

# Kidsafe News

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President: Associate Professor Anne Johnson

Spring/Summer 2007

## EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S

### MESSAGE

Welcome to Kidsafe News – Spring/Summer 2007.

2007 has proved to be an extremely busy and productive year for Kidsafe SA. A major focus of our work has been the "Prevention of Injuries to Children from Playground Related Falls in SA" project. Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health & Ageing, the project has seen the production and launch of the Playspace Resource Kit (See page 4 for more information), the introduction of a telephone advisory service for playground safety queries, and the implementation of a Playground Safety Audit and Inspection Service for playspace providers. If you are interested in any of these services, contact the staff at Kidsafe SA on 08 8161 6318, email [sa@kidsafe.org.au](mailto:sa@kidsafe.org.au)

National Kidsafe Day was celebrated this year on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> October, with the theme being "Playground Safety". We used this opportunity to launch a new advocacy campaign to lobby for legislation of five areas of the Australian Standards (AS) for Playgrounds. Currently Australian Standards for playgrounds are voluntary. This means that despite recommendations and public education, many playgrounds do not meet the specifications of the Standards. Kidsafe believes that legislative change is necessary to maximize the safety of children at play.

With the arrival of the warmer weather, it is important to be aware of the potential risks for children. Remember, children dehydrate very quickly in hot weather, and most importantly – **Never leave children alone in cars!**

The staff of Kidsafe SA wishes everyone a very Happy Christmas and Safe New Year.

Helen Noblet

## KIDSAFE SA INC SPONSORS

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## Proposed Changes to National Road Rules

The National Transport Commission (NTC) has proposed amendments to the Australian Road Rules covering children as passengers in cars. The proposed amendments will add greater definition to the regulations for child passengers in cars.

In summary, the proposed amendments are that:

- Infants up to minimum 6 months of age must use a rear facing restraint;
- Children up to 4 years must then use a restraint with an inbuilt 5 point harness
- Children between the ages of 4 and 7 years must use a booster seat
- Children under 4 years of age will not be allowed to occupy the front passenger seat
- Children under 7 years of age will not be allowed to occupy the front passenger seat unless all rear seating positions are occupied by children less than 4 years of age.



There is debate about whether weight and size or age is the better means to define child use of particular restraints in regulation. The NTC will consider all submissions on the proposed amendments before deciding the final wording of these amendments to the Australian Road Rules.

While there is still some decision making to occur, the intent of these proposed amendments is clear and well overdue. All in the injury prevention sector should support and encourage adoption as speedily as possible.

### Never leave children alone in a car

*A customer outside a Supermarket finds a 6 year old boy, 4 year old girl, and a 2 year old boy in a locked car with the windows closed. After unsuccessfully attempting to attract the children's attention, the customer called 000. Police and paramedics were able to eventually get the 6 year old to unlock the car door. Paramedics reported the children were unresponsive, disorientated, flushed, and profusely sweating and had delayed reflexes.*

*The children were placed in the shade under a tree and given juice and water for re-hydration; they regained alertness and began talking within 30 minutes. The children had been in the car for 10 – 20 minutes. The outdoor temperature was 28.9° and the humidity 60%, and the estimated temperature inside the car was greater than or equal to 43.3°. Paramedics reported that the children had classic signs of the onset of heatstroke.*

*Another 5 – 10 minutes would have been life threatening.*

### KIDS IN CARS - FACTS

- On a typical Australian summer day, the temperature inside a parked car can be as much as 30° to 40° higher than the outside temperature.
- 75% of the temperature increase occurs within 5 minutes of closing the car and leaving it. 90% of the temperature rise occurs within 15 minutes.
- Larger cars heat up just as fast as smaller cars
- Having the windows down 5cm causes only a slight temperature drop
- As the temperature rises, the child begins to dehydrate and develops heat exhaustion.
- Young children are more sensitive to heat than older children and adults, and are at greater risk of heatstroke.

### Never leave children alone in a car

## It's Time to Spring Clean your Playground!

Maintenance of playground equipment is essential to ensure safety for children. The following is a guide for risk managing your play space.

It is important to note that inadequate or poorly maintained under surfacing is the most common non

compliance issue that is consistently identified in playground studies.

### Organic Undersurfacing

- Organic or loose fill material should be installed to whichever is the greater depth: 300mm, or the depth that your undersurfacing supplier specifies (from the Critical Fall Height-CFH-test report) for the height of your equipment. An extra 20% is required for heavy traffic areas. Organic undersurfacing should be maintained at a minimum 250mm (plus 20% under heavy traffic areas e.g. at the base of a slide).
- Top ups of organic undersurfacing for fall heights greater than 500mm should be purchased from suppliers with certified product that meet the Australian Playground Standard AS/NZS 4422:1996, and who can supply a certificate of compliance. It is important that this certificate be kept on file for licensing and maintenance records. As a guide, topping up needs to be checked quarterly, especially around high use and compacted areas. When raking,



take care to level the upper layer of undersurfacing only, avoid incorporating the underneath soil.

- Sizes of chips may result in a choking hazard for the under 2's. Therefore, it is suggested that chips not be used in babies' areas in supervised early childhood settings.
- 'Watermarking' of equipment to indicate depth: this is an easy way to check and maintain correct depth of undersurfacing by spray painting a contrasting line on each structural post of your fixed playground equipment at the correct height (250 to 300mm) above ground level. A yellow line tends to be the best colour as even when dirty it still shows up. Once the organic material is below this line, it's time to top up with certified organic undersurfacing.



### Sandpits

- Inspect daily and maintain regularly. The sand must be raked over to remove debris, turned over to aerate, and replenished when the sand level drops 100mm below the top edge of the edging, to maintain the required depth of sand.
- The sand can also be watered periodically with a bleach solution to kill germs. A solution of sodium hypochlorite of 400grams to 20 litres of water, when applied with a plastic watering can, will treat 8 cubic metres of sand. Always add the chemical to the water and stir well, rinsing utensils with clean water immediately after use. Never allow undiluted sodium hypochlorite to come in contact with metal.

Sandpits should be covered when not in use.

### Timber Treatment

- From March 2006, Copper Chromium Arsenic (CCA) treated timber may no longer be used for new construction of playground equipment, decking, garden & park furniture.
- If you do have play equipment constructed with CCA treated timber, it is recommended that, if the timber is in good condition, it should be maintained with a coating of oil-based polyurethane or oil-based paint.
- It is also recommended that children wash their hands thoroughly with soap after contact with CCA treated timber and avoid eating while around it.

## Kidsafe Playspace Resource Kit

With funding support from the Australian Government Department of Health & Ageing, Kidsafe SA has produced a Playground Safety Resource Kit for

distribution, free of charge, to early childhood sector sites throughout the state.

The Kit provides information on the requirements of the latest Australian Standard for Play Equipment, AS 4685:2004. It also covers information on topics such as playspace providers' legal responsibilities, safe play surfaces, safe play without hazards, safe maintenance, safe play rules and safe play benefits.

The Kit will be an invaluable resource for Child Care Centres, Schools, Local Councils, Libraries and all playspace providers.

Copies of the Playspace Resource Kit can be purchased from Kidsafe SA for \$29.95 (P&H and GST inclusive). For more information on playground safety and maintenance or to order a copy of the Playspace Resource Kit, please contact Kidsafe SA on (08) 8161 6318.

## Toy Safety

In recent times, there has been much discussion and media around the importation of potentially dangerous toys from China.

As a result, the Federal Government has banned children's toys that contain unacceptable level of lead. It is now an offence to supply toys which have lead migration levels above the limit specified in the current Australian Standard, which is 90 parts per million.



The ruling follows US toy manufacturer Mattel's recalling of more than 22 million products made in China last month due to safety concerns over paint lead levels and loose magnets.

Lead migration refers to the ability of lead to enter the human body from a particular source, such as paint on a toy.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) will be enforcing the ban.

For more information on toy safety and the recent Federal Government ban, visit the following websites:

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

[www.accc.gov.au](http://www.accc.gov.au)

Product Recalls Australia

[www.recall.gov.au](http://www.recall.gov.au)

Mattel

[www.mattel.com](http://www.mattel.com)

## 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, videos and booklets are available. Information available includes the prevention of burns and scalds, drowning, falls, choking and poisoning.

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 phone information 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).

Enclosed is a cheque payable to KidSafe SA **OR**

Please charge my (tick)  Bankcard  Visa  MasterCard  
in the amount of  \$10.00  \$25.00  \$50.00  \$100.00  Other .....

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