that parental nightmare happened Saturday, May 8, in Immokalee, when 2-year-old Branden Luna wandered away from his home during a backyard cookout.


Hours later, he was found in a retention lake where he had drowned just yards away from his home.

"This is a preventable situation," said Cherie Wilson-Watson, a spokeswoman for Collier Emergency Medical Services.

Through a local chapter of the national organization Safe Kids USA, Watson and other representatives from local health, safety and child-care agencies are working to educate families and homeowner associations on the serious risk of children drowning and ways to avoid that danger.

In a report, the organization called drowning "the silent killer" because there is usually no cry for help and little sound from splashing.

Branden's death was just the latest of several drowning deaths in recent years on top of dozens of near-drownings in Collier and Lee counties. Both counties rank among the highest in the state in rates of child drownings, according to Florida Department of Health statistics.





As a state, Florida consistently leads the nation in annual toddler drowning deaths, according to Florida health department injury reports. Those same reports say that drowning is the leading cause of death among children ages 1 to 4 in Florida.

Last year, the NCH Healthcare System in Collier County reported 24 children were treated for near-drowning injuries in their hospitals – three of them died.

But that's not the total. At least one child was transported from Marco Island to a Miami hospital before she died.

Lee Memorial Health Systems reported 35 near-drownings for children and one death.

Most children who drown are younger than 5, said Michele King, child advocate director for Lee Memorial.

The danger with toddlers is that they are mobile enough to reach a water body in many cases, but often unable to swim if they jump or fall in, Wilson-Watson said.

After the accident, the Daily News reported that Branden Luna's neighbors are talking about building a fence around the lake where the child drowned to avoid another tragedy.

Paula DiGrigoli, a health educator for the Collier County Health Department and Safe Kids USA advocate, said that measure may help protect children in that neighborhood – but it's probably not enough.

"There's no one simple solution for preventing drownings," she said.

For one, it's not feasible to simply build fences around every body of water in Collier County, she said.

Instead, parents should be prepared in other ways.

"I want to emphasize what you can do from your own perspective as a family," she said.

She promotes a "layers of protection" system that families should incorporate for water safety.

That starts with adult supervision – but she said sometimes that's not always enough.

DiGrigoli, herself a mother of a 5-year-old and 2-year-old, said she knows it's easy for parents to get distracted from watching their children around water.





Last summer, she was at a pool party with her children. Her daughter, Isabella, 4 at the time, had been wearing the inflatable “floaties” on her arms that day. But Isabella took them off when her mother wasn’t looking. Then she forgot to put them back on before jumping in the pool.

DiGrigoli didn’t see any of this happen, she said, because she was keeping a closer eye on her 2-year-old son.

Fortunately, another man at the party did see it and managed to pull Isabella out of the pool before she was injured _ or worse.

She said she’s has talked to many parents with similar stories.

DiGrigoli and Safe Kids USA promote four layers of protection, which they say will limit the chances of another child drowning:

■ **Supervise**

Parents shouldn’t take their eyes off their children when they are in or around water, DiGrigoli said.

Wilson-Watson recommends alternating an adult water monitor at pool parties. That adult, she said, should act like a lifeguard and keep an eye on the pool at all times.

■ **Use barriers**

Whether fences, self-closing and self-latching gates, pool covers or motion-sensor alarms, all homes with pools should have barriers to keep children from entering the pool area, DiGrigoli said.

A Florida law requires at least one such barrier for pools, but that only applies to homes or pools built after 2000.

If a family with young children lives near a retention lake, DiGrigoli suggests a fence in the yard.

■ **Learn to swim**

After her daughter’s pool scare last summer, DiGrigoli expedited swim lessons for Isabella. This summer, she’s putting her 2-year-old through lessons.





For beginning swimmers, toddlers and infants, Monica Leatherman, branch director at the Naples YMCA, recommends using Coast Guard-approved life vests near water instead of the inflatable arm bands. Bands can pop or be pulled off, she said, whereas life vests have multiple straps for security.

■ Know how to respond

If the situation arises when a child is drowning in a pool, parents or guardians should know how to deal it, Wilson-Watson said.

First, someone should bring the child to safety, preferably by using an object to pull them in rather than jumping in after the child, she said. Next, the child's supervisor should know basic first-aid techniques if it is necessary.

"CPR is the most important thing any parent can learn in their lifetime." Wilson-Watson said.

Florida drowning deaths

2008: 479 total drownings in Florida. Under the age of 5: 48 drowned in a pool, 10 drowned in a natural body of water.

2007: 479 total drownings in Florida. Under the age of 5: 58 drowned in a pool, eight drowned in a natural body of water.

2006: 486 total drownings in Florida. Under the age of 5: 58 drowned in a pool, seven drowned in a natural body of water.

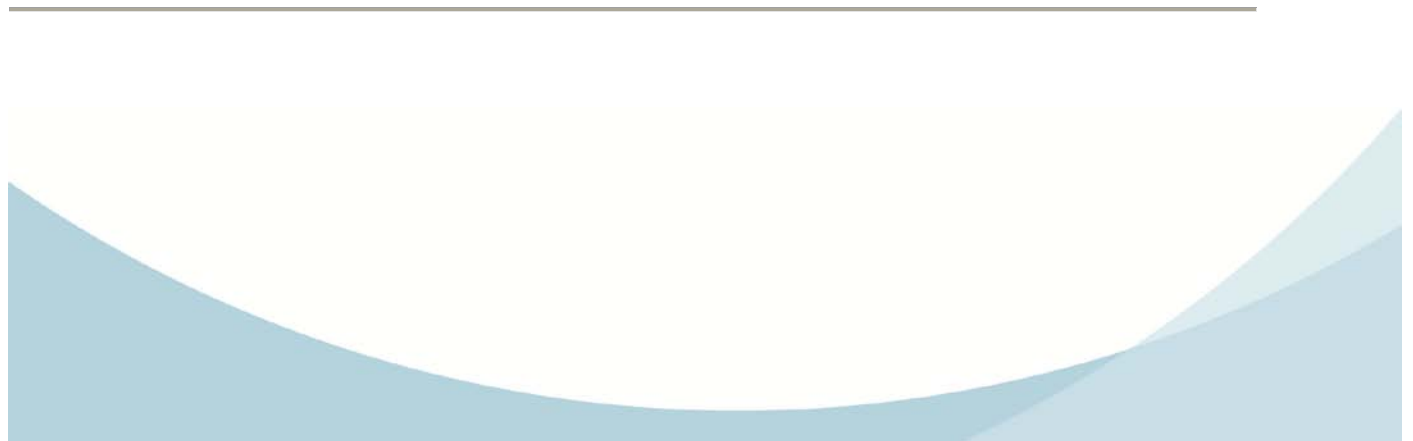
2005: 382 total drownings in Florida. Under the age of 5: 61 drowned in a pool.

2004: 445 total drownings. Under the age of 5: 63 drowned in a pool.

In 2000 when the state's pool barrier law took effect, there were 64 toddler (aged 1-4) drownings.

■ Source: Florida Department of Health

<http://www.naplesnews.com/news/2010/may/19/summer-swim-season-collier-lee-among-top-ranked-fl/>





Soldotna Safety Day Teaches Vital Lessons (Peninsula Clarion, Alaska) [TOP](#)

May 18 / Brielle Schaeffer, Peninsula Clarion

Kenai Peninsula residents learned Saturday how best to be safe rather than sorry at Soldotna Safety Day.

The event, held at Soldotna Creek park and sponsored by Nancy Mitchell and the City of Soldotna, had several informational booths from different agencies informing the public on safety and training related issues.

Mitchell, a State Farm Insurance agent, started Soldotna Safety Day more than a decade ago after seeing dangerous situations firsthand through her job.

"In my particular business I pay out a lot of money for car crashes and people getting injured," she said.

Education and training can sometimes be the best prevention. And safety tidbits were shared all over the park.

"If you don't know the animal, don't touch it and always wash your hands after petting," said Kade Foust, a 4-H club member, offering his advice on animal safety.

"Be fire wise around your home," said Fiona Taylor, fire prevention officer for the Division of Forestry. "You want healthy trees at a good distance from your house."

At Safety Day, a popular stop was Safe Kids Kenai Peninsula's booth selling hundreds children's bicycle helmets for \$5.

"We always need helmets," said Lance Roberts, of Soldotna, while purchasing one for his granddaughter Icyalayd Douglas, 3. "I was just going to buy her first bike today so this was good timing."

Soldotna Police Officer Derek Urban was there to do the department's customary children's bicycle auction. He said that overall bicycle safety, wearing helmets, and knowing the rules of the road are some of the most important things for bicyclists.

Children need to know the rules just like drivers, Urban said. Bicyclists can get tickets if they don't stop at stop signs or do not have lights on their bike when riding after dark, he said.

Safe Kids Kenai Peninsula also provided free car seat safety checks for interested parents.





"Four out of five times there is some error installing the child in the car seat or in the vehicle," said Jane Fellman, coordinator for Safe Kids on the Kenai Peninsula. "They definitely save lives just like seat belts."

The car seat safety checks are something that hits really close to home for Mitchell.

"Being a grandmother, I'm really concerned about car seat safety checkups for my kids," she said.

She's also adamant about teen driving safety, she said, citing several fatal accidents over the years that occurred on prom nights.

"This year there were no teens that died during prom. Talk about an answered prayer," Mitchell said.

Homer Electric Association employees showed kids the dangers of electricity with a live wire demonstration. They set up temporary power poles with live wires to demonstrate how hot and fast electricity is when it comes into contact with people or other objects, like fallen tree limbs.

"Just be safe," Mitchell said. "This is something I'm really passionate about."

Brielle Schaeffer can be reached at brielle.schaeffer@peninsulaclarion.com.

http://www.peninsulaclarion.com/stories/051810/new_640912574.shtml

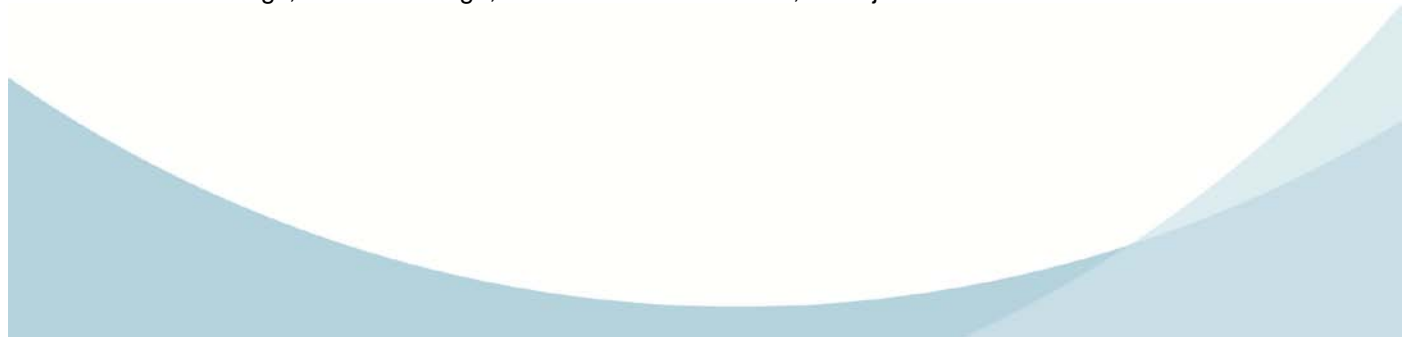
Drowning Is Quick and Quiet, Keep Your Eyes on Your Kids Around Water (Kansas City infoZine, Kansas) [TOP](#)

May 18

Anti-entrapment law provides more protection for children

Topeka, KS - infoZine - It's a warm summer day and you're at the beach with your kids. Your cell phone rings and you answer it, shifting your focus from your kids to the conversation. Good idea? Not at all, according to Safe Kids Kansas; it could even be deadly. Children can get into trouble in a matter of seconds when around water, so Safe Kids Kansas recommends that parents actively supervise – with their eyes on their kids at all times – when they are in or near the water.

Drowning is the second highest cause of unintentional death for children ages one to four and 10 to 14. Approximately three out of four pool submersion deaths and three out of five pool submersion injuries occur at a home pool. Overall, approximately 830 children ages 14 and under die each year due to unintentional drownings, and on average, there are an estimated 3,600 injuries to children after near-





drowning incidents each year.

“Kids drown quickly and quietly,” said Cherie Sage, State Director for Safe Kids Kansas. “A drowning child cannot cry or shout for help. The most important precaution for parents is active supervision. Simply being near your child is not necessarily supervising.”

To help keep kids safe this pool season, Safe Kids Kansas recommends these precautions:

- Always actively supervise children in and around water. Don’t leave, even for a moment. Stay where you can see, hear and reach kids in water. Avoid talking on the phone, preparing a meal, reading and other distractions.
- If you have a pool or spa, or if your child visits a home that has a pool or spa, it should be surrounded on all four sides by a fence at least five feet high with gates that close and latch automatically. Studies estimate that this type of isolation fencing could prevent 50 to 90 percent of child drownings in residential pools.
- A pool or spa should be equipped with an anti-entrapment drain cover and a safety vacuum release system to prevent children from being caught in the suction of the drain. The powerful suction forces can trap a child underwater or cause internal injuries.
- Don’t leave toys in or near the pool, where they could attract unsupervised kids. For extra protection, consider a pool alarm and alarms on the doors, windows and gates leading to the pool.
- Enroll your kids in swimming lessons around age four, but don’t assume swimming lessons make your child immune to drowning. There is no substitute for active supervision.
- Don’t rely on inflatable swimming toys such as “water wings” and noodles. If your child can’t swim, stays within an arm’s reach.
- Learn infant and child CPR. In less than two hours, you can learn effective interventions that can give a fighting chance to a child whose breathing and heartbeat have stopped. Contact your local hospital, fire department, recreation department or Red Cross for information about local CPR classes.
- Keep rescue equipment, a phone and emergency numbers by the pool.

These guidelines apply to inflatable and portable pools, not just in-ground pools. A child can drown in just an inch of water. Kiddie pools should be emptied and stored out of reach when not in use.

Even a near-drowning incident can have lifelong consequences. Kids who survive a near-drowning may





have brain damage and after four to six minutes under water – the damage is usually irreversible. Although 90 percent of parents say they supervise their children while swimming, many acknowledge they engage in other distracting activities at the same time – talking, eating, reading or taking care of another child.

“A supervised child is in sight at all times with your undivided attention focused on the child,” said Sage. When there are children in or near the water, adults should take turns serving as the designated “Water Watcher,” paying undivided attention. Visit www.safekids.org to download a free Water Watcher badge.

Anti-Entrapment Law Will Help Save Lives

One of the most horrific ways for a child to be injured or killed in a pool or hot tub is entrapment. On Dec. 19, 2007, President Bush signed the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act into law. The law is named for the granddaughter of former Secretary of State James A. Baker, III. Graeme died tragically at the age of 7 in 2002 after being trapped under water due to the suction from a spa drain.

The law makes it illegal to manufacture, distribute or sell drain covers that do not adhere to the standards for anti-entrapment safety set by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). The Act also requires public pools and spas to be equipped with these anti-entrapment drain covers as well as a device to disable the drain in the event of an entrapment. Another important component of the law is that it establishes a grant program to reward states that adopt comprehensive laws mandating certain safety devices for all pools and spas. Additionally, the law creates a national drowning prevention education program and media campaign administered by the CPSC.

For more information about drowning and water safety, call Safe Kids Kansas at 785-296-1223 or visit www.safekids.org


<http://www.infozine.com/news/stories/op/storiesView/sid/41199/>

Safe Kids USA Demonstrates Escalating Temperatures Inside Vehicle to Warn Parents About the Dangers of Heat Stroke (PR Newswire) [TOP](#)

May 18

Shares seven tips to prevent future tragedies

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla., May 18 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- In an effort to continue educating parents and caregivers about the dangers of heat stroke to children left unattended in vehicles, Safe Kids USA hosted an event yesterday at Test Track at Walt Disney World Resort's Epcot® theme park near Orlando, Fla. Through the NEVER LEAVE YOUR CHILD ALONE campaign, Safe Kids USA, along with





many other partners such as AAA, is working to increase awareness and reduce heat stroke deaths to children left unattended in vehicles.

During the event, Safe Kids USA demonstrated to Epcot guests at Test Track just how fast the temperature inside a vehicle can increase, putting any child occupant almost immediately at risk. Unfortunately, there have already been three confirmed heat stroke fatalities this year. The first occurred in early March in Florida on a day that reached only 73 degrees, the second occurred in late April in Georgia on a day that reached 86 degrees and the third occurred just six days later in Texas on a day that reached 80 degrees. Between 1998 and 2010, 450 children died from heat stroke because they were left unattended in vehicles that became too hot for them to survive. As summer approaches and temperatures soar, Safe Kids USA reminds parents and caregivers to always check for sleeping children before leaving a vehicle.

NEVER LEAVE YOUR CHILD ALONE is part of Safe Kids Buckle Up (SKBU), the multifaceted child passenger safety program conducted by Safe Kids and sponsored by the General Motors Foundation. SKBU is dedicated to educating parents and caregivers about the importance of properly restraining children and protecting them in and around vehicles at all times.

"A child's core body temperature rises three to five times faster than an adult's, making them more susceptible to heat stroke – even on a day with mild temperatures" said Lorrie Walker, training manager and technical advisor for Safe Kids USA. "Our display here at Test Track demonstrated just how fast the temperature inside a car can increase, putting any child occupant immediately at risk. Our goal for this event was to raise awareness of just how dangerous it is to leave a child unattended in a vehicle, as well as to remind parents and caregivers of important safety precautions they can take to avoid this preventable tragedy."

Safe Kids USA urges all adults to take the following steps:

- Call 911 if they see a child unattended in a vehicle.
- Never leave children alone in a vehicle - even for a minute.
- Set your cell phone or Blackberry reminder to be sure you drop your child off at daycare.
- Place a cell phone, PDA, purse, briefcase, gym bag or whatever is to be carried from the car on the floor in front of the child in a back seat. This forces the adult to open the back door and observe the child before leaving.
- Set your computer "Outlook" program to ask you, "Did you drop off at daycare today?"
- Have a plan with your child care provider to call if your child does not arrive when expected.
- Check cars and trunks first if a child goes missing.

More than 50 percent of the children who died from heat stroke were forgotten by a caring adult who became distracted when they left the vehicle. When left unattended by an adult, thirty percent of affected kids gained entry into an unlocked vehicle, became trapped and were overcome by heat. "It takes only



minutes for a child to be at risk of death and serious, permanent injury in a hot car," added Walker. "Drivers must keep car doors locked and keys out of reach from young children at all times."

For more information on preventing hyperthermia deaths, please visit www.safekids.org/nlyca and www.ggweather.com/heat. Be sure to NEVER LEAVE YOUR CHILD ALONE in a vehicle.

About Safe Kids USA

Safe Kids USA is a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global network of organizations with the mission of preventing unintentional childhood injury, the leading cause of death and disability to children ages 1 to 14. More than 600 coalitions in the United States and nineteen member countries worldwide bring together health and safety experts, educators, corporations, foundations, governments and volunteers to educate and protect families.

In partnership with General Motors since 1997, Safe Kids Buckle Up, the child passenger safety program of Safe Kids USA, has inspected 1.2 million car seats; held approximately 60,500 car seat checkup events around the country; donated more than 426,000 car seats to families in need and educated more than 20 million parents and caregivers.

About General Motors Foundation

Since its inception in 1976, GM Foundation has donated hundreds of millions of dollars to deserving American charities and to disaster relief efforts worldwide. The GM Foundation focuses on Education, Health and Human Services, Environment and Energy and Community Development initiatives, mainly in the communities where GM operates. For more information, visit www.gm.com/corporate/responsibility/community.

About AAA

As North America's largest motoring and leisure travel organization, AAA provides more than 51 million members with travel, insurance, financial and automotive-related services. Since its founding in 1902, the not-for-profit, fully tax-paying AAA has been a leader and advocate for the safety and security of all travelers. AAA clubs can be visited on the Internet at AAA.com.

About Walt Disney World Resort

Walt Disney World Resort is a contiguous 40-square-mile, world-class entertainment and recreation center featuring four theme parks (Magic Kingdom, Epcot, Disney's Hollywood Studios and Disney's Animal Kingdom); two water adventure parks (Blizzard Beach and Typhoon Lagoon); 35 resort hotels (25 owned and operated by Walt Disney World, includes eight Disney Vacation Club resort properties); 81



holes of golf on five courses; two full-service spas; Disney's Wedding Pavilion; Disney's Wide World of Sports Complex; and Downtown Disney, an entertainment-shopping-dining complex encompassing the Marketplace and West Side. Walt Disney World Resort is also included in vacation packages of Disney Cruise Line. Located at Lake Buena Vista, Fla., 20 miles southwest of Orlando, Walt Disney World Resort opened Oct. 1, 1971. Open daily, year-round.

SOURCE AAA

<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/safe-kids-usa-demonstrates-escalating-temperatures-inside-vehicle-to-warn-parents-about-the-dangers-of-heat-stroke-94097069.html>

Another Toddler Killed in Driveway Car Accident Involving A Relative (National Post, Canada) | [TOP](#)

May 18 / Mary Vallis

Canadians are waking up this morning to news that [a two-year-old girl in Hamilton, Ont., has died](#) after she was hit by a van driven by her aunt. [Canwest News Service reports:](#)

“The woman was babysitting along with the toddler’s grandmother when the accident occurred. The woman was reportedly leaving the home to pick up another child when she accidentally struck her niece while backing out of the driveway.”

Just a few weeks ago, a mother in Markham, Ont., endured a similar scenario when she [backed over her own two-year-old son](#). The [National Post reported:](#)

“As the two-year-old played outside his home, his mother began backing out of the driveway and struck him, causing fatal injuries. Paramedics attended the scene but were unable to revive the young victim.”

According to [Safe Kids Canada](#), the number of children injured as pedestrians goes up in May and June (as well as September and October). It is likely because children are outside more at those times of year, said Kristen Gane, a spokeswoman for the organization:

“They’re out and about more in the spring. The weather’s better. Children that may have been driven to school are walking again and may be rusty in their pedestrian-safety behaviour.”

Incidents involving driveways are extremely rare, Ms. Gane stressed. “To have two so close together are a bit of anomaly.”





Pedestrian incidents are one of the leading causes of childhood severe injury and death in Canada — mainly involving kids crossing at controlled intersection or suddenly running out into a road.

<http://news.nationalpost.com/2010/05/18/another-toddler-killed-in-car-accident-involving-a-relative/>

Expert Weighs In On Bike Helmet Safety (OnMilwaukee.com, Wisconsin) | [TOP](#)

May 17 / Molly Snyder Edler

Kids spend a lot of time on four, three or two wheels in the summertime, which means they should spend as much time wearing a safety helmet.

Lisa Klindt Simpson is the coordinator for Safe Kids of Southeast Wisconsin. The group is led by the Children's Health Education Center and is a member of Children's Hospital Health Systems. It works to prevent injuries through collaboration, education and advocacy.

Recently, OnMilwaukee.com contacted Simpson and asked her for detailed information about safety helmets, injury statistics, her thoughts on bike trailers and what parents need to know when choosing a safety helmet.

OnMilwaukee.com: When should a child wear a helmet?

Lisa Klindt Simpson: The helmet habit needs to be developed and reinforced from the very first time a child starts riding anything with wheels, even a tricycle. Helmets should be worn properly, each and every time they participate in any wheeled sport whether it's at their own home or on a bike trail or riding with their parents. Activities can include tricycle, ride-able push toys, scooters, skate boards, inline skates or roller skates ... If it moves, wear a helmet!

OMC: What should parents look for when buying a helmet?

LKS: Buy a helmet that meets or exceeds current safety standards developed by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

OMC: How often should a child get a new helmet?

LKS: A helmet should be replaced immediately if the one they are currently wearing is not fitting correctly, if you see any cracks or breakage in the helmet, if the helmet has been in a crash. It has done its job and





needs to be replaced. Or, if none of the above have occurred, the recommendation is to replace a helmet every 3-5 years depending on the amount of use it has received and exposure to the elements.

OMC: How many kids in the United States suffer a head injury every year?

LKS: Each year, approximately 135 children are killed as bicyclists. Children sustain more than 267,000 non-fatal bicycle injuries each year. Nearly 630 children are injured daily due to bicycle-related crashes. A total of 226,409 total child bicyclist injuries were recorded in 2006.

OMC: How much does wearing a helmet really help?

LKS: Helmet use can reduce the risk of head injury by 85 percent and severe brain injury by 88 percent. And it is estimated that 75 percent of bicycle-related deaths among children could be prevented with a bicycle helmet.

OMC: What are your thoughts on bike carriers and trailers? Are they safe?

LKS: The recommendation is that children aged 1 and under should not ride in bike carries or trailers.

OMC: Any more safety information you'd like to share?

LKS: Helmets should be removed while kids are on the playground. Parents should role model by wearing their own helmet each and every time, and supervision is also key in ensuring the safety of children. Have fun, be safe.

<http://onmilwaukee.com/family/articles/bikehelmet.html?22661>

A Moment of Inattention, A Lifetime of Regret (SoMdNews.com, Maryland) [TOP](#)

May 14 / Lea S. Sadler

Safe Kids Maryland joins national health, safety partners to eliminate 'forgotten child' deaths

When asked if he had one thing to say to Calvert County residents about leaving children unattended in vehicles, Cpl. Richard Wilson of the Calvert County Sheriff's Department said "Don't do it, 'cause if your car gets stolen, your kids get stolen, too."





But it's more than that. Leaving a child unattended in a car can be deadly because it can cause hyperthermia, an often unsafe rise in body temperature, according to *Pediatrics*, the official journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Even when it's only 70 degrees outdoors, temperatures inside a vehicle can rapidly reach dangerous levels, even when a window is left partially open, according to *Pediatrics*. And because children's bodies are less efficient than they will be later in life, their body temperatures can rise three to five times faster than an adult's, putting them at higher risk.

One Florida child has already died of heat stroke this year after being left unattended in a vehicle, according to *Pediatrics*. The publication also cites that, just last year, 33 children died from vehicular hyperthermia, bringing the total to 445 such deaths since 1998.

To date, there have been no reported deaths from vehicular hypothermia in Southern Maryland. But people need to remain vigilant, said Cynthia Wright-Johnson, Safe Kids Maryland and Maryland Risk Watch chair. "Even one death would be too many," she said.

Wilson says it's extremely rare to hear complaints in Calvert County about children being left unattended in vehicles, although it has happened. "Calvert County parents are pretty good," he said.

Vehicular hyperthermia isn't just a summertime problem, said Wright-Johnson. "Kids can also experience hyperthermia and heat exhaustion in cooler weather, because cars still get hot," she said. She added that the best thing a person can do is to develop the habit of circling their vehicle every time they get out to make sure no one is left in the vehicle by accident.

What if you see someone else's child left unattended in a vehicle? Call 911, especially if the child is unresponsive, sleepy, or appears to be less than 8 years old. "If in doubt," Wright-Johnson said, "I suggest that the person call 911 and tell them exactly what they see." The 911 operators are highly trained and can determine what kind of help is needed, Wright-Johnson added.

Cpl. Vladimir Bortchevsky at the Calvert County Sheriff's Office agrees that a call to 911 is the best way to go.

Although residents sometimes call the sheriff's office directly, a call to 911 can sometimes be dispatched more quickly, he said.

"Calvert County has an excellent 911 system, with great dispatchers," said Bortchevsky. They can simultaneously take information from the caller and contact the Sheriff's office to dispatch officers, he added.





Bortchevsky, Wilson, and Wright-Johnson all encourage that a caller reporting a child left in a vehicle to remain on the scene until help can arrive in case the dispatcher needs additional information from you to find the vehicle you're reporting. If that's not possible, at least provide contact information, they said.

Leaving children unattended in vehicles is illegal in many states, including Maryland. According to the Maryland family law 5-801:

(a) A person who is charged with the care of a child under the age of 8 years may not allow the child to be locked or confined in a dwelling, building, enclosure, or motor vehicle while the person charged is absent and the dwelling, building, enclosure, or motor vehicle is out of the sight of the person charged unless the person charged provides a reliable person at least 13 years old to remain with the child to protect the child.

(b) A person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine not exceeding \$500 or imprisonment not exceeding 30 days, or both.

For more information on preventing hyperthermia deaths, call Safe Kids Maryland — a statewide coalition dedicated to reducing childhood disabilities and deaths due to unintentional injuries — go to www.safekidsmd.org or call 410-706-1758. To view Pediatrics online, go to <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/>.

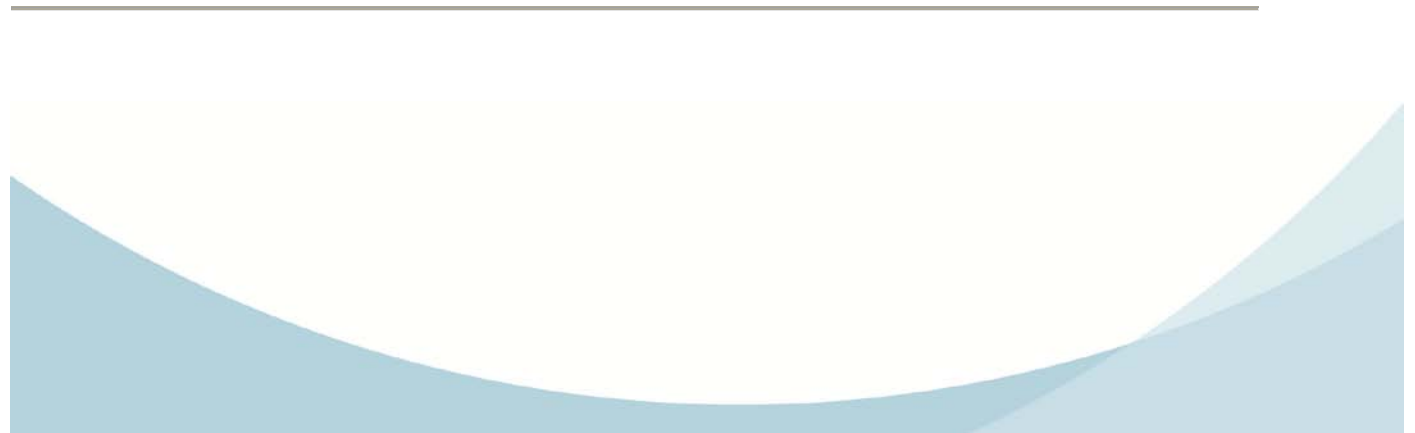
Prevention

What can you do to help prevent children dying in hot cars?

Safe Kids Maryland urges the following:

- Never leave a child alone in a vehicle, even with the window cracked. (Cracking the window is almost useless in reducing interior temperature.)
- Call 911 immediately if you see any child alone in a vehicle
- Never allow children to play in vehicles; keep vehicles locked when not in use to avoid a child locking themselves in accidentally
- Make it a habit to always check your vehicle when you get out to insure you haven't unintentionally left any passengers inside

http://www.somdnews.com/stories/05142010/reccov141708_32205.shtml





Smokeless Tobacco Linked to Accidental Poisonings (33 TV, Texas) | [TOP](#)

April 19 / Barry Carpenter, The 33 News

Health experts say a pinch between your cheek and gum causes childhood poisonings

FORT WORTH, TEXAS - Smokeless tobacco often comes in shiny little boxes infused with minty flavors and they're gaining in popularity. As the community outreach director at Cook Children's Hospital in Fort Worth, Terri Ford's job is to spread the word on how to keep kids safe.

Ford considers smokeless tobacco products to be potentially dangerous for kids.

"They look like gum pellets or candy, a lot of our medications look like candy," Ford said. "So it's just the same kind of message to be careful where you put things, keep them out of the reach of children."

Cigarettes are still the number one source of unintentional ingestion but the study indicates smokeless products pose a growing risk. Ford got her first whiff of a nicotine laced smokeless product.

"I think the smell is what really surprised me how good it smells. It smells like candy," Ford said.

We took a tin of Camel Snus to the streets of Fort Worth where Kimberly Johnson also got her first whiff of the stuff.

"It smells like mint, like gum," Johnson said. "It smells like candy."

Kimberly and her husband Bob have a vested interest -- their young son Cade. Kimberly said the product looks like a kid magnet.

"Oh, he would play with them at his age."

Snus is made by RJ Reynolds. The company countered that more kids accidentally ingest cosmetics than tobacco products and nicotine replacement therapies, also regulated by the FDA, come in a variety of flavors and weren't even mentioned in the study.

Company spokesperson David Howard said the company is not targeting children.

"We are not marketing towards kids, we only market to adult tobacco consumers, the only audience with which we are interested in communicating with," Howard said. "The bottom line is that tobacco products along with many other types of goods need to be kept out of the hands of children."

As for Kimberly, she said she wouldn't want the products in her home.





"I mean I think if somebody were to leave that on the table it's too easy, you know we have prescription drugs in specific containers to where kids can't open them but that, any kid could open that," Johnson said.

Tobacco officials argue that smokeless tobacco is age restricted and sold behind the counter in child resistant packaging.

<http://www.the33tv.com/news/kdaf-tobacco-mints-poisoning-story,0,2463209.story>

RISK AREA NEWS

Police Will Soon Issue Tickets for Kids Not in Booster Seats (Dallas Morning News, Texas) [LTOP](#)

May 13 / Tasha Hayton, The Dallas Morning News

Ignoring the state's new booster seat law is about to get expensive.

Starting June 1, police can issue citations to drivers with young passengers who are not strapped into booster seats. First offenses will cost \$25. Additional offenses will cost up to \$250 plus municipal court fees.

The new state law requires that all children younger than 8 be strapped into safety or booster seats. Children younger than 8 but taller than 4-foot-9 are exempt.


The booster seat law went into effect Sept. 1, 2009, but until now officers could give only warnings.

Some police departments haven't been issuing warnings. The [Flower Mound](#) Police Department, for example, plans to spend at least the first two weeks of June educating residents on the law.

Flower Mound police Capt. Wess Griffin said the department wants to ensure that residents fully understand the law before writing tickets.

"From my experience, I would say that probably the No. 1 thing that a parent can do to ensure their child's safety is to properly use a child's restraint system," Griffin said.

Before the law was passed, Texas was among only six states that didn't require additional protection for older children, said Beth Warren, a Texas Department of Public Safety spokesperson.





The law does not include restrictions on where a child rides in a vehicle, but car manuals and safety experts agree that the safest place for children is the backseat.

Most area police or fire departments will offer to check car seats to ensure they are strapped in properly.

<http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/news/texasouthwest/stories/051410dnmetkidbelts.3c24b13.html>
