

# keeping kids safe

Parents, guardians and child carers have a major role to play in ensuring the safety and well being of children. The onus is on the carers of children to provide a secure and safe environment, to ensure all possible safety measures are in place and, in case of an emergency, first aid equipment and training is up to date. This information sheet has been produced to advise those caring for children on safety procedures, equipment and training available to them.

## Basic safety tips

Here are some basic safety tips parents and child carers should be aware of:

- Know the triple zero emergency call number and how to use it.
- Make sure you have a current first aid certificate and access to a fully stocked first aid kit.
- Ensure children are supervised at all times, both indoors and outdoors.
- Ensure play equipment and toys are maintained in good order and free from hazards.



- Heating appliances, electrical cords, toxic products and medications should be secured out of reach of children.
- The home should be fitted with an effective system of smoke alarms and other fire safety equipment such as extinguishers.
- The home should have a plan for the safe evacuation of children in case of fire or other emergencies.

## Improving fire safety

The home environment should be well equipped to deal with an emergency. In the case of fire safety, smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, fire blankets and a well-rehearsed fire evacuation plan should be considered the minimum safety requirements.

- Smoke alarms provide early warning of fire which could allow critical time to escape a burning building. Alarms should be checked monthly, with batteries replaced annually (National Smoke Alarm Day, June 1).
- Fire extinguishers are useful to extinguish a small fire before it spreads. They should be stored in an accessible place out of reach of children.
- Heater guards will prevent contact with hot surfaces. Guards should be installed around open fires, gas heaters, electric radiators, fan heaters and combustion stoves.

## Fire safety audit

Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) can provide you with on-the-spot advice regarding fire safety. Operation Safehome is one of QFRS's premier community safety initiatives and enables you to obtain life-saving information in your home. As part of the program, firefighters will inspect your home and advise on the best location for smoke alarms, assist in the formulation of a home evacuation plan and address the specific needs of householders such as the correct and safe storage of chemicals. Operation Safehome is available statewide and is free of charge. Call 1800 815 080 during office hours to arrange an Operation Safehome visit.

## Evacuation plan

In the event of a fire or other emergency, an evacuation plan could save lives. Evacuation plans should be carefully thought out and well rehearsed. To design an evacuation plan, firstly draw a floor plan of your home. Mark two ways out of each room – a window and a door. Ensure you have a primary escape route and a secondary escape route, and a designated meeting place at the front of the building. Keep keys for deadlocks close at hand. Teach children to “stop, drop and roll” if their clothing catches on fire and to crawl low in smoke to the nearest exit – more people are affected by smoke than flames. Practise using the evacuation plan regularly, so children are familiar with the procedure.

## First aid preparedness

It is recommended that all parents and carers of children have a current first aid certificate and update their first aid training regularly. The Australian Resuscitation Council also recommends proficiency in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) be maintained by regular practice and annual assessment. Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) delivers training in all levels of first aid and patient care. QAS currently offers 14 first aid and injury prevention courses, aligned to national competency standards. QAS first aid and injury prevention courses range from a four-hour basic resuscitation course to a 16-hour comprehensive first aid course where participants learn emergency treatment for sudden collapse, fractures, bleeding, burns, poison, bites and stings. For all QAS first aid course inquiries and enrolments call 1300 650 377.

## Services for parents and children

- Parentline (8am to 10pm 7 days/week) **1300 301 300**
- Kids Help Line (24 hr) **1800 551 800**
- Community Child Health Service (24 hr) **3862 2333**  
Outside Brisbane **1800 177 279**
- Child Care Information Service **3224 4225**  
Outside Brisbane **1800 637 711**
- Women’s Infolink **1800 177 577**
- *dvconnect* womensline (24 hours) **1800 811 811**  
Domestic violence counselling and refuge placements
- *dvconnect* mensline (10am to 6pm) **1800 600 636**  
Counselling, support and information

Your local library has a range of excellent books on parenting.

## First aid kits

First aid kits should be stored both in the home and the car. There is an extensive range of first aid kits available to meet specific needs. Parents should ensure all first aid kits are restocked regularly and are appropriate for their needs. For information on first aid kits supplied by Queensland Ambulance Service call 1300 650 377 or contact your nearest QAS Customer Service Office.

## Car restraints

By law, children must be restrained at all times when travelling in a car and car restraints must comply with Australian Safety Standards. When fitted correctly, car restraints have proven to be very effective in preventing injuries to children in an accident. Queensland Ambulance Service assists child carers and new parents with baby capsule hire and fitting. Fully trained ambulance officers and QAS staff ensure the capsule is correctly fitted to provide babies with comfortable and safe travel. Further information is available by contacting your nearest QAS Customer Service Office or via the QAS website at [www.ambulance.qld.gov.au/firstaid/babycap.asp](http://www.ambulance.qld.gov.au/firstaid/babycap.asp)



Look in your local White Pages for your Queensland Health Community Child Health Service and for information about their parent education courses (Positive Parenting Program - Triple P)

**Adapted from information contained in the Parent Easy Guide Series © Parenting SA, Government of South Australia 2000.**

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Tip sheets are also available from the Department of Communities website at [www.communities.qld.gov.au](http://www.communities.qld.gov.au)



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