

 **IT'S AGAINST THE LAW**  
to Leave Kids Unattended in Cars



**Don't Forget.**  
**Double Check!**

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FOUNDATION  
Better parents. Better kids.  
Orange County's Child Abuse Prevention Council



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## About Kaitlyn's Law

**Why do people leave a young child unattended in a car?**  
One common reason is that well-intentioned parents and caregivers have simply forgotten the child was in the car.

### What is Kaitlyn's Law?

Since 2001, it has been illegal in California to leave a child age 6 or younger inside a motor vehicle without the supervision of someone at least 12 years old. The law is named for 6-month-old Kaitlyn Russell, who died from heat related causes after being left alone in a car.

### What can happen to a child left unattended in a car?

On average, 37 children die each year from heat-related deaths after being left inside motor vehicles. Nationwide, 27 children (ages 4 months to 4 years) have died so far this year.

### How long does it take for the inside of a car to heat up?

Within just 10 minutes the temperature inside a car can rise to 20 degrees higher than the outside air. So if it is 100 degrees outside, the temperature inside a car can hit 120 degrees in that time. Those were the conditions under which Kaitlyn died.

### Is it okay to leave a child in car if:

- Parent/caregiver has visual contact with child? NO.
- Car is on your driveway or street outside your house? NO.
- It is only for a few minutes? NO.
- It is not hot outside? NO.

### What are the consequences to the caregiver/parent?

Possibly, the death or severe injury of the child. And, a monetary fine or possibly jail time.

### What do I do if I see a child left unattended in a car?

Seconds count! Call 911 immediately. Alert the parent/caregiver and a security guard if they are nearby. Check the door. If it is unlocked open the door. If it is locked, talk to the child with a comforting tone and ask the child if they can unlock the door.

### What are some tips to keep a child safe?

- ✓If multiple people are in car, decide who will be the "Chosen Child Checker" to and from your destination.
- ✓No matter how rushed, be sure to check the back seat and lock the door every time you exit car. Remember sleeping babies and those in backwards facing car seats.
- ✓Keep a stuffed animal in car seat. After putting your child in, place stuffed animal in front with you as reminder.
- ✓Share these tips with everyone you know (*friends, parents, grandparents, babysitters, co-workers*).

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#RaiseForKaitlyn #KaitlynsLaw #RaiseOC  
www.theraisefoundation.org • 949.884.3421  
www.raiseforkaitlyn.org

August 2016

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