

# Kidsafe News

Kidsafe Centre, 72 King William Road, North Adelaide, SA 5006

Ph: (08) 8161 6318

[www.kidsafesa.com.au](http://www.kidsafesa.com.au)

Email: [sa@kidsafe.org.au](mailto:sa@kidsafe.org.au)

President: Dr Anne Johnson

Patron: His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce AC CSC RANR

Autumn/Winter 2009

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE

Welcome to Kidsafe News – Autumn/Winter 2009.

As we have previously alerted readers of this newsletter, changes to the legislation around child restraint use in motor vehicles are expected to be introduced in South Australia later this year. To maximise the safety of your children when travelling in a motor vehicle, parents and carers should ensure they are complying with these proposed new laws. Families intending to purchase new restraints in the near future should also be aware of what these new laws will call for:

These requirements are:

- Infants up to 6 months old to be restrained in a rearward facing infant restraint
- Children aged between six months and four years old to be seated in either a rearward or forward facing child safety seat
- Children from the age of four to seven years to be seated in a forward facing child safety seat or full booster seat
- Children under the age of 4 to be seated in the rear of the vehicle
- Children from the age of 4 to 7 years may only be seated in the front of the vehicle if all rear seats are occupied by younger children. Where airbags are fitted in the front of the vehicle, the manufacturer's handbook advice must be adhered to.

For more information on these laws and how they may affect you, don't hesitate to contact Kidsafe SA on Ph: (08) 8161 6318.

Take care and keep safe.

Helen Noblet

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# Safe Sleeping

In the last few years there have been a number of deaths of babies in fatal sleeping accidents. It is very important that parents and carers are aware of the potential dangers of unsafe sleeping environments.

Why are babies at risk?

When put down to sleep, babies may get into dangerous situations. They may:

- Suffocate under bedding
- Choke on toys or other objects
- Become caught between the cot side and mattress
- Strangle on ribbons or curtain and blind cords
- Suffocate if they sleep in the same bed with another person



This can happen because babies cannot understand danger, are not able to control their own sleeping situations, may not be able to get out of a dangerous situation and may place things in their mouths or around their necks and choke.

There are positive steps that parents and caregivers can take to make sleeping situations safer for babies:

## Reducing the risks:

- From birth, settle baby on it's back to sleep – never on the tummy or side
- Always keep baby's head and face uncovered during sleep
- Avoid exposing babies to tobacco smoke during pregnancy and after birth
- Provide a safe sleeping environment night and day – safe cot, safe mattress, safe bedding and safe sleeping place
- Sleep baby in their own cot or bassinet in the same room as the parents for the first 6 – 12 months
- Do not position the cot within reach of curtain or blind cords as babies have strangled on these.

## Cots:

- Only use a cot that complies with the mandatory Australian Standard (AS 2172)
- Make sure the mattress is firm and fits the cot snugly with no gaps of more than 2cm at the sides and ends
- Do not use bumpers, doonas, quilts, pillows or have large fluffy toys in the cot

## Bedding:

- Sleep baby in a Grobag or baby sleeping bag which has a fitted neck, arms holes and no hood.

Be aware of the dangers of overheating – do not sleep babies in fabrics such as polar fleece.

- If not using a baby sleeping bag, use layers of light bedding
- Keep baby's head and face uncovered
- Make up the cot from the bottom so the bedding only comes to the baby's chest
- If your baby needs to be wrapped for settling, use muslin cloth

## U-shaped pillows:

There have been a number of deaths in South Australia associated with accidental asphyxiation (smothering) in infants who had been left unattended on U-shaped pillows. Never leave children unattended on a U-shaped pillow and **do not use any type of pillow in the cot.**

## Co-sleeping:

Research shows that sharing a sleep surface with a baby increases the risk of SIDS and fatal sleeping accidents. Babies can suffocate if they sleep in the same bed with an adult or child. If you want your baby to sleep near you, place baby in a separate bassinet or cot near to your bed, not in your bed.

# Hot Water Burns Like Fire - Ouch!

**Fact 1:** *Cups of hot tea/coffee and hot water from kettles are the most common causes of hospital admissions for childhood scalds*

**Fact 2:** *Scalds from hot water in baths are less common, but usually more serious.*

**Fact 3:** *Half of the children admitted to hospital with scalds need to have surgery for skin grafting. All these children will suffer scarring.*

## How to reduce the risk of your child being scalded

### Hot Drinks:

- When making tea/coffee, keep the mugs or cups well back from the edge of the bench
- NEVER put hot drinks in a child's regular cup
- Use a non-slip placemat instead of a tablecloth
- Keep hot drinks in the centre of the table
- Only drink your tea/coffee when your child is NOT in your arms or on your lap
- NEVER let a child sip a hot drink from your mug.



### Bathroom:

- ALWAYS run cold water into a bath first. Remember that in hot weather, water from the cold tap can often be very hot
- ALWAYS check the temperature of the bath before placing your child in it
- Regulate the hot water delivered to your bathroom to 50°C. Contact the Master Plumbers Association or Kidsafe SA for advice
- To prevent your child from turning on the hot water tap, cut a slit in the side of a plastic drink bottle, then cover the handle with the bottle
- NEVER, even for a second, leave a young child unattended by an adult in a bathroom
- NEVER leave a young child in the care of another child who may turn on the hot water tap.

### Kitchen:

- When cooking, ensure your child is safe by placing a child safety barrier across the kitchen door to keep them out of the kitchen, or place them in a playpen, stroller or high chair away from cooking areas or cords
- Keep kettles/jugs and teapots away from the edge of benchtops
- Keep cords to kettles/jugs and other electrical appliances short or use coiled cords
- Turn saucepan handles inward so they don't protrude over the edge of the stove top
- Use a stove guard
- Allow free bench space near the stove, so that you don't have to carry hot pots and dishes across the kitchen
- Ensure your stove is fixed to the wall or use an oven door lock to prevent your child climbing onto the oven door and tipping the stove
- NEVER leave a bucket of hot water on the floor where your child can get to it

## First Aid for Burns and Scalds

If a child is scalded:

- **Quickly take off all the child's clothing.** Clothes can hold in the heat and make the scald worse. They can also hide other parts of the skin that may be scalded.
- **Immediately put the scalded area in cool water or run cool water on it for up to 20 minutes.** It may help to cuddle the child under a cool shower while the water runs over the scald. Cooling the scald is very important as it prevents the heat from burning into the skin's deeper layer. Do this first, before calling for help if needed (if possible get someone else to call for help while you cool the child's skin).
- **Never use ice.** Children have been dangerously chilled in baths of iced water. Ice applied to scalded skin can cause more damage to the skin
- Remove anything tight such as bracelets or jewellery. Scalds quickly cause swelling.
- After cooling the skin, if the scald is on the face, **cover the scald** with a clean, damp cotton cloth. On other parts of the body, cover the scald with clear

plastic wrap, then with a clean damp cotton pillow case or sheet. This will reduce pain and risk of infection.

- **Never use butter, oils, toothpaste, creams or ointments to cover the burn.**

Go to the hospital or doctor if the skin is broken or if the burned area is larger than a 20 cent piece. Infection may change a superficial burn into a deep burn.

## Important information about Bumbo Baby Seats

Recently, concerns have been raised by health professionals, parents and care providers about the potential for injuries to babies using the Bumbo Baby Seats.



Most commonly where injuries occurred, the Bumbo Baby Seat was being used on an elevated surface e.g. a bench top, and the baby was able to twist out of it and fall from a height.

If you choose to use a Bumbo Baby Seat:

- ALWAYS supervise your baby
- Never use it on an elevated surface
- Bumbo is not designed to be totally restrictive
- Some babies may be able to get out of the Bumbo seat
- Never use on a bed, sofa or cushion
- Never use as a bath seat or in water
- Never use as a car seat
- Baby must be fully able to support his/her head before using it
- This seat supports a baby, but is not designed to be a restraint
- Only use this seat on the floor because an active baby may get out of the seat and fall
- Never leave your baby unattended

Kidsafe SA has a large range of Grobag Baby Sleeping Bags available for purchase from the Kidsafe Centre. A safe and sound night's sleep for your baby means peace of mind and more sleep for you. Come in and visit or telephone us for more information on Grobag Baby Sleeping Bags.

## What services and resources does Kidsafe SA offer?

Kidsafe SA provides an education and information service for parents and carers of children on all aspects of child safety and injury prevention. We operate the Kidsafe Centre, where a range of brochures, Fact Sheets, DVD's and booklets are available. Information is available on a wide range of topics including playground safety and the prevention of burns and scalds, drowning, falls, choking, poisoning etc.

Kidsafe SA offers a 'Community Talks Program' on child safety and injury prevention to new parents and other interested community groups. Bookings are essential, contact Kidsafe SA on 8161 6318 for more information.

A wide range of safety products are available to inspect and purchase directly from the Centre. A mail and phone order service is also available.

Kidsafe SA also offers a playground safety and general child safety telephone advisory service on (08) 8161 6318.

### Kidsafe SA contact details

#### Location and Postal Address

The Kidsafe Centre  
Main Foyer, Kermode Street Entrance  
Women's and Children's Hospital  
72 King William Road  
North Adelaide SA 5006

#### Phone

(08) 8161 6318

#### Fax

(08) 8161 6162

#### E-mail

[sa@kidsafe.org.au](mailto:sa@kidsafe.org.au)

#### Opening Hours

Monday to Friday 9:30am – 4.00pm

#### Website address

[www.kidsafesa.com.au](http://www.kidsafesa.com.au)

Contact us with your comments, concerns or queries on child safety issues on  
(08) 8161 6318 or [sa@kidsafe.org.au](mailto:sa@kidsafe.org.au)

Please send me the Kidsafe News electronically.

My e-mail address is: .....

### Becoming a member of Kidsafe

I would like to make a tax deductible donation to Kidsafe SA. My details are provided below.

I would like to become a Member of the Foundation. My payment details are provided below. (\$44.00 for individuals, \$165.00 for organisations. Subscriptions are due and payable on 1<sup>st</sup> January each year).

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