



Rick Staly, Sheriff
FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

NEWS RELEASE

Date: Friday, August 25, 2017

Contact: Brittany Kershaw; (386) 586-2637; bkershaw@flaglersheriff.com

Dangers of Leaving a Child (or Pet) in a Hot Car

"If it has a heartbeat, don't leave it in a car" – Sheriff Rick Staly

The Flagler County Sheriff's Office and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) teamed up to host a demonstration on the dangers of leaving a child inside a vehicle. Last month, more infants died in hot car deaths than any other July in nearly a decade, according to research completed by San Jose State University.

On a typical summer day in Florida, the temperature inside a parked vehicle can reach well above 120 degrees. Those temperatures create a great risk for heat stroke, which can lead to high fever, dehydration, seizures, stroke, or even death. On average, 37 children die each year from being left inside a hot car in the United States.



Left: White Ford Focus used for hot car demonstration. Right: Magnet and Car Air Freshener with reminder message.

The demonstration today took place at the Target parking lot in Palm Coast. A white Ford Focus with the air conditioning on was turned off at 1 p.m. and a timer was set. The temperature outdoors was 91 degrees, partly cloudy with a breeze. After ten minutes, the temperature inside the vehicle was 105 degrees. After 20 minutes, the temperature reached 110 degrees.

Proudly Serving the Community for 100 Years – Centennial Anniversary 1917 - 2017
An Accredited Law Enforcement Agency



“These are lethal temperatures for a child left inside a vehicle,” Sheriff Rick Staly said on scene. “Even if you plan to run into the store real quick to grab something, it will likely take you 15 to 20 minutes to complete your purchase and get back to the car. By that time, it could already be too late.” A child’s body temperature raises five times faster than an adult’s temperature. Studies show that cracking a window does not help.

“Heat can kill, especially Florida heat,” Sheriff Rick Staly said. “Parents and caregivers need to take all measures possible to keep kids, older adults and pets safe. Many people think this could not happen to them, but all it takes is one ‘off’ day and things can change. Be proactive and use the tools we’ve presented to keep kids safe.”



Sheriff Staly and Patricia Medlock at Hot Car Demonstration at Target in Palm Coast.

Charles Puckett and Patricia Medlock from DCF were at the event with magnets, air fresheners, brochures and car safety hammers to hand out to parents in attendance. These tools are provided free to anyone who requests them from all DCF locations and Flagler Sheriff’s Operations Center in Bunnell or the Sheriff’s District 2 office in Palm Coast. “Put your phone in the backseat or put your laptop in the backseat. Something to remind you to look in the backseat before you go in the store,” Medlock said.

“I would say this to kind of sum it up, if it has a heartbeat don’t leave it in a car,” Sheriff Staly said. “It doesn’t matter if it’s a child, a dog, or a cat. If it has a heartbeat, take it out of the car with you to wherever you are going.”

At least 729 children have died in the United States due to overheating inside of a vehicle – 29 of those deaths have occurred so far in 2017. KidsAndCars.org reported that a child’s body overheats three to five times faster than an adult’s does. Most of these deaths were accidental.

###

Proudly Serving the Community for 100 Years – Centennial Anniversary 1917 - 2017
An Accredited Law Enforcement Agency

