June 2013

School's out, and many kids will be spending time at home alone for several hours each day this summer.

Developmentally, children are generally ready to be home alone around the age of 12 or 13. However, children develop at different rates. It is up to each parent to determine a child's maturity level and capabilities.

Recommendations when leaving a child home alone:

- Start slowly. The first time you leave your child home alone, leave only for a brief period and stay close to home.
- Tell your child where you'll be, how you can be reached and when you'll return.
- Program all emergency numbers, the phone number where you can be reached and the number of a friend or neighbor in your child's cell phone. Post the numbers in a visible place such as the refrigerator.
- Show your child the safety precautions you have taken in your home and how they work. Practice scenarios where your child has to use them.
- Point out potential hazards in your home such as electrical outlets, appliances and heating equipment, and teach your child how to avoid injuries from them.
- Prepare a snack or meal for your child in advance, preferably one that doesn't need to be heated. If it needs to be heated, remind your child to turn off the oven or stove and be safe when using the microwave.
- Show your child where the first-aid kit is and how to use the items in it.
Hot car: ACT!

Did you know?
Heatstroke, also known as hyperthermia, is the leading cause of non-crash, vehicle-related deaths for children. It can happen anywhere, anytime.

A young child is particularly at risk because his or her body heats up three to five times faster than an adult’s.

When a child’s internal temperature gets to 104 degrees, major organs begin to shut down. When that child’s temperature reaches 107 degrees, the child can die.

Because of this, and because cars heat up so quickly – 19 degrees in 10 minutes – tragedies can happen faster than you think.

Symptoms can quickly progress from flushed, dry skin and vomiting to seizures, organ failure and death.

View a simulation of how quickly a car heats up in direct sunlight: www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3NffWlj24

Basic first-aid kit:
- Two pairs of non-latex gloves
- Dressing gauze and tape
- Cleansing agent/soap and antibiotic towelettes
- Antibiotic ointment
- Burn ointment
- Adhesive bandages in a variety of sizes
- Eye wash solution to flush the eyes or as a general decontaminant
- Thermometer
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant
- Non-prescription medications (aspirin, ibuprofen)
- First-aid instruction booklet

These types of tragedies can happen to anyone, and most of the cases involve loving, caring parents.

Data has shown that heatstroke tragedies happen more often when the daily routine is disrupted.

Safe Kids is asking everyone to ACT to help protect kids from this very preventable tragedy.

Avoid heatstroke-related injury and death by never leaving your child alone in a car, not even for a minute. Always keep your car locked.

Create reminders by putting something in the back of your car next to your child such as a briefcase, a purse or a cellphone that you will need at your final destination. This is especially important if you’re not following your normal routine.

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.
ASK (Asking Saves Kids)

“Is there a gun where your child plays?” Asking this simple question is an important step every parent can take to help their kids stay safe.

Children are naturally curious. If a gun is accessible in someone’s home, there is a good chance a child will find it and play with it. Tragedies have occurred when kids found guns that parents thought were well hidden or safely stored.

In Kentucky, more than 94,000 children and teens live in homes with loaded guns, and more than 37,000 live in homes with guns that are loaded and unlocked.

June 21 is National ASK Day

ASK Day takes place on the first day of every summer, a time of year when children play more often in others’ homes.

Tips to make asking easier

- Ask with other questions. Include the question along with other things you might normally discuss before sending your child to someone’s house – such as seat belts, animals or allergies.
- Use the facts. More than one-third of homes with children have a gun. Many are left unlocked and loaded. That is why you are asking – you just want to make sure your child is safe.
- Present your concerns in a respectful manner. You are simply trying to make sure your child is in a safe environment.

Teaching your child about 911

Emergencies: Even very young children can be taught how and when to call for help.

Teach children WHEN to call for help using 911.
- Call 911 when you need the police, fire department or an ambulance if there are no grown-ups around.

Teach children HOW to use 911.
- Stay calm. Listen for a dial tone.
- On a push button phone push “9” then “1” then “1” again.

Teach children WHAT to say when the 911 dispatcher answers.
- Explain what’s wrong. What type of an emergency is it?
- Explain where help is needed.
- Give your name and address loudly and clearly.
- Answer all questions that are asked of you. Answer “yes” or “no” out loud.
- Do not hang up until the dispatcher says it’s OK to do so.

Teach children when NOT to call 9-1-1.
- When there is no emergency
- For animals
- As a game or prank
- As a joke
- To practice

For more information, contact Safe Kids at 859-323-1153 or visit www.safekidsfayettecounty.com.

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