

# Kids in Hot Cars

## NEVER LEAVE CHILDREN UNATTENDED IN A CAR

The thought of running a quick errand and leaving the children in the car for a minute can be tempting for a parent or carer. Leaving children unattended in a car on any day is dangerous, let alone a hot summer's day. It could result in serious injury or death. In some states it is against the law to leave children unattended in a car. Check the motoring authority in your state or territory for the relevant laws and regulations.



## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

On a typical Australian summer day, the temperature inside a parked car can be 20 degrees C to 30 degrees C hotter than the outside temperature.

The temperature inside a car can reach dangerous levels quickly; 75% of the temperature rise occurs within the first 5 minutes of closing and leaving the car. Large cars heat up just as fast as smaller ones.

Leaving the windows down slightly has little effect on the inside car temperature. Tests conducted by RACQ have shown that when car windows are left open by 10cm, the inside temperature is only 5 degrees C cooler than with the windows closed.

Young children are more sensitive to heat than older children or adults as their body temperature can rise 3 to 5 times faster. This puts them at greater risk of heatstroke and other health risks as their body temperature reaches dangerous levels much sooner.



## HOT CARS SAFETY TIPS

- If you have to leave the car, even to run a quick errand - take the children with you.
- Never use the car as a substitute 'babysitter'.
- Never leave children in a car without adult supervision for any length of time, not even a minute!
- Lock cars and secure keys when at home to prevent children playing inside the car.
- Make 'look before you leave' a routine whenever you get out of the car.
- When a child is missing, in addition to checking backyard pools and any other bodies of water, be sure to check inside the car and the boot of any nearby vehicles.
- Never leave valuables in the car, including your kids!

## SUMMER HOLIDAY TRAVELLING

- Provide plenty of cool water and fluids throughout the journey.
- Dress kids in lightweight and easy fit clothing.
- When planning a long journey, consider travelling in the cooler hours of the day.
- Plan to stop every 2 hours so all passengers can have a rest from travelling.
- If you need to protect babies or young children from sun through the car windows, use a visor or sunshade on the vehicle glass.
- On every trip, check the fit of your child's harness, child restraint tether straps and secure seatbelts to ensure they are correctly latched and firmly adjusted.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU SEE A CHILD ALONE IN A CAR?

- If you notice that a child has been left unattended in a vehicle call 000 and ask for the Fire Brigade.
- Give your location, the vehicle registration number, the approximate age of the child and the condition of the child.
- If the car is unlocked, open the doors and shield windows with a blanket etc. and wait for emergency services - or - safely try to remove the child from the vehicle if you are concerned about the child's condition as every second counts!

For further information please visit Kidsafe Victoria at:  
[www.kidsafevic.com.au](http://www.kidsafevic.com.au)

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