

August, 2013

KIDSAFE QUEENSLAND

Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia



Kidsafe visits Gladstone

On July 19th, Kidsafe Queensland CEO Susan Teerds and licensed child car restraint fitter and instructor Lachlan Logan, visited Gladstone to ask an important question: *“Have you chosen the right child car restraint, are you using it properly and have you installed it correctly?”*

Hosted by Gladstone City Council at the local PCYC, Susan gave a seminar on Safety in the Home, the child car restraint laws and use, and free child car

restraint checks proudly supported by Aurizon Community.

While in Gladstone, thanks to Arrow Energy, Kidsafe trained front line health and community workers as Type 1 Fitters. Three community workers are now qualified to give advice on the correct selection, use and to install child car restraints! Gladstone is well on its way to becoming Kidsafe.

For additional information on child car restraints, see page 3.

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Contact Us!

P: (07) 3854 1829

Fax: (07) 3252 7900

E: qld@kidsafeqld.com.au

Kidsafe House: 50 Bramston Terrace, Herston

Button Batteries - you need to know:

- These batteries can be found in a number of common household items.
- A chemical reaction in the battery is activated by sweat and saliva.
- In as little as two hours the battery can begin to cause damage to skin and tissue.
- Can become lodged in the oesophagus if swallowed.
- Flat or dead batteries still have enough current to cause significant damage.



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Button Batteries - A hidden danger

Button batteries found in remote controls and other household electronic devices are a severe and little known risk for young children. Kidsafe Qld CEO Susan Teerds said that swallowing button batteries often occurs with children under the age of five, however there have been cases involving children up to the age of 12. "Button batteries present a problem whether they are ingested or inserted in an ear or nose; wherever they have prolonged local contact with the body," Ms Teerds said. "Damage occurs when the battery charge generates a chemical reaction that causes a localised caustic injury."

It is vital to detect a swallowed battery as soon as possible because of the nature of the threat involved. "While most other ingested foreign objects will pass through the gastrointestinal tract without causing any concerns, button batteries, depending on their size, have a tendency to lodge in the oesophagus (food pipe).

"Once stuck, damage starts to occur after one to two hours. "If the ingestion is not recognised, the battery can erode through into vital organs, causing catastrophic damage and sometimes death."

If parents believe their child has swallowed a battery, they must seek medical attention immediately and not give any food or water.

The coin-sized lithium button batteries can lodge in the throats of children, where saliva immediately triggers an electrical

current, causing a chemical reaction that can severely burn through the oesophagus in as little as two hours.

"An estimated four children per week in Australia present to an emergency department with a button battery related injury," Queensland Injury Surveillance Unit's Director, Dr Ruth Barker said.

"A significant problem arises when the parent does not know that their child has ingested or inserted a button battery. This is particularly so for children under the age of three years, who are more likely to ingest a foreign body and not be able to tell someone about it. Unfortunately, symptoms can mimic common childhood conditions, with vomiting, drooling and cough. Parents should take full responsibility when changing and discarding batteries and don't leave new batteries or the flat batteries within reach of children.

"Parents should take full responsibility when changing and discarding batteries and don't leave new batteries or the flat batteries within reach of children."

"Flat or dead batteries still contain enough life to generate an electrical current once ingested."

Symptoms of swallowing a button battery include:

- chest pain
- coughing
- nausea/vomiting
- diarrhoea
- abdominal pain, and

fever

One of the greatest risks is when parents are changing or discarding button batteries that are flat.

Parents must remember that flat or dead batteries still contain enough life to generate an electrical current once ingested.

It is crucial to ensure all flat or dead batteries are disposed of properly and all other batteries are kept out of reach of children.

Button batteries are found in common devices:

- bathroom scales
- hearing aids
- reading lights
- flameless candles
- games and toys
- watches
- calculators
- torches and laser lights
- remote control devices that unlock car doors and control MP3 speakers, 3D glasses and
- musical greeting cards.

The advice from Kidsafe is to:

- Examine devices and make sure the battery compartment is secure. (Only toys are required to have screwed down battery compartments.)
- Keep coin-sized button batteries and devices out of sight and out of reach (as poisons and medications).
- Dispose of old button batteries immediately and safely—for example into non-openable money box that you can buy from discount stores.
- If swallowing of a button battery is suspected, go to the hospital immediately
- Call the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 for additional treatment information
- Tell others about this threat and share these steps.

The correct restraint can save your child's life

Here are some vital tips to remind parents how to reduce the risk of injury to their children by adhering to the correct child car restraint laws.

The incorrect use of child car restraints has been found to be linked to deaths of children in cars. A recent NRMA Insurance survey revealed that one in five parents are not familiar with the child car restraint laws.

Specifically, they are not aware that all children under the age of seven should be secured in an appropriate child car restraint or a booster seat.

In 2011, a Tasmanian toddler who was secured in the rear passenger's seat by a lap belt only, died in a car crash.

This tragic incident reminds us that seatbelts are designed for people over 145 centimetres tall.

“A child's life may depend on whether parents restrain their children correctly”

If a child who does not fit the height requirement is secured only by a seatbelt which does not fit properly over a child's lap and

shoulders, this exposes the child's abdomen, spine and neck to serious injury in the event of a crash.

Kidsafe advises that children under the age of 12 should always travel in the back seat of a vehicle, not the front.

The age, weight and height of a child determine what type of restraint they should be using.

The law gives the minimum ages children can transition into the next category of restraint. If your child has not outgrown their current restraint, do not move them. If in doubt, call Kidsafe.

What are the rules?

Birth - 6 months:

Newborns must travel rearward Facing in an Australian Standard approved child car restraint.

6 months - 1 year:

Infants may travel rear or forward facing until they outgrow the restraint. They are safest rearward facing.

6 months - 4 years:

Toddlers travel forward facing with inbuilt harness until they outgrow the restraint.

4 - 7 years:

Kids travel in a booster with an adult seat belt OR H-harness until they outgrow the booster.

Kidsafe and the Broncos join forces again

Recently, Kidsafe Queensland teamed up with the Brisbane Broncos and filmed a [TV advertisement](#) showing that anyone can choose or install the child car seat incorrectly and because your kids depend on you, call Kidsafe if unsure. Kidsafe Qld CEO, Susan Teerds and Kidsafe restraint fitter, Lachlan Logan joined Broncos players Sam Thaiday, Josh McGuire, Brendon Gibb and Jarrod Wallace in the ad which is shown on the big screen at Broncos home games at Suncorp Stadium.

Kidsafe and the Broncos previously featured in a [TV ad with Kidsafe ambassador and former Wallaby great, Brendan Cannon](#), to highlight awareness and the

prevention of driveway runovers.

The ad has also been converted to radio thanks to family station 96Five.



Susan Teerds (far right) and Lachlan Logan (far left) with the Broncos, who now know a lot more about child car restraints!



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Kidsafe Frequently Asked Questions

Kidsafe are always happy to answer any questions you may have regarding child injury prevention. Here are some common questions we are asked.

What age can my child go into a booster seat?

The minimum requirement is four years of age. If your child is still fitting in their forward-facing restraint with an in-built harness, then it is safer for them to stay in that seat.

What age can my child sit in a front seat?

The minimum legal age is

seven years. From a safety perspective, Kidsafe strongly recommends that children stay in the back seat of a vehicle until they are at least 12 years — until they are able to sit with their knees over the seat with their feet flat on the floor (without slouching).

How do I know when my baby is ready to go forward facing?

Minimum age legally is six months. For safety, baby should stay rear-facing as long as they still fit into the rear-facing restraint.

The baby should only make the transition if they have a strong neck i.e. are able to sit up independently and have a good look around (able to look over their shoulder) without losing their balance. The head is the heaviest part of the baby's body.

What can I do to keep kids out of the kitchen?

Use child-proof security gates to block off access to the kitchen. If you can't do this use door and drawer lock, stove guards and oven lock.

Congratulations to our end of financial year raffle winners:

The Fruit Box gift voucher hamper worth \$200:

Clare

Delta Force paintball tickets for 10 people x3:

Joanne, Tammie, Jo

Milk by Michael Klim products for men hamper: Daniella

Milk by Michael Klim products for baby hamper: Andrea

Milk protein bombs and protein bars hamper: Chevaun

Britax Platinum Convertible baby car seat: Alan

Anaconda gift voucher worth \$20 x2: Claire, Jon

Infsecure Kompressor XT Convertible baby car seat: Debbie

Palace Cinema double pass x3: Belinda, Katrina, Sharynn

Brisbane Broncos ball signed by Justin Hodges: Glen

Miss out on one of these great prizes? Keep your eye on the Kidsafe website or Facebook for future raffles. Thank you to all the people who supported us.

Some of our raffle winners! Congratulations!



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