

Children left Unattended in cars



Leaving a child in a car, even for a short period of time can be fatal. Every year in Australia over 5,000 children are rescued after being left in a car.

In Victoria it is an offence for a person responsible for a child to leave the child unattended for any longer than is reasonable, without making appropriate arrangements for the child's supervision or care. This includes leaving children unattended in cars.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

- The temperature inside a parked car can be 20 -30 degrees hotter than outside.
- The majority of the temperature rise occurs within the first 5 minutes of parking and turning off the car.
- Leaving the windows down has little effect on the temperature rise.
- Children's body temperature can rise 3 - 5 times faster than an adult's. This places them at greater risk of losing fluid quickly, becoming dehydrated and suffering from heatstroke, which can be fatal.

SAFETY TIPS

- If you have to leave the car, even to run a quick errand, always take your children with you.
- Keep your keys on you at all times when packing and unpacking the car, to reduce the risk of them becoming locked inside.
- Set a 'look before you leave' routine whenever you get out of the car, to make sure nobody has been left behind.

- Try to plan ahead and buy petrol at times when there are two adults in the car, or get a partner/ other adult to fill your car with petrol. Look for service stations that have 'pay at the pump' facilities.
- Lock cars and secure keys when at home to prevent children playing inside the car.

SUMMER TRAVELLING TIPS

- When planning a long journey, consider travelling in the cooler hours of the day.
- Dress kids in lightweight and easy fit clothing
- Provide plenty of cool fluids throughout the journey.
- Plan regular stops so all passengers can have a stretch and rest from travelling.
- Use a visor or sunshade on the vehicle window to protect children from the sun.
- Check that your child car restraint is correctly installed and adjusted to fit your child on every trip.

If you have to leave the car, take the kids with you



IF YOU SEE A CHILD LEFT UNATTENDED

- Look for the parents or carers
- If they can't be found, if the child is distressed or you are concerned about the child's health, don't delay, call 000 and follow the operators instructions
- Stay with the car until help arrives