

Dad accused of leaving son in hot car at Parx

By Jo Ciavaglia Staff writer | Posted: Tuesday, July 9, 2013 11:00 am

A Philadelphia man allegedly left his 18-month-old son inside a car where the temperature was above 88 degrees so he could play blackjack at Parx casino in Bensalem on Saturday.

Bensalem police say the boy was alone, screaming and "sweating profusely" when they found him inside a gray Lexus parked about 300 feet from the doors to the casino, which is on Street Road.

Police were called to the casino parking lot shortly after 9 p.m., when the temperature outside was 88 degrees with 62 percent humidity.

"Officers on scene described the interior of the vehicle to be hotter than the exterior temperature," according to a affidavit of probable cause.

While police were investigating, car owner Danny Ngo, 44, of Adams Avenue, appeared, police said. He admitted he was inside the casino gambling, but told police he was inside only 10 minutes.

Surveillance video, though, showed he was inside closer to 40 minutes, according to the affidavit.

"Ngo also admitted to police that he knew leaving his son alone in the vehicle was wrong," according to the affidavit.

Ngo was arraigned Sunday before Bensalem District Judge Leonard Brown on misdemeanor charges of recklessly endangering another person and endangering the welfare of children. He was sent to Bucks County prison in lieu of 10 percent of \$100,000.

Since it opened, Parx has experienced periodic problems with gamblers leaving children alone inside parked cars. At least two incidents occurred last year, down from nine in 2010.

A child's body temperature rises three to five times faster than an adult's and even with the windows partially down, the temperature inside a parked car can reach 125 degrees in minutes, according to the group kidsandcars.org. Last year, 32 children in the United States died of heat stroke after they were left inside cars, down from 33 the year before, according to the organization.