



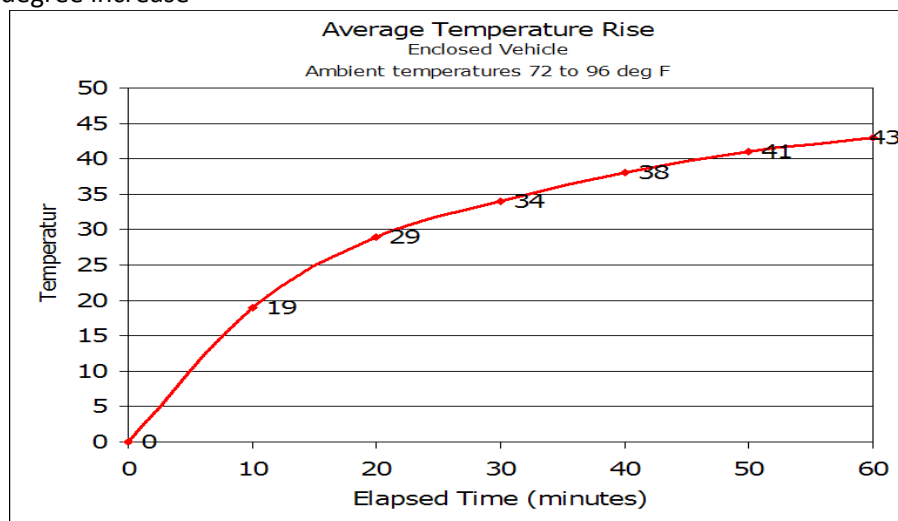
Driving on the Right Side of the Road Passenger Safety In and Around Vehicles Hyperthermia and Trunk Entrapment



JUST THE FACTS

HYPERTHERMIA

- Hyperthermia occurs when the body core temperature reaches 104°F.
 - A body core temperature of 107°F is usually fatal.
 - A child's body warms three to five times faster than an adult's body.
- Body temperature rises over time in an enclosed vehicle
 - 10 minutes = 19 degree increase
 - 20 minutes = 29 degree increase
 - 30 minutes = 34 degree increase
 - 1 hour = 43 degree increase



(Adapted from [Never Leave Your Child Alone in the Car Fact Sheet](#)¹)

- The temperature in a car can rise almost 20 degrees within the first ten minutes, so even outside temperatures in the 60s can cause temperatures to rise above 110°F in a car.²
- An outside temperature of 101°F is equivalent to an inside temperature of 140°F.³

Nationally

- According to NHTSA research, hyperthermia is the leading cause of non-crash vehicle fatalities for children 14 and under.⁴
- There have been at least 27 deaths of children in hot vehicles in 2011.
- The total number of hyperthermia deaths of children left in cars from 1998 to 2010 was over 494.
- The average annual number of hyperthermia deaths of children in cars from 1998 to 2010 was 38.
- These deaths fall into three main categories:
 1. Children who were trapped while playing in a vehicle without supervision;
 2. Children who were accidentally left behind; and
 3. Children who were intentionally left alone in a car.

(Adapted from [Never Leave Your Child Alone in the Car Fact Sheet](#)⁵)

Texas

- Texas leads the nation in hot-car deaths among children.⁶
- In 2010, 49 children died in over-heated cars in the U.S.; 13 of those fatalities occurred in Texas.⁷

TRUNK ENTRAPMENT

- Some children die in hot cars after climbing into an unlocked vehicle without an adult's knowledge. Once in the vehicle, they may become confused by the door-opening mechanism or get trapped in the trunk, unable to get out before heatstroke occurs.⁸
- High temperature, humidity, and poor ventilation create an extremely dangerous environment in the trunk of a vehicle.⁹
- As of September 1, 2001, auto manufacturers are required to equip all new vehicle trunks with a "glow in the dark" trunk release inside the trunk compartment.¹⁰
 - If your car is older and does not have the "glow in the dark" trunk release, ask your automobile dealership about getting your vehicle retrofitted with a trunk-release mechanism.¹¹

RIDING IN CARGO SPACE OF PICKUP TRUCKS

- Kids are not cargo. The beds of pickup trucks are designed to carry cargo, not people, and are not designed to provide protection in a crash.¹²
- Children and teens account for more than half the deaths of passengers riding in the bed of a truck.¹³
- Many non-collision deaths in a pickup truck bed are caused by swerving, braking, or rough roads.¹⁴
- Both children and adults can be easily ejected from cargo areas even at relatively low speeds as a result of a sharp turn to avoid an obstacle or a crash.¹⁵
- Children in covered pickup beds are exposed to carbon monoxide poisoning from exhaust.¹⁶

IT'S THE LAW

Key: P.C. – Penal Code; T.C. – Transportation Code

NAME OF OFFENSE	SECTION OF CODE	COMMENTS
Leaving a Child in a Vehicle	P.C., Sec. 22.10	A person commits an offense if he or she intentionally or knowingly leaves a child in a motor vehicle for longer than 5 minutes knowing that the child is: 1. Younger than 7 years of age and; 2. Not attended by an individual in the vehicle who is 14 years of age or older.
Riding in Open Beds	T.C., Sec. 545.414	A person commits an offense if the person operates an open-bed pickup truck or open-bed flat truck or draws an open flatbed trailer when a child younger than 18 years of age is occupying the bed of the truck or the trailer.

Restrictions on Riding in Cargo Areas¹⁷

STATE	RESTRICTIONS ON RIDING IN CARGO AREAS	WHO IS NOT COVERED
Texas	Yes	People 18 and older; vehicles that are the only vehicles owned by members of the household; vehicles in parades, hay rides, on beaches, or being used in an emergency; vehicles in farm operations used to transport people from field to field or on a farm

KEEP IT SAFE

Hyperthermia and Hot-Car Death Prevention:

- Never leave a child in an unattended car, even with the windows down.
 - Not all hot-car deaths happen intentionally. Sometimes a change in routine or busy schedule can cause a caregiver to forget that a child is still in the car.
- Make a habit of looking in the car before locking the door and walking away. “Look before you leave.”
- Be sure that all occupants leave the vehicle when unloading. Don't overlook sleeping babies.
- Always lock a vehicle's doors and trunk—especially when parked in the driveway or near the home—and keep keys out of children's sight and reach.
- If a child is missing, check the car first, including the trunk.
- Teach children that: (1) trunks are only used to transport cargo and (2) cars and their trunks are not safe places to play.
- Keep a stuffed animal in the car seat, and when the child is put in the seat, place the animal in the front with the driver.
- Place your purse or briefcase in the back seat as a reminder that you have your child in the car.
- Have a plan that your childcare provider will call you if your child does not show up for school.
- If you see an unattended child in or around a car, **CALL 911!**
- Show children how to locate and use the emergency trunk release found in newer cars.
- Keep the rear fold-down seats closed to help prevent kids from getting into the trunk from inside the car.
- If you find your child in a locked car, get him out and dial 911 or your local emergency number immediately to check for signs of heat stroke.
- Go into the store with your family and friends rather than staying in the car.
- Learn how to disable the driver's door locks in the event you unintentionally became trapped in a vehicle.
- Never leave your brother or sister in a vehicle.
- Never play in or around vehicles.

Passenger Safety Tips:

- Never let children ride in the bed of a pickup truck – even if there is a covered bed.
- Never let passengers ride on the tailgate of a pickup truck.
- Jump seats in extended cab pickups are not suitable for child restraint systems.
- Never skateboard or skate holding onto a car or truck.
- Do not distract the driver by shouting, arguing, joking around, or teasing.
- Always wear your safety belt or use a booster seat.
- Understand airbags – they work well with older children and adults in the front seat. Air bags, however, may seriously injure or kill an unbuckled child or adult who is sitting too close to it or who is thrown toward the dash during an emergency braking or collision.
- The rear seat is the safest place for children 12 and under to ride.

(Adapted from [Never Leave Your Child Alone in the Car Fact Sheet](#),¹⁸ [Hyperthermia Dangers in Texas](#),¹⁹ [Children In and Around Cars](#),²⁰ [Keeping Kids Safe Inside & Out](#),²¹ [Preventing Trunk Entrapment](#),²² and [Kids Aren't Cargo](#)²³)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Report, [Children and Cars – A Potentially Lethal Combination](#)²⁴

¹ Department of Geosciences, *Never Leave Your Child Alone in the Car Fact Sheet*, Jan Null, Retrieved on September 24, 2011, from http://ggweather.com/heat/fact_sheet.pdf (hereinafter referred to as *Never Leave Your Child Alone in the Car Fact Sheet*).

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- ² Texas Department of State Health Services, *Hyperthermia Dangers in Texas*, Retrieved on September 24, 2011, from <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/saferiders/hyperthermia.shtm> (hereinafter referred to as *Hyperthermia Dangers in Texas*).
- ³ Safe Kids USA, *Safety Tips By Risk Area – Never Leave Your Child Alone*, Retrieved on September 24, 2011, from <http://www.safekids.org/safety-basics/safety-guide/kids-in-and-around-cars/never-leave-your-child-alone-tips.html>.
- ⁴ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, *Nation's Highway Chief Discusses Ways to Prevent Texas Child Fatalities in Hot Cars*, August 11, 2011, Retrieved on September 24, 2011, from <http://www.nhtsa.gov/About+NHTSA/Press+Releases/2011/Nation's+Highway+Safety+Chief+Discusses+Ways+to+Prevent+Texas+Child+Fatalities+in+Hot+Cars>.
- ⁵ See *Never Leave Your Child Alone in the Car* Fact Sheet - endnote 1
- ⁶ See *Hyperthermia Dangers in Texas* - endnote 2
- ⁷ Fox 44, *First child dies this year from being left in overheated car*, Courtney Francisco, April 4, 2011, Retrieved on September 24, 2011, from <http://www.kwkt.com/news/first-child-dies-this-year-from-being-left-in-overheated-car>.
- ⁸ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, *Kids dying after being left alone in a hot vehicle*, Retrieved on September 24, 2011, from <http://www.nhtsa.gov/safety/hyperthermia>.
- ⁹ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, *Trunk Entrapment – Keeping Kids Safe Inside & Out*, Retrieved on September 24, 2011, from <http://www.nhtsa.gov/Driving+Safety/Child+Safety/Keeping+Kids+Safe+-+Trunk+Entrapment> (hereinafter referred to as *Trunk Entrapment*).
- ¹⁰ See *Trunk Entrapment* - endnote 9
- ¹¹ See *Trunk Entrapment* - endnote 9
- ¹² Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, Highway Loss Data Institute, *Restrictions on riding in cargo areas of pickup trucks*, April 2011, Retrieved on September 24, 2011, from <http://www.iihs.org/laws/cargoareas.aspx> (hereinafter referred to as *Restrictions on riding in cargo areas of pickup trucks*).
- ¹³ AgriLIFE EXTENSION, *Kids Aren't Cargo*, Retrieved on September 24, 2011, from http://fcs.tamu.edu/safety/passenger_safety/pdf/kids_arent_cargo.pdf (hereinafter referred to as *Kids Aren't Cargo*).
- ¹⁴ See *Kids Aren't Cargo* - endnote 13
- ¹⁵ See *Restrictions on riding in cargo areas of pickup trucks* - endnote 12
- ¹⁶ See *Kids Aren't Cargo* - endnote 13
- ¹⁷ See *Restrictions on riding in cargo areas of pickup trucks* - endnote 12
- ¹⁸ See *Never Leave Your Child Alone in the Car* Fact Sheet - endnote 1
- ¹⁹ See *Hyperthermia Dangers in Texas* - endnote 2
- ²⁰ Safe Kids USA, *Children In and Around Cars*, Retrieved on September 24, 2011, from <http://www.safekids.org/safety-basics/safety-guide/kids-in-and-around-cars/>.
- ²¹ See *Trunk Entrapment* - endnote 9
- ²² See *Trunk Entrapment* - endnote 9
- ²³ See *Kids Aren't Cargo* - endnote 13
- ²⁴ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, *Children and Cars – A Potentially Lethal Combination* (August 2006), DOT HS 810 636, Retrieved on September 24, 2011, from <http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/enforce/ChildrenAndCars/index.htm>.