

Keeping children safe

English



Parents from all cultures and communities want their children to be safe from harm. While Australia is generally a safe place, children can be harmed at home or in the community.

Preventing children's accidents

Many children are hurt in accidents. It is the main cause of injury and death for children under 15 years.

Most accidents can be prevented.

Accidents include:

- > being hit by a car in a home driveway or on the road
- > drowning at the beach, swimming pool or in the bath
- > falls in the playground, at home or other places
- > burns, poisoning, choking
- > babies dying from sleep accidents.

There is a lot parents can do to help prevent accidents and protect children from harm.



Keep young children safe by staying close and watching them.



Many young children are hit by cars in home driveways. Check children are safe before moving your car.

Road and car safety

- > The law says:
 - anyone driving a vehicle must have a licence
 - everyone must wear a seat belt
 - children must use the right seat belt or safety seat for their age and size.
- > Never leave children alone in a car even for a short time. Cars get very hot, very quickly. Children can become ill and some have died.
- > Always supervise children near traffic. Hold their hand when crossing roads.

Water safety

Children can easily drown, even in small amounts of water.

- > Never leave children alone in the bath.
- > Stay close and watch them at the beach, swimming pool, rivers.
- > Put up barriers to keep children away from water, such as ponds or pools. Empty water out of baths, buckets, sinks.
- > Teach children to swim.
- > Teach them how to be safe at beaches, rivers, dams. These waters can be dangerous.



Learning to swim can be a fun activity for the whole family. It is never too late to learn.

Home safety

Many accidents happen in the home.

- > Put dangerous things out of reach – knives, cigarettes, lighters, alcohol, medicines.
- > Keep children away from fires and heaters.
- > Make sure they can't reach pots of hot food on the stove. Turn pot handles away.
- > Keep hot drinks away from children.
- > Make sure furniture or TVs can't fall on them.

Watch children around dogs, cats or other pets.

Safe sleep for babies

Some babies die in their sleep if their face becomes covered and they can't breathe. They are too small to move out of danger. Some die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

- > Always sleep babies on their back, not on their tummy or side.
- > Keep their head and face uncovered.
- > Don't smoke around babies or pregnant women.
- > Sleep babies in a safe cot, not on soft things such as couches.
- > Don't put anything soft in the cot such as pillows, quilts, soft toys.
- > Sleep babies in the parents' room, in their own cot, for the first 6 to 12 months.
- > Breastfeed babies if you can.

Babies need their own place to sleep so they don't get too hot or rolled on. It is not safe for babies to sleep with you.



Preventing choking

Young children can easily choke.

- > Don't give them foods they can't chew such as apples, nuts, lollies, sausages with skin.
- > Don't give them chewing gum.
- > Stay close while children eat.
- > Watch out for toys with small parts or button batteries they could swallow.

Sun safety

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. The sun burns in less than 15 minutes even on a cloudy day. Make sure everyone:

- > wears a hat and loose, cool clothing
- > uses sunscreen (30+ SPF)
- > is in the shade, especially between 10am and 3pm.

While protection from the sun is important, we all need some sun on our skin each day to get enough Vitamin D for strong bones. It can be harder for people with dark skin or who cover their skin to get enough sun. Ask your doctor about Vitamin D.

Children going out alone

If children go out without an adult they need to know how to:

- > be safe on the road or when riding a bike
- > use the bus, tram, train or taxi. Make sure they have enough money
- > contact you, another trusted adult, or emergency services on 000.

It is important to know where children are going, how they will get there and who they are meeting. Ask about their plans for staying safe, especially teenagers.

Leaving children home alone

The law says that parents are responsible for children's safety and must not leave them in an unsafe situation. Children always need to be looked after by someone who:

- > you know and trust
- > is mature and responsible
- > knows what to do in an emergency.



Online safety

Parents can help children learn to use the internet safely by:

- > talking with them about what they are doing
- > using it yourself so you know how it works
- > letting children know to tell you or another trusted adult if something worries them
- > finding great information at www.esafety.gov.au.

If there is bullying you could talk to your school or report it to internet providers or the Police.

Make sure children know not to meet anyone they only know online.

Children always need someone responsible to look after them.



Children's safety is at risk if family members are affected by alcohol or drugs.

Family violence

Family violence is a problem in every community and culture. It is never OK. It is against the law in Australia.

Violence can be:

- > physical, such as hitting, pushing, pinching, hair pulling
- > emotional, such as shouting, making people feel bad, making threats
- > controlling what people do.

Violence in the home harms children. Even if they don't see or hear violence, the stress changes how their brain works and they can't grow or learn as well. It can affect babies in the womb. Family violence can make it harder for adults to care for children.

If there is violence you can get help from services. Phone the Police on 000 if there is immediate danger.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse can happen in any culture or community. Parents can help keep children safe by teaching them:

- > that their whole body is private
- > to tell you or another trusted adult if someone makes them feel scared or uncomfortable, even if it is a family member or friend
- > that you will believe them and protect them
- > that you don't keep secrets about these things
- > not to go with anyone they don't know.

Most sexual abuse of children is by people they know and trust.

If you feel angry or upset, remember never shake a baby. It can cause brain damage and some babies die.

Emergencies

- > If you are very worried about a child you can take them to a hospital emergency unit.
- > If you think a child has swallowed something harmful, call the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 or an ambulance on 000.
- > If anyone is seriously ill, injured or has trouble breathing, call an ambulance immediately on 000.

If you think a child is at risk of violence, abuse or neglect, you can help by phoning the Child Abuse Report Line on 13 14 78.

Services

Emergency

000 Police, Fire, Ambulance
13 11 26 Poisons Information Centre
13 14 44 Police attendance if there is a problem but no immediate danger

Interpreters

Interpreting and Translating Centre

1800 280 203, 8.30am-5pm, Mon to Fri
Phone or face to face interpreters www.translate.sa.gov.au

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)

13 14 50 any time day or night for phone interpreters
www.tisnational.gov.au

Children's safety

Healthdirect

1800 022 222 any time day or night if someone is sick or injured
www.healthdirect.gov.au

National Home Doctor Service

13 74 25 to book an after hours doctor home visit
<https://homedoctor.com.au>

Kidsafe SA

8161 6318, 8.30am-5pm, Mon to Fri
Information on keeping babies and children safe, including safe car seats
www.kidsafesa.com.au

Red Cross Baby Seats

8443 9700, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri
Advice on buying, hiring, fitting safe car seats
www.redcross.org.au/baby-seats

SIDS and Kids SA

8332 1066, 9am-4pm, Mon to Fri (crisis response available 24/7)
Information about safe baby sleep and grief support www.sidssa.org

Child Abuse Report Line

13 14 78 any time day or night
If a child is at risk of violence, abuse or neglect
www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse

Office of the eSafety Commissioner

1800 880 176
Online safety and reporting cyber bullying information in a number of languages www.esafety.gov.au

Violence

Domestic Violence Crisis Line

1800 800 098 any time day or night
Help with violence, emergency accommodation and referrals
<http://womenssafetyervices.com.au>

Migrant Women's Support Program

8152 9260, 8.30am-5pm, Mon to Fri
Free, confidential assistance for migrant women and children in family violence <http://womenssafetyervices.com.au>

1800 RESPECT

1800 737 732 any time day or night
Talk to someone by phone or online about family violence or sexual assault www.1800respect.org.au

Multicultural services

African Women's Federation of SA

8161 3331 or 8354 2951, 9am-5pm, Mon, Wed, Fri
304 Henley Beach Road, Underdale
Programs and services for African women www.awfosa.com

AMES Australia

7224 8550, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri
Ground floor, 212 Pirie Street, Adelaide
7224 8500, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri
2/59 Commercial Road, Salisbury
Settlement services for refugees and newly arrived migrants
www.ames.net.au/locations/find-sites

Australian Migrant Resource Centre

8217 9500, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri
23 Coglein Street, Adelaide
Settlement, family relationships and family violence services for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers
See www.amrc.org.au for metro and country locations

Australian Refugee Association

8354 2951, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri
304 Henley Beach Road, Underdale
8281 2052, 9.30am-4.30pm, Mon to Fri
1 Brown Terrace, Salisbury
Assistance and support for refugees www.australianrefugee.org

Refugee Health Service

8237 3900 or 1800 635 566 (country callers) 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri
21 Market Street, Adelaide
Health service for newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers

Multicultural Youth SA (MYSA)

8212 0085, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri
Shop 9 Miller's Arcade, 28 Hindley Street, Adelaide
Programs for young people and families www.mysa.com.au

Muslim Women's Association of SA

8212 0800, 9.30am-3pm, Mon to Fri
Level 4, 182 Victoria Square, Adelaide
Programs and support for Muslim women and their families
www.mwasa.org.au

Parenting

Parent Helpline

1300 364 100 for advice on child health and parenting

Islamicare – Parenting Helpline

1800 960 009, 7 days a week
Confidential support for parents of teenagers <http://Islamicare.org.au>

Raising Children Network

Parenting information and videos in many languages
<http://raisingchildren.net.au>

Parenting SA

Other multicultural Parent Easy Guides and general Guides on a wide range of topics, including 'Safety for young children', 'Home alone', 'Protecting children from sexual abuse', 'Cyber safety'
www.parenting.sa.gov.au

This Parent Easy Guide is one of 9 developed by Parenting SA for families from new and emerging multicultural communities in South Australia. We would like to thank the many services and families that generously contributed their knowledge and expertise to the Guides, especially families and staff members whose photographs appear in them.

Parenting SA is a partnership of the Department for Education and the Women's and Children's Health Network.

Phone (08) 8303 1660

www.parenting.sa.gov.au

Parent Easy Guides are free in South Australia

Important: This information is not intended to replace advice from a qualified practitioner.

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