

La Voz article for February
Love Them, Protect Them
February is Child Passenger Safety Month

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As Health Officer, I know that parents hear a lot about the importance of having their children ride correctly in vehicles by using car safety seats or boosters seats. However, I am also concerned that parents understand and develop other healthy habits around cars since our children spend so much time in and around motor vehicles. There are four things that can help parents assure their child's safety.

1. Never leave your child in a car alone not even to run a quick errand.
 - The temperature in a parked car can reach 125 degrees in just 20 minutes and heatstroke and death can result.
 - Leave something that you need on the backseat floor (cell phone, handbag, lunch) to remind you so that no child is left behind in a vehicle.
2. A small child 28 to 40 pounds is no match for a two ton motor vehicle and at least one child per day is backed over and killed in their own driveway or parking lot.
 - Before moving a vehicle walk around it to check for small children.
3. Children think driving would be fun but every year many are hurt or killed by setting a car in motion when they are left alone inside a vehicle.
 - Keep vehicles locked at all times even in the garage or driveway.
 - Don't leave keys in reach of children
 - If a child is missing check a car and the trunk right away.
4. A power window can cut a grapefruit in two and can hurt a child who plays with and thinks the window is a toy.
 - Always engage power window lock-out mechanism.

These are simple things to do and can make a big difference in your child's safety. Remember, love them and protect them.