

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Equality



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NINE OUT OF TEN VICTORIAN KIDS AT RISK IN THE CAR

Concerning statistics from Kidsafe which found nine out of ten Victorian kids are not safe in the car have promoted a call for parents and carers to make sure their child car restraints are installed correctly.

The survey of more than 9,200 cars found that nine out of ten child car restraints are either incorrectly installed or used, with 51 per cent needing an adjustment and 37 per cent requiring a full re-installation.

Should a parent crash while driving, the risk of life-threatening injuries to children are up to six times greater when child car restraints are incorrectly installed or used.

To help improve safety in the car, Victorian families have access to the *Safe Seats, Safe Kids* program – which offers free fittings and safety checks by accredited professional child car restraint fitters.

The program is run by Kidsafe Victoria in partnership with Neighbourhood Houses Victoria and backed by a \$4 million investment from the Andrews Labor Government to provide free appointments for parents and carers to have their child car restraint installed or inspected.

Common incorrect installation and usage issues identified as part of the program include:

- top tether straps were twisted, connected to the wrong point or not connected to an anchor point at all
- twisted harness straps or harness straps that were at the incorrect height
- seatbelts which were threaded through the incorrect path, or were loose
- ISOFIX attachments which weren't secured correctly
- children who had been graduated to the next stage of car restraint before they were the right size.

Kidsafe Victoria has also launched a new free online e-learning tool to help parents make their child car restraints safe. The e-learning tool offers information and advice on choosing, installing, adjusting and using child car restraints and booster seats.

The free inspections and the e-learning course can be found at the safeseatssafekids.com.au

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"Keeping kids safe in the car is every parent's priority when driving, and these free inspections are helping parents do just that."

"Children are up to six times more likely to get seriously hurt in a crash when they're not properly restrained, so I urge all parents and carers to take advantage of this important resource."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Roads and Road Safety Ben Carroll

"The correct adjustments to a booster seat can be the difference between life and death in a crash, so it's vital carers take the time to get it right."

"We're making it easier than ever to keep kids safe in the car, through this important partnership with Kidsafe Victoria and Neighbourhood Houses Victoria."

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