



## Queensland

# Summer News

Volume 4; December 2008

### Executive Officer Report

Welcome to our Summer Edition of Kidsafe News, QLD. In this edition we have covered an ongoing education campaign targeting correct use of child restraints. It is anticipated that in early 2009 new Queensland legislation will be in place to strengthen existing child restraint laws. With the warmer weather it is important that everyone should be reminded never to leave a child alone in a parked vehicle; even for a few minutes. The temperature in a vehicle can rise by 30 degrees in 15 minutes. In this edition Barry Collis (Kidsafe's Deputy Chair) has provided some essential information on Bicycle Safety. This information has been drawn from his many years and vast experience as Road Safety Officer, Education QLD and his dedication to keeping children safe on the road. This is timely as many children may be receiving bikes for Christmas. We hope you find this edition informative and look forward to any feedback you may have.

#### Robyn Allen Executive Officer

### Restraints checks at Maroochydore

Kidsafe QLD proudly supported and assisted by NRMA Insurance, provided a free child restraint fitting day at Sunshine Plaza, Maroochydore. This event was held to mark the annual Kidsafe Day on 20th October 2008.

Of the 32 restraints checked throughout the day, 17 were found to be either not fitted correctly or required some sort of adjustment. Some of the common problems that were found on inspection included:

- ◆ Restraint not suitable for child's weight and height
- ◆ Restraint too old – a restraint should not be more than 10 years old
- ◆ Incorrect anchorage point used – some people mistakenly used the luggage/cargo point.
- ◆ Harness twisted
- ◆ Harness height incorrect
- ◆ Harness frayed
- ◆ Seatbelts not threaded through correctly or not threaded at all
- ◆ Harness incorrectly fitted

It is important for child restraints to be appropriate for the child's weight, height and age and that they are correctly fitted in accordance with the manufacturers instructions. A big thank you should go to the management and staff of Sunshine Plaza, 91.1 Hot FM, Win Television and our sponsor NRMA Insurance.

For further information see the Fact Sheet on Child Restraints or contact Kidsafe QLD on 3854 1829 (Mon—Fri 9am-3pm).

### Upcoming Events /News

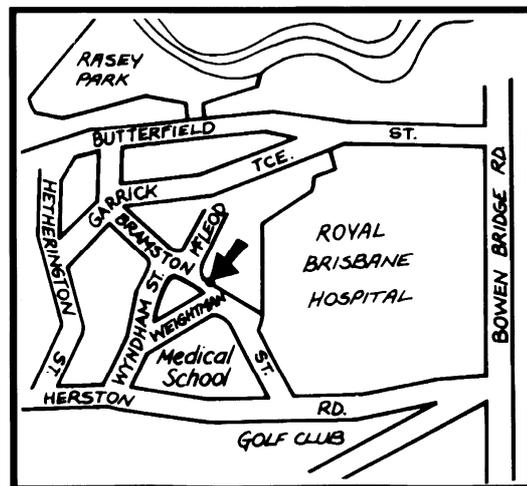
#### National Injury Prevention & Safety Promotion Conference— Melbourne July 2009

[www.oesc.viv.gov.au](http://www.oesc.viv.gov.au)

#### Kidsafe Day - 26 October 2009

#### Kidsafe's 30th Anniversary

We celebrate Kidsafes 30th Anniversary in 2009



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#### Inside this issue

Restraint Checks at Maroochydore	1
Upcoming Events/ News	1
Hot Cars and Safety Tips	2
Bicycle Safety	3

child safety is no accident

## Hot Cars

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, i.e. on a 30° day, the temperature inside the car could be as high as 70°. Within 5 minutes of closing the car and leaving it the temperature can rise by 75%.



Dark coloured vehicles reach slightly higher temps than lighter coloured vehicles. The greater the amount of glass in the car (eg hatchbacks) the faster the rise in temperature. Larger cars heat up just as fast as smaller cars. The colour of the interior trim of the car has no effect on cabin temperature. Having the windows down 5 cms causes only a slight temperature drop (78° in closed car, 70° in car with windows open 5cms).

### What are the risks?

- ◆ The temperature and humidity inside the car begins to rise while the airflow decreases.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ The younger the child, the greater the risk of dehydration and heatstroke.
- ◆ Hyperthermia, dehydration and asphyxia can all lead to death.
- ◆ Children may become distressed and try to get out of the restraint; if the harness is loose the child is at risk of strangulation.

### Safety Steps

- ◆ If you have to leave the car, even to run a quick errand; take the children with you.
- ◆ Do not use the car as a 'baby-sitter' substitute.

**It is an offence in Queensland to leave children unsupervised in a vehicle.**

### Criminal Code Act states:

364A Leaving a child under 12 unattended

- (1) A person who, having the lawful care or charge of a child under 12 years, leaves the child for an unreasonable time without making reasonable provision for the supervision and care of the child during that time commits a misdemeanour.

Maximum penalty—3 years imprisonment.

- (2) Whether the time is unreasonable depends on all the relevant circumstances.

## Hot Cars continued

### Safety when travelling in hot weather

- ◆ Provide plenty of cool fluids, preferably water, for all occupants and offer them to children regularly.
- ◆ Dress children suitably to promote airflow around their bodies
- ◆ Double check that the harness fits the child in summer time with children wearing lightweight clothing, restraints and harnesses may need to be tightened.
- ◆ For rear facing restraints, do not use a hood to protect the baby from the sun. This decreases airflow around the baby's head. Instead use a visor or sunshade on the window to filter the sun's rays.
- ◆ Make frequent stops, at least every 2 hrs, so that all occupants can get out of the car for exercise. Remove the baby from the capsule, and allow them to roll around on a rug on the ground.
- ◆ When getting back into the car, recheck the fit of the children's harnesses.
- ◆ Plan car journeys for the cooler hours of the day.
- ◆ Cool your car down as much as possible before putting the child in the car.
- ◆ When stopping or parking your car, put it under cover or in the shade to reduce the amount of the direct sunlight hitting your car.



## Bicycle Safety

### Important Facts

In all Australian States and Territories cyclists are required by law to wear a properly fitted and Australian Standard (AS2063) helmet. The helmet should sit straight and must be done up firmly so it cannot move.

Under State laws, a bicycle is a vehicle and therefore the rider (whatever age) is required to **OBEY ALL ROAD RULES** – the same as a motorist.



Cyclists need to be highly visible to other road users so wearing light coloured or reflective clothing is an important safety issue.

To keep children safe, I would suggest children under 10 to ride on footpaths, but **remember that driveways are dangerous.**

### Children and bikes

Children under 10 years should NOT ride on the road unaccompanied for the following reasons:

- ◆ They do not have the mental capacity to cope with complete traffic situations
- ◆ They have poor perception of: speed; distance and time
- ◆ Their peripheral vision is not fully developed



### Maintaining a Safe Bike

All bikes should be properly maintained and under the Australian Rules of Manufacture, bicycles are required to be fitted with the following:

- ◆ A bell or warning device
- ◆ Hand grips—covering ends of handles
- ◆ A white front reflector, a red rear reflector and yellow pedal reflectors
- ◆ A white front light and a red rear light for night riding
- ◆ Dual braking system

### Maintenance

Regular checks on:

- brakes—wear and adjustment
- chain—frequently oiled and not loose
- tyres—bald spots and pressure
- pedals—spin freely
- seat—at right height for rider
- reflectors—secure and clean
- bell or horn—working properly
- hand grips—covering handles.

## Bicycle safety continued...

### Cyclists must:

- ◆ Give clear hand signals when turning or stopping
- ◆ Ride on the left hand side of the road or use the marked bike lane if there is one
- ◆ Not double on a bicycle. These vehicles are designed to carry one person so doubling is not permitted
- ◆ Ride no more than two abreast – not more than 1.5 metres apart
- ◆ Ride a bicycle that is the correct size for the rider
- ◆ Children in children's seats must wear a properly fitted standard approved helmet

Cyclists should also:

- ◆ Keep at least 1 metre from or behind other moving vehicles
- ◆ Watch out for opening car doors
- ◆ Look out for motor vehicles pulling out from the kerb without indicating
- ◆ Give way to pedestrians on footpaths and shared ways
- ◆ Dismount to cross roadways
- ◆ Not ride on footpaths in shopping centres or where signs prohibit them
- ◆ Exercise care near driveways and watch out for cars entering and exiting driveways

The number of Qld fatalities of bike riders to 21st December 2008 is 6 which is 3 lower than the same time last year. One death is too many. Not taken into consideration in these statistics are the large number of injuries and hospitalisations of many cyclists in Queensland.

Cycling can be fun. It is great exercise and environmentally friendly but this must be coupled with safe and considerate use of our roads by all vehicle drivers.

*Barry Collis*

*Deputy Chair—Kidsafe QLD*

*Thanks also for input from Dr Caroline Acton (Maxillofacial surgeon and keen bicycle rider)*