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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Papillion, NE— Heatstroke is the leading cause of non-crash, vehicle-related deaths for children. On average, every 10 days a child dies from heatstroke in a vehicle. When children are left in a vehicle, for even a few minutes, they are at serious risk for heat stroke as temperatures begin to heat up. “Child deaths from heatstroke have occurred with an outside temperature as low as 57 degrees,” said Jane Husz, Safe Kids Sarpy/Cass Coordinator. “Whether you are a parent, caregiver, or just a concerned bystander, you can help save lives.”

“The temperature inside of a vehicle can rise 19 degrees above the outside temperature in just 10 minutes,” said Jane Husz. “And after an hour, the temperature difference can be 45 degrees or more. Leaving windows down a little does not make it safe either.” When left in a hot vehicle, a young child’s core body temperature increases three to five times faster than that of an adult. Children’s internal systems that regulate body temperature are not fully developed, and they absorb heat and generate heat under stress more quickly than adults. When body temperature reaches 104 degrees, internal organs start to shut down. When it reaches 107 degrees, the person dies. Symptoms can quickly progress from flushed, dry skin and vomiting to seizures, organ failure or death.

Safe Kids Sarpy/Cass wants to help parents avoid these tragedies by offering daycares and other organizations in Sarpy and Cass Counties the use of a special thermometer display. This display can be placed on a vehicle window to show parents the temperature difference inside and outside the car. Safe Kids will also offer those parents a special keychain to help serve as a reminder to not leave their child in the car.

Safe Kids Sarpy/Cass suggests that caregivers can reduce the number of deaths from heatstroke by remembering to **A-C-T**.

A: Avoid heatstroke-related injury and death by never leaving your child alone in a car, not even for a minute. Make sure to keep your car locked when you’re not in it so kids don’t get in alone. Keep keys and remote entry fobs out of children’s sight and reach.

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. Have a plan that your childcare provider will call you if your child does not show up at daycare.

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.



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Safe Kids Sarpy/Cass works to prevent unintentional childhood injury, the leading cause of death and disability to children under the age of 14. Safe Kids Sarpy/Cass is a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global network of organizations dedicated to preventing unintentional injury. Safe Kids Sarpy/Cass was founded in 2006 and is led by Sarpy/Cass Department of Health and Wellness.

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