



**Brian P. Kemp**  
Governor

**Amy M. Jacobs**  
Commissioner

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## **DECAL Spotlights Dangers of Leaving Children in Vehicles**

### ***“Look Again” Campaign Urges Greater Awareness to Protect Georgia’s Youngest Citizens***

**ATLANTA, Ga., (June 29, 2020)** – For the seventh consecutive year, the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is calling for families and caregivers of children to increase awareness of the dangers of leaving children unattended in vehicles. This year’s “Look Again” campaign aligns with National Heatstroke Prevention Day on July 1, 2020, to ensure that families, child care providers, and the public understand how to prevent pediatric vehicular heatstroke.

“As more Georgians are getting back on the road, it is critically important to remember that our children are our most precious cargo,” said Governor Brian P. Kemp. “That’s why Marty and I stand with the Department of Early Care and Learning in urging everyone to ‘Look Again’ and protect the health and safety of Georgia’s children. Please join us in following these simple steps to make a difference and save lives.”

DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs said more than 337,000 children in Georgia are cared for daily by approximately 4,500 child care providers, most of whom regularly transport children. This year, to prevent the spread of COVID-19, Governor Kemp issued an Executive Order limiting when child care programs are allowed to transport children. However, the need for child care providers to be vigilant still exists. In the United States, 52 children died from pediatric vehicular heatstroke in 2019. So far, six have died in 2020.

“When we receive reports of children left in vehicles by providers, we investigate each incident,” Jacobs explained. “During FY2019, 19 children were left in vehicles by child care providers statewide. In FY2020, nine children have been left. Thankfully all of these children survived, but one child left unattended in a vehicle is one child too many, and, despite our best efforts, these numbers show we cannot become complacent.”

Jacobs said “Look Again” is a message not only for child care programs and teachers but for anyone caring for a child – parents, grandparents, other family members, neighbors, and friends – to always account for the children in their care as they drive them from place to place. “When you arrive at your destination, check the front and back of your car, and after you’ve looked, just to be sure, Look Again. There is absolutely no reason for a child to suffer or die in these conditions,” she stressed.

Jacobs said technology is helping in the effort: “Sensors in car seats and vehicles and phone apps like Waze signal reminders when you reach your destination,” she said. “These technological resources help build habits to check the backseat after driving. And if these aren’t options, you can place a stuffed animal in your passenger seat as a reminder that your child is in the back.”

State officials hope families and the public will access and share the [Look Again PSA](#) on social media accounts. Officials also remind the public to act responsibly and quickly if they see a child left alone in a vehicle by calling 911 immediately; emergency personnel are trained to respond.

For more information, visit [www.dec.al.ga.gov](http://www.dec.al.ga.gov) or [www.noheatstroke.org](http://www.noheatstroke.org).

### **About DECAL**

The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia’s children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia’s Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia’s Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages Quality Rated, Georgia’s community powered child care rating system.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to [www.dec.al.ga.gov](http://www.dec.al.ga.gov).