Safe Kids Missoula Urges Community to Help Protect Children from Heatstroke

*Hot Cars Can Quickly Become Deadly for Children*

Missoula, MT – Hot summer days across the country have contributed to 23 child deaths so far this year from heatstroke when children were alone in vehicles. Safe Kids Missoula reminds caregivers to never leave children alone in cars, and if you see a child alone in a car, call 911.

Heatstroke, also known as hyperthermia, is the leading cause of non-crash, vehicle-related deaths for children. It occurs when the body is not able to cool itself quickly enough and the body temperature rises to dangerous levels. Young children are particularly at risk as their bodies heat up three to five times faster than an adult’s. Since 1998, more than 660 children across the United States have died from heatstroke when unattended in a vehicle.

“A car can heat up 19 degrees in 10 minutes. And cracking a window doesn’t help,” said Kira Huck, Safe Kids Missoula Co-Coordinator. “Heatstroke can happen anytime, anywhere. We don’t want to see this happen to any family. That’s why Safe Kids is asking everyone to help protect kids from this very preventable tragedy by never leaving your child alone in a car, not even for a minute.”

Together, we can cut down the number of deaths and near misses by remembering to **ACT**.

- **A**: Avoid heatstroke-related injury and death by never leaving your child alone in a car, not even for a minute. And make sure to keep your car locked when you’re not in it so kids don’t get in on their own.

- **C**: Create reminders by putting something in the back of your car next to your child such as a briefcase, a purse or a cell phone that is needed at your final destination. This is especially important if you’re not following your normal routine.

- **T**: Take action. If you see a child alone in a car, call 911. Emergency personnel want you to call. They are trained to respond to these situations. One call could save a life.

(Continued)
The Never Leave Your Child Alone in a Car program is made possible through a grant from General Motors to Safe Kids Worldwide. For more information on preventing child heatstroke deaths, please visit www.noheatstroke.org and www.safekids.org/heatstroke, or call Safe Kids Missoula, led by Foundation for Community Health, at 406.926.2522.

About Safe Kids Missoula
Safe Kids Missoula Coalition, a local partner of Safe Kids Worldwide, is led by Foundation for Community Health. The Coalition includes safety experts from more than 30 nonprofit and government agencies dedicated to protecting kids from preventable injuries—the number one cause of death to children in the United States. The Coalition works together to increase awareness and create safer environments with the goal of preventing traffic injury, concussion, poisoning, child gun access and more. In 2015, more than 7,000 children, parents and caregivers received hands-on education and take-action information through Safe Kids Missoula. For more information, visit fchwmt.org/safe-kids-missoula.

About General Motors and Safe Kids Buckle Up
Beginning in 1997, General Motors and the GM Foundation have served as Safe Kids Worldwide’s exclusive funding source and helped build the Safe Kids Buckle Up program into a multifaceted national initiative, bringing motor vehicle safety messages to children and families through community and dealer partnerships. To date, more than 23 million people have been exposed to Safe Kids Worldwide events and community outreach efforts. Certified child passenger safety technicians working through Safe Kids coalitions have examined over 1.89 million child safety seats at more than 94,000 events, and the program has donated more than 667,000 seats to families in need.