



Dena Murphy
Director

July 21, 2017

JULY IS PURPLE RIBBON MONTH

Keeping Kids Safe in and around Motor Vehicles

UPDATES

(Bakersfield, CA) – The Department of Human Services, with support from First 5 Kern, Bakersfield Police Department, Kern County Sheriff and the California Highway Patrol, proclaim “Purple Ribbon Month” in memory of Kaitlyn Marie Russell. A series of events have been planned to raise public awareness about “**Kaitlyn’s Law**”, passed in 2001, that makes it a citable offense for parents to leave **children under the age of 6** unattended in a motor vehicle without the supervision of someone at least 12 years of age or older. The Law was named for 6-month old Kaitlyn Marie Russell, who died on August 15th, 2000, after being left behind in a hot van by a caregiver.

July is Purple Ribbon Month in memory of Kaitlyn and all the children who have lost their lives to preventable injuries in and around cars, and in order to educate and increase public awareness about all of the dangers of leaving children unattended in or around motor vehicles. On average, 37 kids die in hot cars every year in the United States, according to San Jose State University's Jan Null. **Already this year, at least 25 children have died due to hyperthermia nationwide.** Please join us in our community awareness campaign.

Upcoming Community Safety Demonstrations

Join us as we demonstrate how quickly a car can heat up, and learn safety routines that could save a life! Our safety demonstrations this week resulted in Inside-Vehicle temperatures that peaked at **161 degrees**, and we have had cars move from a cool 75 degrees to 100 in 10 minutes, to 112 degrees in 20 minutes, and 125 degrees in 35 minutes. While these demonstrations are non-scientific, we trust the results and find these demonstrations have been very effective in raising awareness.

During these demonstrations, we encourage families to develop safety routines by using the acronym **ACT** to remember these prevention tips:

A - AVOID heat stroke by never leaving a child in the car alone, and locking all vehicles so children cannot gain **ACCESS**;

C- CREATE reminders by putting something in the back that is needed after exiting the vehicle, like your cell phone, briefcase or purse. You can also create visible reminders by placing a stuffed toy in the child seat that moves to the **front seat** every time baby is on board;

T - TAKE action any time a child is left alone in a car by calling 911 immediately!

Monday, July 24th, 10am - Noon

Lake Isabella Department of Human Services office
7050 Lake Isabella Blvd, **Lake Isabella**

Tuesday, July 25th, 10am - Noon

Mojave Department of Human Services office
2340 Hwy 58, **Mojave**

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August Dates

Thursday, August 3rd, 9am - Noon

Bakersfield Ready-Set Back 2 School Health & Wellness Fair
Kern County Fairgrounds, 1142 S. P St., **Bakersfield**

Thursday, August 10th, 9am - Noon

Ridgecrest Ready-Set Back 2 School Health & Wellness Fair
Kerr McGee Center, 100 W. California Ave., **Ridgecrest**

We will also be participating in **National Night Out** with our Purple Ribbon Month information and demonstrations.

For more information, contact Heidi Carter-Escudero at (661) 633-7104 or at carterh@kerndhs.com. Additional resources can also be found at the following websites and links:

NoHeatstroke.org

<http://www.kidsandcars.org/>

<https://www.safekids.org/heatstroke>

<https://www.safercar.gov/parents/InandAroundtheCar/heatstroke.htm>

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