

## Kidsafe out and about

It has been a busy couple of months for staff at Kidsafe giving many presentations across Queensland on injury prevention and the new child restraint regulations. Presentations on child restraints and on the installation of the restraints have been given to various community groups, government departments and schools throughout Brisbane and in Ipswich, Redlands, Caloundra and Cairns.

Feedback from attendees has been very positive and has resulted in even more bookings for presentations as far afield as Maroochydore and the south coast. Bookings for guided tours of Kidsafe House are also increasing.



Above: Debbie from Kidsafe explains the new child restraint rules to parents at Mary MacKillop Catholic School.

Here are two questions we are often asked:

Is a H-Harness compulsory with a booster? No. Can my child move into a booster once they reach 14kg? No. Your child must be 4 years of age. Refer to page three.

At many of these presentations Kidsafe staff inspected child restraints in vehicles. At least half were incorrectly fitted.

Please read installation instructions carefully or come into to Kidsafe and we will fit or check it.

## Alert!

Baby slings are terrific for keeping your hands free, and also keeping baby close and happy. However, a report from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is advising parents and caregivers to be careful when using slings — especially for babies less than four months. Slings can pose two different types of suffocation hazards to babies. In the first few months of life, babies cannot control their heads because of weak neck muscles. The sling's fabric can press against an infant's nose and mouth, blocking the baby's breathing and suffocating a baby within a minute or two. Also, where a sling keeps the infant in a curled position bending the chin toward the chest, the airways can be restricted, limiting the oxygen supply. The baby will not be able to cry for help and can slowly suffocate.

CPSC recommends that parents make sure the baby's face is not covered and is visible at all times to the sling's wearer. If nursing the baby in a sling, change the baby's position after feeding so the baby's head is facing up and is clear of the sling and the mother's body. Frequently check on baby when in a sling.



## New Product

### Learn Infant CPR and what to do in a choking emergency in 22 minutes!

Kidsafe Queensland is very pleased to be selling this kit from St John Ambulance for just \$55. The Infant CPR learning program is a must-have for parents and grandparents — anyone looking after a baby who cannot attend a CPR course. The kit includes:

- Mini Baby CPR learning manikin
- Instructional DVD (Includes both CPR training and relief from choking)
- Fold-out Quick Reference guides - wallet and poster size
- Practice phone
- Manikin wipes (2)
- Mini Baby spare lung (2)

Directions are printed inside the box.

# Check the tags

Many parents are using sleeping bags for babies instead of sheets and blankets. Provided the sleeping bag is the right size for baby with fitted neck and arm holes, a sleeping bag is fine. With the cooler months coming even more parents will be looking at using sleeping bags to keep baby warm - especially older babies who kick off their blankets and move around the cot.

Beware of what you are buying. Some popular sleeping bags on the market have a High Fire Danger label and could pose a significant risk.

In Australia, children's nightwear and a limited amount of daywear must comply with Australian standards which reduces the fire hazard of clothing. Garments must be flammability tested before being labelled and are categorised according to fabric type and burning behaviour.

High fire danger clothing is more at risk of catching fire. These clothes are usually made with a

combination of some cotton, chenille and cotton flannelette, and have a design that is more likely to spread flames — long and/or flowing.

Sleeping bags are not close fitting — like a baby jumpsuit — and could swirl into contact with flames or hot surfaces from sources of heat or fire such as gas stove tops, heaters and open fires.

Kidsafe recommends buying Low Fire Danger clothing which is usually made from material that is difficult to ignite such as wool and some nylon and polyester. Low Fire Danger clothing is usually close fitting and has to pass stringent restrictions on trim sizing which limits the risk of flames spreading.

More than 125 children are admitted each year to Queensland hospitals from burn injuries. Many



more are treated in emergency departments.

### **Burn prevention tips:**

- Ensure that heaters are kept away from flammable material.
- Have fire blankets and extinguishers on hand.
- Install guards around heaters and fireplaces.
- Keep children out of the kitchen when cooking.
- Choose low fire risk clothing that is designed to be close fitted and made of less flammable material.

## Kidsafe gets social:

Become a fan of Kidsafe Qld on Facebook or follow us on Twitter for important safety updates and news.

## Warning:

Kidsafe warns to double check the information given by retail outlets about the new child restraint laws.

## Nth Qld Baby Expo:

Kidsafe exhibited at the North Queensland Baby and Children's Expo & Parenting Forum on 5-6 March in Cairns. More than 4,000 people attended with many parents signing on as Kidsafe members. One lucky new member won a Safe'n'Sound MaxiRider kindly donated by Britax. A Kidsafe session on the new road rules with a demonstration of child restraints was very well received.

# Tip over injuries

Tip over injuries (where the item falls over and injures the child) in children under 5 years of age account for an estimated 115 emergency presentations annually in Queensland, according to a report from the Queensland Injury Surveillance Unit.

Children under 2 years of age tend to injure themselves by pulling items over onto themselves.

Over 2 years of age children are more likely to be injured after climbing the item and either falling off or tipping the item over onto themselves.

The most common single item that causes furniture-related injuries is a TV with or without a cabi-

net followed by a cabinet or cupboard, chest of drawers, and a bookcase.

Televisions — especially large plasmas — should be tethered to the wall, mounted on a wall bracket or even screwed into the top of the cabinet which is anchored to the wall.

Children use drawers as stairs. If a child stands on an open oven door a free-standing oven will topple over. So, before your child even thinks about crawling — before they start pulling themselves up on furniture when starting to walk — use brackets or straps to secure chests of drawers, cupboards, bookcases, free-standing stoves, dressers etc to the wall.

# New child restraint laws

The major cause of child death and injury in car accidents is that the child is not in the proper restraint or wearing a seat belt. Research has shown that in many cases, a proper child restraint was in the car but not used.

By law, every child must use a suitable restraint in a car, even when only travelling a short distance.

## Birth to 6 months

Babies must travel facing toward the back of the vehicle in a capsule or a rear-facing convertible car seat until they are at least 6 months of age **and** weigh 8kg. The baby **must be both** 6 months or older and 8kg or more.

## 6 months to 4 years

At 6 months the baby may face forward provided they have also reached a minimum of 8kg body weight and have good, steady, full head control. Children without good head control can stay facing toward the rear until they are 9kg to 12kg, depending on the weight guidelines for the restraint used. The weight of the child is important because all forward-facing restraints are tested from 8kg and,

## What does it mean for you and your child?

some rear-facing restraints are tested up to 12kg.

Once facing forward, children should remain in this type of child seat — anchored by a tether strap and the car seat belt with an in-built harness — until they are 4 years of age. If the child is not 4 but has exceeded the maximum limitations of the seat (under current Australian Standards a body weight of 18kg) **or**, when sitting on the child seat, the highest harness shoulder position is more than 2.5 cm below the child's shoulder, **or**, when sitting on the child seat, the child's eyes are level with or above the back of the child seat, then the child can graduate into a booster seat.

So, children should only graduate into a booster seat when they have exceeded the height / weight limitations of the child toddler seat. For example, if your 3-year-old weighs more than 18kg they can move into a booster, **or** if your child is at least 4 years old and has reached the MINIMUM requirements for using a booster

seat (14kg in weight) they can graduate into a booster seat.

While 14kg is around the average weight of a 2 year old, booster seats ARE NOT designed for children this young. A 2-year-old weighing 14kg will likely be a shorter, 'squatter' package than a slim 4-year-old weighing similar. Also, 2-year-olds are not mentally ready for booster seats as they do not have the level of comprehension for instructions on the wearing of seat belts.

## 4 years to 7 years

All children are required to be restrained in a booster seat until they turn 7 years of age. A child must be in a booster seat until they turn 7 **unless** their weight exceeds 26kg (currently the maximum weight to which all boosters are tested in Australia) **or** their eye level is higher than the back of the restraint or the vehicle's headrest. If the vehicle is not fitted with a headrest then a half booster is probably not suitable as the child's head is not adequately protected.

## A guide to child restraints

### Indicative ages and weights

0–6 months	6 months–1 year	6 months–4 years	4–7 years
Less than 8 kgs	8–12 kgs	8–18 kgs	14–26 kgs
Rearward facing baby capsule or infant restraint 	Rearward or forward facing infant restraint 	Forward facing child restraint with built-in harness 	Booster seat with H-harness* <b>or</b> Booster seat with a secured adult seatbelt  

\*Note: An H-harness can continue to be used with or without a booster seat for a child up to 32 kgs.

Penalty for incorrectly securing a child: \$300 and 3 demerit points.

For more information go to [www.transport.qld.gov.au/childrestraints](http://www.transport.qld.gov.au/childrestraints), call 13 23 80 or call Kidsafe on (07) 3854 1829