

CHP warns of heat danger for children

Contributed by Editor
Wednesday, 11 July 2007

LAKE COUNTY – As we sweat through another warm summer month, the California Highway Patrol would like to warn the public of the dangers of leaving a child unattended inside a scorching hot vehicle.

Seven years ago, 6 month old Kaitlyn Russell’s babysitter decided to go shopping while leaving Kaitlyn in the car. The babysitter lost track of time, and by the time she returned to the car, the baby had died.

“The temperature within a car can climb higher than 20 degrees over the outside temperature in less than 15 minutes,” said Officer Adam Garcia of the Clear Lake CHP office.

“Kaitlyn’s Law,” also known as the “Unattended Child in a Motor Vehicle Act,” was passed by the Legislature in 2001 and went into effect on January 1, 2002.

The law states in part that anyone responsible for a child 6 years old or younger may not leave that child inside a vehicle without supervision of someone at least 12 years old, under the following conditions:

– Where there is a risk to the child’s health or safety.

– When the vehicle’s key is in the ignition or when the engine is running.

“Please do not leave your child unattended, even if it’s only to run inside the store or your house for a minute,” said Garcia. “A violator of this law could be fined \$380.”

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