

MEDIA RELEASE - 13 December 2007

Make it a Kid Safe Summer

Summer is here again!

Summer holidays can be a time of great fun for children however they are also the time when children under ten years of age present more frequently to the Emergency Department at Princess Margaret Hospital as a result of injury.

Between December 2006 and February 2007, there were total 2,883 injury presentations to Princess Margaret Hospital. Children under 5 recorded the highest number of injury presentations during January 2007 with a total of 467; while presentations by children aged 5 to 9 years were highest in December 2006, with 308 presentations.

This December, Kidsafe WA with the support of the Department of Health is launching a Summer Seasonal Safety Campaign reminding parents of the simple steps they can take to ensure safety this holiday season.

Melita Leeds, Program Manager, Kidsafe WA says "The campaign asks parents and carers to *Make it a Kid Safe Summer* by taking simple steps to ensure the safety of children when travelling, during celebrations, selecting toys for Christmas and around water".

Between December and February children participate in many activities that they may not encounter during other times of the year. The summer holiday period poses a heightened injury risk to children for a number of reasons:

- Festive celebrations such as family gatherings, carols by candlelight and Christmas day luncheons means children are often in environments that aren't designed for the safety of children
- Adult supervision may be less vigilant during celebrations as there can be confusion over who is watching the children
- New gifts and toys received by children may not be suitable for their age or ability
- Recreational activities increase due to time off school and gifts of new bikes and sporting equipment
- Water based activities increase due to the hot weather
- Travel increases as families get together from vast distances to celebrate the holiday season
- Parents and guardians may not be able to remain at home to supervise children during the six week school break

The good news is that these injuries can be prevented by following a few key safety tips:

- **Toy Safety:** Follow the age recommendations on toys even if you believe that your child is exceptional; the age recommendations relate to the safety of the toy.
- **Safe Celebrations:** Don't neglect the supervision of small children during family gatherings and holiday parties.
- **Water Safety:** Always supervise children in and around water. Ensure that pool barriers are functioning and are correctly used.
- **Safe Travelling:** Kidsafe WA with the support of SGIO remind parents to ensure that child car restraints are suitable for your child's weight and age and correctly installed before embarking on holiday travel; create safe play areas away from moving vehicles; and if you have to leave the car, even to run a quick errand – Be Kidsafe and take your children with you.

Kidsafe WA asks parents and guardians to follow these tips and remember to supervise young children at all times – Make it a Kid Safe Summer.

Further information is available from the Kidsafe WA website www.kidsafewa.com.au

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Media Opportunities

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