



# Annual Report

Kidsafe Victoria **2023/2024**





**Our mission  
is to make a  
safer world  
for kids**

# About Kidsafe Victoria

Kidsafe Victoria was established in 1979 as part of the Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia. We are an independent, non-profit organisation dedicated to the prevention of unintentional death and injury to children through education, advocacy and research. Our mission is to make a safer world for kids.

Preventable injuries are the leading cause of death for Australian children aged 1-14 years and one of the leading causes of hospitalisation. In Victoria, approximately 31 children die and over 100,000 are treated in hospital each year due to unintentional injuries, with children under the age of five most at risk.

Kidsafe exists to prevent these tragedies. We do this by empowering families – particularly those who are most vulnerable – with the provision of evidence-based practical strategies and knowledge of how to keep their kids safe. We run evidence-based community outreach programs and develop educational campaigns and resources in collaboration with a variety of stakeholders.

Kidsafe Victoria works with the community to provide information, education and advice to parents and carers around five key areas:

Since Kidsafe's establishment, the number of children killed by unintentional injury in Australia has more than halved. To date, a great deal has been achieved in preventing unintentional childhood injuries – however, as the statistics reveal, there is still much to be done. Kidsafe and the community must continue to work together to ensure all Victorian children have the opportunity to grow into healthy adults.

**Kidsafe and the community must continue to work together to ensure all Victorian children have the opportunity to grow into healthy adults.**



**Home  
Safety**



**Road  
Safety**



**Water  
Safety**



**Safe  
Play**



**Product  
Safety**

# Our Strategy



## Our vision

A safer world for kids at home, on the go and during play



## Our purpose

To empower families to avoid preventable child injury and death

## Our ultimate goal for 2025

To halve the number of preventable child deaths and trauma in Victoria

## Our impact goals



Families and professionals are informed, supported and equipped



Coordinated, whole-of-sector approach whereby priority and emerging issues are understood

## Our team and organisational goals



Skilled team and culture of inclusion and excellence



Respected, valued and sought-after partner and brand



Strong foundations to sustain growth and resourcing to meet the need at hand

# Snapshot of Kidsafe's 2023/24 activities



**93**

Child restraint fitting education sessions



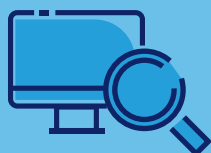
**7,837**

Safe Seats Safe Kids free child car restraint fitting and safety checks



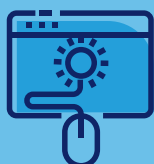
**1,000+**

Public enquiries answered



**120K +**

Website visits and almost 295,000 page views



**1,250 +**

Users of our professionals e-learning tool



**350K**

Resources distributed



**20K+**

Followers on Facebook



**1,600+**

Followers on Instagram



**350+**

Media segments including national television





# Child injury statistics

Injury is the leading cause of death for Australian children aged 1-14 years – more Australian children die as a result of injury than from cancer and asthma combined.

In Australia, every year:

Over  
**170**  
CHILDREN  
**DIE**

**60K+**  
children are admitted  
to hospital due to an  
unintentional injury

Many more  
are treated  
in hospital  
emergency  
departments

In Victoria, every year:

APPROX  
**35**  
CHILDREN  
**DIE**

**100K+**  
children are treated  
in hospital due to an  
unintentional injury

The good news  
is that child  
injuries can be  
prevented!



# Major causes of child injury

The major causes of death for children aged 0–4 years due to injury include:



**Transport**  
(both as passengers  
and pedestrians)



**Drowning**



**Choking /  
suffocation**

The major causes of injury resulting in hospital admission or emergency department presentations for children aged 0–4 years include:

- Falls
- Hit/struck/crush injuries (e.g. TV and furniture tip overs)
- Cutting/piercing
- Poisoning
- Fires/burns/scalds
- Transport
- Choking/suffocation
- Drowning



# CEO + President's report



Erica Edmonds



Melanie Courtney

**As we look back on the past financial year, we're reminded of both the challenges we've faced and the progress we've made in our mission to keep children safe.**

Sadly, we lost 35 young lives this year, with a record-high 14 deaths from transport-related injuries, including low-speed runovers. These numbers, along with over 100,000 hospital treatments costing around \$70 million (excluding long-term costs), underscore the critical importance of our work.

We're excited to share our new strategic plan, which reaffirms our commitment to reaching those most at risk and working towards our vision of zero child deaths from injury in Victoria. You can read more [here](#).

In response to the alarming number of low-speed runover incidents and thanks to funding from the TAC, we've collaborated with stakeholders and the community to develop a comprehensive strategy and will launch this next financial year.

While our Safe Seats Safe Kids program's initial funding wrapped up in December 2023, we're not slowing down. Thanks to Transurban's generous support, the team is continuing to provide fittings, primarily for families in the west.

We're actively seeking new funding sources to keep this vital program running, including government, private and fee for service and hope to have some positive news soon.

We're also proud to have kicked off the Nursery Equipment Program, providing free cots and car restraints to vulnerable families. Our team worked tirelessly to develop an online portal in just eight weeks, and we've been rolling out the program across the state since November. You can find more details on page 22 of this report.

Our advocacy efforts have been in full swing, tackling issues like septic pit safety, child car restraint laws, and curtain and blind cord safety. We're incredibly grateful to the families who've shared their stories – their bravery is truly inspiring and continues to drive our work.

On the national front, we're leading the work to obtain Health Promotion Charity (HPC) Status for injury prevention organisations. This status is crucial for attracting and retaining top talent in our field. We're also pushing for an active, funded National Injury Strategy to better protect children across Australia.

We've continued our community outreach with first aid courses in partnership with Emergcare and free swimming lessons for vulnerable children. Our media presence has been strong, and we've contributed to numerous safety standards updates.





**We've also delivered significant numbers of child restraint education and accredited sessions, maintaining our leadership in this area.**

We've also delivered significant numbers of child restraint education and accredited sessions, maintaining our leadership in this area.

Our board has grown stronger this year with some exciting changes. We welcomed Adrian Wong, Anita Orr and Katrina Bringham to the board at our AGM.

Additionally, we formed a Business Development Subcommittee with Marianna Petrenko, Rowan Pizzey and Chris Samartzis, and welcomed Jessica Kerr to our reformed Governance Subcommittee.

We're also thrilled to have Trudy Marr, Sudha Joseph and Robert Roseby join our Advisory Board, bringing their valuable expertise to our team.

We'd like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Brooke Disney and Jason Snell, who stepped down during the year, for their significant contributions over a number of years.

A highlight of our year was our hugely successful Gala Ball fundraiser, held on 3 May at the stunning Plaza Ballroom. We were delighted to host 300 key supporters for an evening of celebration and connection. The night was a resounding success, raising an impressive \$110,000 for our crucial work.

It was also our pleasure to present our Program Partner, Kidsafe Champion and Media Awards during the event. You can read more about these well-deserved recipients later in this report.

This Gala not only raised vital funds but was an opportunity for us to acknowledge the wonderful families and communities with whom we work and raise awareness of both our organisation and the work we do.

Looking ahead, we have our work cut out for us. We will be renegotiating the Nursery Equipment Program (currently an annual undertaking), looking to secure funding for a statewide Safe Seats Safe Kids program, and continuing our advocacy efforts across some key risk areas. But with the incredible support of our board, team, partners and community, we're ready for the challenge.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we work towards a safer future for all children in Victoria. Together, we're making a real difference.

*Erica Edmands* *Melanie Courtney*

Erica Edmands  
President

Melanie Courtney  
CEO

# Board, staff and subcommittees

## Board

Erica Edmands (President)  
Mark Stokes (Vice President)  
Justin Siebert (Treasurer)  
Julia Sheehan (General Member)  
Brooke Disney (General Member, resigned Nov 2023)  
Katrina Brigham (General Member, commenced Nov 2023)  
Anita Orr (General Member, commenced Nov 2023)  
Adrian Wong (General Member, commenced Nov 2023)  
Jason Snell (General Member, resigned April 2023)

## Secretariat

Melanie Courtney (Chief Executive Officer)  
Jason Chambers (General Manager Program and Communications)  
Kathy Taylor (General Manager Child Car Restraints)  
Sarah Sexton (General Manager Operations)  
Kaitlyn Patten (Administration Co-ordinator)  
Sarah Mullaly (Project Manager)  
Rob Wise (Product Integrity and Child Safety Manager)  
Courtney Rayner (Fundraising Manager; parental leave Feb-June)  
Kat Deith (Fundraising Manager; parental leave cover Jan-June)  
Andrew Ellis (Communications Manager)  
Shannon Griffiths (Senior Digital Media Officer)  
Alissar El-Murr (Policy and Program Manager)

## Life members

Joan Adams  
Mark Stokes  
Ron Smith  
Robert Caulfield  
Erin Cassell  
Marianna Wickert  
Steve Reynolds  
Martin Botros

## Support

Scott Garrett and Jaryd Fletcher –  
**Preflight** (Website)  
Danielle Tomas –  
**Tomas Studios** (Graphic Design)  
Stacey Price and Melissa Budge –  
**Healthy Business Finances**

## Finance Subcommittee members

Justin Siebert (Chair)  
Erica Edmands  
Mark Stokes  
David Mylonas  
Stacey Price (Observer)  
Melanie Courtney (Observer)  
Heather Morecroft

## Governance Subcommittee (formed February 2024)

Katrina Brigham (Co-Chair)  
Adrian Wong (Co-Chair)  
Jessica Kerr  
Justin Siebert  
Erica Edmands  
Melanie Courtney (observer)

## Business Development Subcommittee (formed February 2024)

Mark Pellas (Chair)  
Marianna Petrenko  
Rowan Pizzey  
Chris Samartzis  
Anita Orr  
Julia Sheehan  
Melanie Courtney (observer)





**Education, training  
and awareness**





## First aid

**Kidsafe Victoria was delighted to maintain our partnership with Emergcare, a paramedic-led first aid training provider, throughout this financial year.**

Together, we delivered an innovative program that provides parents, carers, and professionals with essential skills and knowledge in injury prevention and first aid.

This collaboration has enabled us to enhance our offerings and meet the diverse needs of our target audiences. The available courses include:

- **Perinatal First Aid:** Offered in collaboration with the Centre of Perinatal Excellence (COPE), this course provides practical information and advice on CPR, first aid, and injury prevention, along with evidence-based perinatal mental health education to support parents' mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- **Paediatric First Aid:** A 3-hour educational training program that covers infant and child CPR and how to manage common child first aid emergencies. It also includes practical injury prevention education and strategies.
- **Accredited First Aid:** Our nationally recognised, accredited first aid training courses are designed for businesses, organisations, and employees across various sectors, including Maternal and Child Health Nurses, early childhood educators and staff of community organisations.

In March we proudly launched our Family First Aid Kits in partnership with Emergcare, marking a major step in improving home safety for families. The kit is designed to equip parents and carers with the essential tools needed to administer first aid, providing a reliable and trusted resource for family care.

**The Family First Aid Kit features a unique pouch system with clearly labelled compartments, ensuring swift access to necessary items for various injuries and illnesses, ranging from minor cuts and burns to sprains and even snake or spider bites.**

Each kit also includes a Baby Essentials Kit, which provides gentle care tools like a nasal aspirator, sick bags, and wet wipes, along with a convenient change mat, ensuring preparedness for unexpected moments with little ones.

We are excited to continue offering first aid courses for both families and professionals, while also promoting our Family First Aid Kits.







The seasonal approach of the campaign ensured that toddler water safety messages remained relevant throughout the year.

## Keeping Victorian Kids Safe In and Around Water All Year Long

**Kidsafe Victoria was grateful to receive funding from Play It Safe By The Water to launch a new water safety initiative titled 'Keeping Victorian Kids Safe in and Around Water All Year Long'.**

This project involved implementing four comprehensive seasonal campaigns aimed at raising awareness of water safety among parents and carers of toddlers aged 0-4 years in Victoria. Each campaign focused on key water safety issues, including backyard swimming pool and spa safety, farm water safety, bath safety, and home water safety related to eskies, ponds, and buckets.

The seasonal approach of the campaign ensured that toddler water safety messages remained relevant throughout the year. Each campaign included a variety of activities such as media releases and social media campaigns across Kidsafe Victoria's platforms, including Facebook and Instagram advertising.

We developed and distributed communication kits for stakeholders, including local councils, community organisations, Maternal and Child Health (MCH) nurses, and early childhood centres, to assist them in implementing local campaigns. Additionally, we conducted webinars for parents and caregivers, as well as for professionals.

Our first campaign, launched in early October, focused on pool and spa safety. It incorporated key messaging from our long standing "**Safe Barriers Save Lives**" (SBSL) backyard pool safety initiative, which has been running for 12 years.

During the 2023/24 summer season, the annual SBSL campaign saw significant engagement across all platforms.

As part of our farm water safety initiative, we developed a new video to highlight the unique water hazards encountered by families in regional/rural areas. The video features key water safety messages, along with practical tips and advice for families on how to keep children safe in and around different bodies of water on the farm.

Thank you to the PISBTW Committee for their generous support of our campaign.







## Safe Seats Safe Kids

In its fourth year the Safe Seats, Safe Kids program provided vital free child car restraint fittings, safety checks, and education to Victorian families. In collaboration with Neighbourhood Houses Victoria and with the generous support of the Victorian State Government, our program has made significant strides in promoting child safety on the road.

From July to December 2023, our dedicated team conducted 7,837 restraint checks and fittings across 45 local government areas. It's noteworthy that 90% of the child car restraints inspected required adjustments, refitting, or replacement to comply with Australian standards. These figures underscore the critical role our program plays in ensuring the safety of children during travel.

Our commitment to expanding our reach saw us partner with council-operated Neighbourhood Houses and other public venues. We increased the number of events featuring multiple fitters, collaborating with the Nunawading Highway Patrol and participating in local markets like 'Bumble Bee' and 'All for Kids'. We were honoured to have Victorian MPs, including Dylan Wight, Katie Hall, Melissa Horne, and Alison Marchant, witness our program in action.

While funding from the Victorian State Government concluded in December 2023, we are thrilled to have received support from external stakeholders eager to continue the program in their localities. We extend our heartfelt thanks to sponsors such as Transurban, Britax, Victoria Police, JLL, and Mirvac.

**Their support enabled us to conduct over 680 child car restraint checks between January and June 2024, with 91% requiring an adjustment or re-installation to ensure parents and carers are transporting their little ones correctly and safely.**

We also thank the professional child car restraint fitters who shared their expertise to educate and empower parents and carers attending the free fitting, ensuring their little ones are transported safely.

We are actively seeking further sponsorships to sustain this essential service throughout 2024 and 2025. Our mission is clear: to ensure that every child in Victoria can travel safely.







## National Kidsafe Day

**On Wednesday 15 May, we celebrated National Kidsafe Day, marking 45 years of dedicated service ensuring the safety of children across Victoria.**

Since our establishment in 1979, we've worked tirelessly to keep kids safe. At that time, over 700 Australian children tragically lost their lives each year due to preventable incidents.

**Today, through our collective efforts, that number has decreased to around 150.**

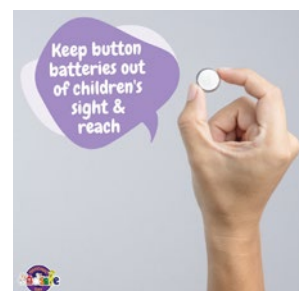
While this is undoubtedly a significant achievement, three families still experience the devastating loss of a child every week due to preventable injuries.

This year's National Kidsafe Day featured Kerrie, who lost her beautiful grandson Lincoln in a curtain and blind cord incident – you can read more about this on page 28. Lincoln's story serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of our work and the urgent need to continue raising awareness about child safety in the home environment.

In recognition of our 45th anniversary, we launched a social media campaign to encourage families to address common injury hazards in their homes. The campaign focused on practical solutions to reduce the risk of injuries in and around the home, continuing our mission to prevent tragedies like Lincoln's.

The campaign also promoted the range of resources we have for parents and carers including our Baby Safety Guide, Child Car Restraint Course and Making Your Home Kidsafe.

To coincide with the social media campaign, we launched the "Donate \$45 for 45 Years" campaign, calling on supporters to contribute one dollar for each year of Kidsafe Victoria's journey. Every donation went directly towards empowering Victorian families with practical strategies and vital knowledge to prevent childhood injuries. Thank you to the generosity of our supporters.





## Hunter Boyle Children's Swim Program

**In August 2020, two-year-old Hunter Boyle tragically drowned in a dam on a farm in Shepparton. In the depths of their grief, Hunter's parents, Ash and Matt, were determined to make a difference and prevent other families from experiencing similar heartbreak.**

Partnering with Kidsafe Victoria, they launched the Hunter Boyle Children's Swim Program in 2021, aimed at providing free swimming lessons and equipment to children in need in the Goulburn Valley region.

The program has focused on delivering swimming lessons and water safety education to vulnerable children, particularly those from families facing financial barriers. Initially designed to support 10 children, the program has grown substantially, making a wider impact in the community.

We have made significant progress in the program, achieving several key milestones to date, including:

- More than 40 local children receiving free swimming lessons, equipping them with essential water safety skills. Participants also received complete swimming kits that included bathers, towels, goggles, and swim bags.
- The provision of six scholarships to address the shortage of swim instructors at Aquamoves Lakeside Shepparton, covering essential expenses such as Working with Children checks, first aid training, and swim teacher certification.
- Establishment of a key community connection with Community Hub of St Georges Road Primary School & Shepparton English Language Centre which supports migrant families, where 30 children and their mothers were funded to begin swimming lessons.

- Culturally appropriate swimming attire was also provided to the mothers to help them overcome barriers to participating in swimming activities.
- Water safety education was delivered through media campaigns and local community initiatives, enhancing awareness of water safety issues.

Kidsafe was also excited to learn that the HBCSP was awarded the Kidsafe Australia Program of the Year as part of the National Kidsafe Day Awards in March. This award is a testament to the courage of Ash and Matt, and their drive to make a difference in his memory. It is also great recognition for the support and efforts of the local Shepparton community who have helped to self-fund the program activities.

We look forward to expanding the reach of this program in Shepparton as well as other local government areas in Victoria over the coming years.

Drawing inspiration from the community support demonstrated in the inaugural event, including the pivotal role played by Hunter's parents, Matt Boyle and Ash Napolitano, we aim to enhance our water safety initiatives and broaden our reach, ensuring a greater impact across Victoria.

### Hunter Boyle Children's Swim Program named KidSafe program of the year



By Grace Carter  
Apr 18, 2024







## Play It Safe By The Water – bath safety project

In 2022/23, baths and spa baths were the equal leading locations (along with swimming pools) for toddler drownings in Australia. To address this concerning trend, Kidsafe Victoria, with funding from Play It Safe By The Water (PISBTW), developed a series of resources to help parents and carers keep their children safe at bath time.

These resources included two videos—one focused on bath safety and the other on the safe use of baby bath aids.

Additionally, a digital bath safety flyer was created, which was translated into five languages (Arabic, Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Hindi, Vietnamese, and Punjabi).

The flyer presents key bath safety messages in a simple and clear format, making the information accessible to families.

These resources were distributed to a range of key stakeholders, including multicultural organisations, to ensure broad access to families from diverse backgrounds. Through the provision of these resources, we aim to equip families with the knowledge they need to prevent bath-related drownings and to keep their children safe.



**Did you know that 20 seconds and a few centimetres of water is all it takes for a toddler to drown?**



## Kidsafe Injury Prevention Short Course

**In November 2023, Kidsafe Victoria introduced the newly updated Kidsafe Injury Prevention Short Course. This innovative course underwent extensive revision, building upon the success of our previous e-learning resources tailored for Maternal and Child Health (MCH) nurses and community organisation staff, initially supported by the Victorian Department of Health.**

Prior to this update, over 1,250 users were registered across both e-learning platforms.

This short course has been specifically tailored to support professionals (e.g. MCH nurses, staff at community organisations, early childhood educators, local council staff members), by providing up to date information on a range of child injury prevention issues, including relevant Australian Standards, best practice recommendations and links to useful resources parents and carers can be directed to.

Covering essential topics such as home safety, road safety, water safety, safe play, and product safety, our course ensures professionals are well-equipped to support families in keeping their children safe.

The shift to a fee-for-service model has established a framework that ensures its sustainability and ongoing relevance for professionals committed to child safety. This transition allows Kidsafe Victoria to continuously update and improve the course content, ensuring that it reflects the latest research, Australian Standards, and best practices in injury prevention.

We look forward to continuing to promote our Kidsafe Injury Prevention Short Course, providing professionals with the essential knowledge and skills needed to foster safer environments for children across Victoria. With ongoing updates and improvements to the tools, we anticipate continued uptake and engagement from all relevant stakeholders.

## Accredited Course in Type 1 Child Restraint Fitting

**Now in its fourth year, it's been exciting to witness the growing interest and enrolments in Kidsafe Victoria's accredited child car restraint fitting course.**

The nationally recognised course—52862WA Course in Type 1 Child Car Restraint Fitting—equips participants with the skills needed to install child car restraints and perform Type 1 fitting and checking services. Additionally, participants gain the knowledge to educate consumers on selecting and using child car restraints properly.

In 2023/24, we welcomed enrolments from a diverse group, including mechanics, car dealerships, child protection staff, occupational therapists, childcare workers, career changers, and current child car restraint fitters interested in joining the 'Safe Seats, Safe Kids' program. During this period, Kidsafe Victoria delivered 11 courses, accrediting 84 participants as child car restraint fitters. We're eager to continue delivering this course and training more professional fitters in the 2024/25 financial year.



# Child car restraint education workshop

**This year Kidsafe Victoria, with funding support from the VicRoads Community Road Safety Grants Program (VCRSGP), was excited to be able to offer subsidised accredited child car restraint fitting workshops to foster carers, family support workers and family day care educators across the state.**

This nationally recognised, face-to-face workshop aims to equip participants with the knowledge and skills to install and select suitable child car restraints from a specific range of restraints for transporting children in their care.

The one-day workshop consists of a theoretical component – which provides information and advice on the Victorian child restraint road rules, the different types of child restraints and the process of choosing a suitable child restraint – and a practical session, which provides staff hands-on experience installing various types of child restraints and booster seats.

Due to the variety of hours the carers perform, the course was delivered virtually throughout the year.

We are excited to see this program continue to grow over the next year, providing foster carers, family support workers and family day care educators with the skills and knowledge to enable them to transport children safely in their care.



## 2-hour child car restraint fitting education sessions

**For nearly a decade, Kidsafe Victoria has received funding support from the VicRoads Community Road Safety Grants program (VCRSGP). This partnership enables us to provide child car restraint fitting education sessions to staff from community organisations at a reduced cost.**

The funding from VCRSGP helps subsidise many of these sessions each year, making child car restraint education more accessible.

Our two-hour sessions include both theoretical and practical components. Participants learn about Victorian child car restraint road rules, the different types of child car restraints, and how to select the appropriate restraint based on a child's age and size.

Additionally, the practical session offers hands-on experience in installing and using various child car restraints and booster seats.

In 2023/24, Kidsafe Victoria conducted 93 education sessions, reaching over 930 staff members from community organisations. We look forward to continuing this program in 2024/25.





## Nursery Equipment Program

**The Nursery Equipment Program is a vital initiative delivered by Kidsafe Victoria, with funding from the Victorian State Government. This program provides free child car restraints and cots to eligible vulnerable families across Victoria, facilitated through the Maternal Child Health Service.**

Kidsafe Victoria commenced delivery of the program in October 2023. Key highlights include:

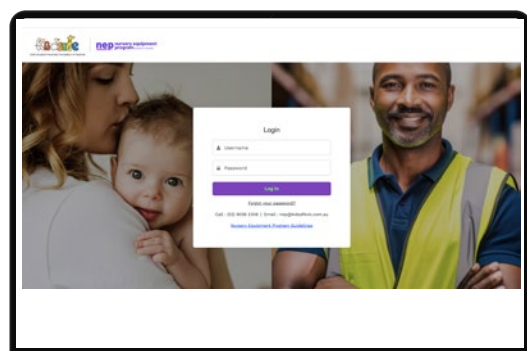
- 770 child car restraints were installed
- 994 cots were assembled
- The program was provided to 95 Maternal Child Health Services across Victoria
- A new online ordering portal was developed to streamline access to the program

A crucial component of the program is the education provided to families, ensuring they know how to use the items safely. This includes guidance on adjusting the child car restraint as the child grows, promoting ongoing safe use over time.

Looking ahead, we are eager to explore opportunities to further enhance this program. This includes improving referral pathways for families so they can access the program before their baby is born, ensuring they can safely take their newborn home from the hospital.



**770 child car restraints were installed and 994 cots were assembled.**



**nep** nursery equipment  
program KIDSAFE VICTORIA





## Low Speed Vehicle Runover Prevention Awareness Day

**On 16 April, Kidsafe Victoria proudly promoted National Low Speed Vehicle Run Over (LSVRO) Prevention Awareness Day. The day, which is held on 16 April each year, is dedicated to raising awareness about the dangers of LSVROs and promoting key driveway safety preventative measures to the community.**

This awareness day was established by Emma and Peter Cockburn in memory of their beloved daughter, Georgina, who was fatally injured in a LSVRO incident on 16 April 2011. Since 2022, Kidsafe Victoria has had the privilege of continuing the mission of The Georgina Josephine Foundation through our Ambassador Program, after they entrusted us with their operations. Our partnership with Emma and Peter seeks to uphold Georgina's legacy by educating families on how to reduce the risk of LSVRO incidents and advocating for safer driveway environments for children.

The 2023 campaign included diverse outreach efforts such as social media initiatives and the distribution of educational resources to families, professionals and Victorian MPs.

Our campaign resulted in considerable media attention, including national stories on the 9 Network featuring Mel's driveway injury story.

We extend our deepest gratitude to Emma and Peter for their unwavering commitment and trust in us to continue this vital work.







# Resources





## Making Your Home Kidsafe

Kidsafe Victoria launched a new resource to support parents and carers to identify potential injury hazards in their homes and put practices in place to help keep their babies and children safe.

'Making Your Home Kidsafe – A Guide for Parents and Carers' (which is an update of Kidsafe's previous resource, 'A Parent's Guide to Kidsafe Homes') provides parents and carers with practical information and advice on a range of topics including water safety, falls, burns and scalds, safe sleeping, poisoning, choking, suffocation, button batteries, and driveway safety.

The new edition includes links to real-life stories to help demonstrate how childhood injuries can occur, updated fire safety information which has been developed with Fire Rescue Victoria and Country Fire Authority, an expanded home safety checklist, CPR/ first aid information, and links to useful resources and programs.



**Provides parents and carers with practical information and advice on a range of topics including water safety, falls, burns and scalds, safe sleeping, poisoning, choking, suffocation, button batteries, and driveway safety.**

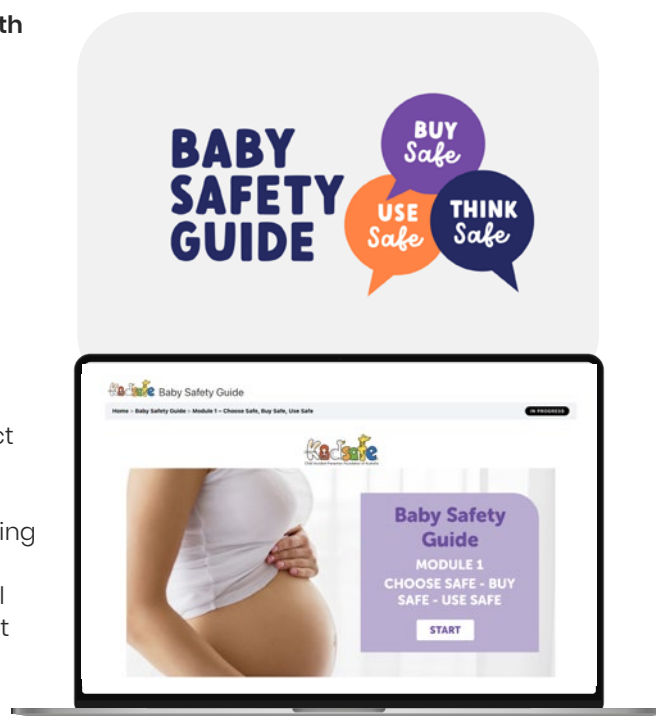
# Baby Safety Guide

**The Baby Safety Guide is a free online learning tool designed to provide new and expectant parents with important information on keeping their baby safe.**

This interactive guide walks users through two key modules:

- Module 1 focuses on choosing and using safe products, highlighting important safety features to look for, as well as the relevant mandatory Australian standards.
- Module 2 provides practical injury prevention and first aid tips across home, road, water, and play safety, offering valuable guidance to protect babies as they grow and develop.

Looking ahead, we are committed to further enhancing and expanding the Baby Safety Guide. Our goal is to continue providing parents and carers with essential safety information in an engaging, accessible format that helps them navigate the challenges of keeping their little ones safe.



# Community Support Centre

**Since opening Kidsafe's Community Support Centre in 2017 at the Monash Children's Hospital we have been able to provide a space for parents, carers, health professionals and the local community to engage with our services and learn about child injury prevention.**

A key feature of the centre is the four information and advice hubs, one for each of Kidsafe Victoria's four focus areas – home safety, road safety, water safety and safe play. Each of these hubs contain a range of take-home resources as well as interactive elements including a child car restraint, pool barrier and safe sleeping display.

We are working on a refresh of the support centre by early 2025 to make it an even more inviting space for parents, carers and kids.





## Social media

Kidsafe Victoria continues to use social media platforms effectively to share up-to-date child injury prevention information and advice with our key audiences. These digital channels allow us to engage in real-time with parents, carers, community organisations, and professionals.

We aim to create social media content that's timely and relevant to the season, presenting it in a clear and engaging way to help us reach as many people as possible with our important safety messages, while also building a supportive online community centered on child safety.

At the conclusion of the 2023/24 Financial Year, Kidsafe Victoria had built up an audience of:

**f 20,900+ followers on Facebook**

**📷 1,600+ followers on Instagram**

**in 700+ followers on LinkedIn**



## Connect with us on social media

**f Kidsafe Victoria**

**🐦 @KidsafeVic**

**📷 kidsafevic**

**in Kidsafe Victoria**

## Phone and email support

**Kidsafe Victoria receives dozens of enquiries each week via phone, email and face-to-face.**

Enquiries are predominantly from parents, carers, Maternal and Child Health nurses and community organisations looking for information, resources and advice on a range of child injury topics.

Enquiries regarding the Nursery Equipment Program, the Safe Seats, Safe Kids Program and specific questions regarding choosing and using child car restraints were the most frequently asked questions in 2023/24.





**Advocacy**



# Septic pits

**Kidsafe Victoria was made aware of the dangers posed by unsecured septic systems when Amanpreet reached out to us after tragically losing her 3-year-old son Nihal after he stepped onto an unsecured septic pit on a family friend's property in March 2023.**

Amanpreet and her family were attending a housewarming when Nihal, who was playing outside, couldn't be seen. Unable to locate him, a desperate search began among the 150 guests on the property.

Only when they witnessed another child's foot getting caught in the cover of the septic pit, did someone open the lid. Devastatingly, they spotted Nihal's jumper in the water. Despite desperate attempts to revive him, Nihal could not be saved.

**To honour her son and help prevent future tragedies, Amanpreet, with the support of Kidsafe Victoria, established Nihal's Legacy Program under our Ambassador Program – to help raise awareness of the dangers posed by septic pits.**

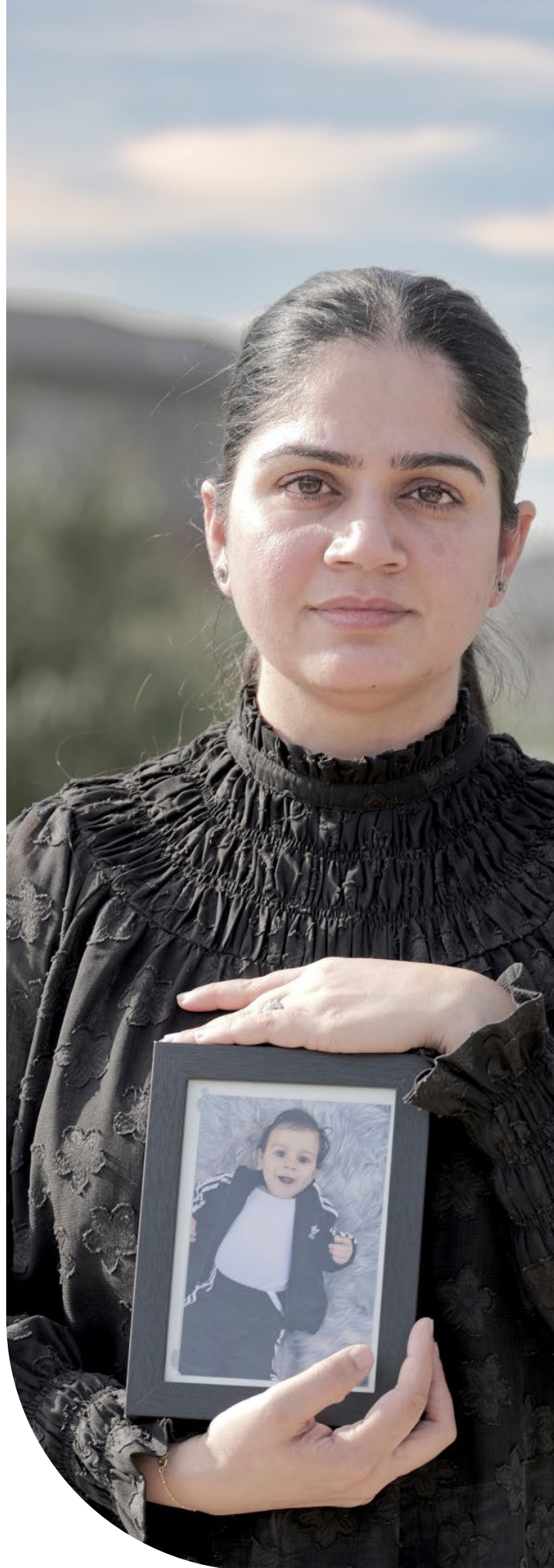
As part of Nihal's Legacy Program, we ran a campaign encouraging all homeowners with septic systems to check the safety of their systems – including making sure that the lid is secure. In addition to this, Kidsafe has been advocating for 2 key priorities that will help save future lives:

- The installation of a child resistant screen under the lid as a secondary backup option if the lid fails; and
- A Certificate of Compliance for septic systems when a property is sold or rented

To date, we have received incredible support for these efforts, and encouragingly, the Coroner's Court of Victoria has echoed our proposed measures.

They recommended that the Victorian Building Authority begin scoping work for the introduction of a Certificate of Compliance for all septic systems in Victoria, as well as consider mandating the installation of child-resistant screens on all septic pits in the state, actions we had recommended as part of the campaign.

We are committed to advancing these important initiatives over the next year and remain deeply grateful to Amanpreet for her remarkable courage in sharing her story.





## Curtain and blind cords

**Over the past year, we have made significant strides in advocating for legislative reforms to improve the safety of children in rental properties. Recognising the dangers posed by unsecured curtain and blind cords, our dedicated advocacy, alongside the courageous efforts of Kerrie, has resulted in a state government proposal that mandates securing these cords in all rental properties by 2025.**

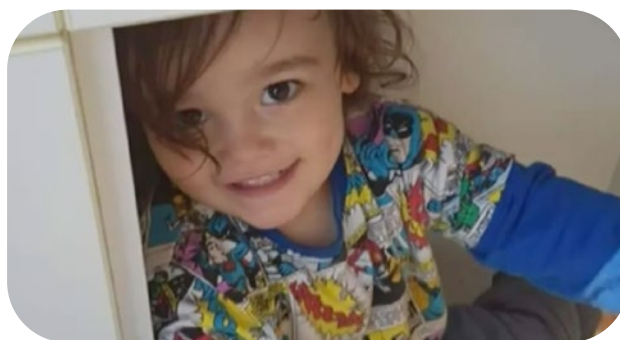
This regulation requires the installation of curtain and blind cord anchors in every rental property by 30 October 2025, with no exceptions, regardless of when the blinds were initially installed.

The heartbreaking loss of three-year-old Lincoln, who tragically lost his life due to a blind cord incident while playing on a windowsill in an unfamiliar rental property, highlights the urgent need for these safety standards. His grandmother, Kerrie, has been a relentless advocate for this cause, aiming to prevent other families from experiencing similar tragedies.

Victorian parents and carers residing in older rental properties do not have to wait for the new standards to take effect. Free blind cord safety kits are available through the Consumer Affairs Victoria website, enabling them to proactively modify older curtains or blinds.

**Kidsafe Victoria wholeheartedly welcomes the introduction of this mandatory blind cord safety requirement, ensuring the protection of children across Victoria.**

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Kerrie for her unwavering dedication and advocacy in sharing her story which has been instrumental in driving this legislative change.







## Reversing cameras

**Following years of advocacy alongside families affected by both fatal and non-fatal driveway incidents, Kidsafe Victoria was thrilled to be part of the announcement by the Australian Government regarding a new mandate that requires reversing technologies in all new vehicles.**

On 26 July, Kidsafe Victoria joined Federal Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Carol Brown, at a media event outside the Monash Children's Hospital, where she announced the new legislation.

This legislation, known as Australian Design Rule 108/00 – Reversing Technologies, mandated that reversing cameras and sensors be installed in all new vehicle models starting from 1 November 2025. For vehicles from existing models, this life-saving technology would be required by 1 November 2027.

**This new standard has marked a major advancement in reducing the number of driveway-related injuries and fatalities, particularly among pedestrians, one of Australia's most vulnerable road user groups.**

The introduction of these technologies would give drivers improved visibility when reversing, helping to prevent the devastating consequences of low speed runover incidents.

Several families who had tragically lost their children in driveway incidents, including Emma and Peter, who lost their 15-month-old daughter Georgina in 2011, and Eve, who lost her 14-month-old daughter Pippa in 2014, attended the announcement.

Their stories, along with their continued advocacy, were instrumental in prompting these legislative changes. We sincerely appreciate their courage in sharing their experiences to help make a difference.

While this milestone is significant and the rollout is eagerly anticipated, Kidsafe still emphasises that reversing cameras are a driving aid only and cannot be relied on to prevent all incidents.





**Events**



# MRC races

**Kidsafe was thrilled to participate as a charity at the MRC Foundation Charity Family Race Day.**

It was a fantastic day filled with thrilling races, family activities, and lively entertainment. We had the wonderful opportunity to share our Kidsafe messages with a broad audience, raising both funds and brand awareness. It was a perfect blend of fun and purpose, and we're grateful to have been part of such a meaningful event.



## Transurban

**With the support of Transurban, we hosted two Safe Seats Safe Kids events during National Road Safety Week in May 2024, providing free child car restraint fittings and safety checks to parents and carers in Melbourne's western suburbs.**

These events not only offered expert fittings from accredited professionals, but also provided valuable resources and a vehicle tidy bag to enhance travel safety for children. Our team found that 96% of restraints inspected were incorrectly used or installed.

Following the success of these National Road Safety Week events, Kidsafe Victoria, with Transurban's support, hosted six additional #checkmyride events in June 2024. The free community events further underscored the vital role of these fittings and safety checks, with our accredited fitters finding that 91% of restraints had been improperly used or installed.

We were honoured to have special guests Liz Waller, Acting GM HSE of Transurban, and Melissa Horne MP, Minister for Roads and Road Safety, visit our events. Both expressed their admiration for the knowledge and service provided by our professional fitters.

Transurban's support has been invaluable, and we look forward to further collaborations to ensure every child's safety on the road.



## Britax

**We are incredibly grateful for Britax's continued support in 2023/2024, which has been vital in advancing Kidsafe Victoria's mission to enhance child safety.**

As returning supporters, Britax enabled two successful Child Car Restraint (CCR) Checking Days, held at Springvale City Hall and the City of Whittlesea, offering local parents and carers free fittings and safety checks.

These events provided essential education and resources, ensuring child car restraints were correctly installed and used, while also boosting Britax's brand visibility.

In addition to the CCR Checking Days, Britax and Kidsafe Victoria launched a scholarship program to train community members in safe child car restraint installation and education.

We also produced four consumer videos with practical advice for parents, supported by a social media competition to drive engagement. Britax's sponsorship of the 2024 Gala of Enchantment further highlighted their commitment, raising awareness and funds for our programs.





# 2024 GALA OF ENCHANTMENT

JOIN THE *Magic* OF KIDSAFE VICTORIA

## Gala Ball

**The third annual Kidsafe Victoria Gala took place on Friday 3 May, at the spectacular Plaza Ballroom in the Regent Theatre, Melbourne CBD. This significant event was dedicated to fundraising and celebrating the impact of our child safety initiatives over the past year.**

Three hundred attendees – including Members of Parliament, industry leaders, community leaders, sponsors, friends and the incredible families of our Ambassador Program – came together to raise funds and celebrate the impact of our child safety initiatives over the past year.

The event was hosted by Kidsafe ambassador and Olympian Matt Welsh and media presenter Candy Hertz and featured a line-up of notable speakers, including Chloe Shorten as the keynote speaker.

Chloe shared an inspiring speech, highlighting her family's deep-rooted connection to Kidsafe's origins as well as a call to invest in the future safety of our children. Her parents were involved in the very beginnings of Kidsafe, playing a pivotal role in laying the foundation for the organisation's ongoing commitment to child safety.

Alongside Chloe, other distinguished speakers included Josh Bull MP, Andrew Crisp, and Richard Lim, adding to the evening's engaging and informative atmosphere.

The Gala also saw the presentation of the inaugural Kidsafe Victoria Awards, designed to recognise and celebrate outstanding contributions to child safety. The awards honoured individuals and organisations that have gone above and beyond in advocating for child safety and ensuring that the importance of this cause reaches far and wide.

Congratulations to our award winners:

- Kidsafe Champion: Associate Professor Warwick Teague, Director of Trauma, Clinical Lead for Burns and Academic Paediatric Surgeon at The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne
- Program Partner: Emergcare
- Media Award: Emily Rice, Nine Network

We extend our gratitude to returning Gold Sponsors Britax and Baby Bunting, as well as new sponsors Lim's Pharmacy and Wheelton Philanthropy, whose support was instrumental in the success of the event.

The Gala featured a variety of fundraising activities, including a silent auction, live auction, and raffle, which engaged our guests and contributed significantly to the evening's success.



Through these initiatives, the Gala raised over \$110,000, which will be allocated to furthering Kidsafe Victoria's education and awareness programs. We appreciate the collective efforts and contributions of all involved in advancing our mission to ensure child safety.







**Media campaigns**



# Media campaigns

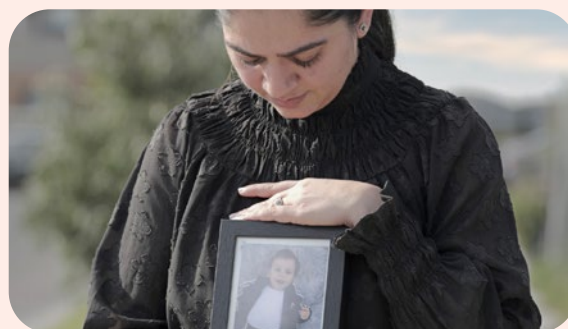
Throughout 2023/24, Kidsafe Victoria continued to enhance its mission of preventing injuries to children through targeted media campaigns.

These campaigns addressed a variety of critical safety topics, including the dangers associated with septic pits, the importance of child booster seats, the role of reversing cameras in vehicle safety, and the risks of curtain and blind cords.

This year, we leveraged our upgraded in-house video production capabilities, enabling us to deliver high-quality, informative content directly to news outlets. This strategic enhancement has substantially increased our media footprint, allowing us to provide valuable safety information more effectively to time-constrained journalists.

Our efforts have led to significant media engagement, with nearly 400 mentions across diverse media channels, including national TV coverage. Notably, our campaign on reversing cameras and their importance for vehicle safety captured widespread attention and was featured extensively on national platforms.

**A highlight of our digital outreach was the video campaign on booster seats, featuring Lisa, Sam, and Dr Warwick Teague, which has attracted more than 100,000 views on YouTube. This achievement not only demonstrates the compelling nature of our content but also underscores our growing digital influence.**







## **Our collaborations and committees**



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## Thanks



We thank the Victorian Department of Health and the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing for providing ongoing support through various funding to assist our operations, as well as the delivery of the Safe Seats, Safe Kids program.

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## Grants



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## Sponsors

Kidsafe Victoria Community Support Centre

Safe Barriers Save Lives  
backyard pool safety campaign



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## Partners



# Kidsafe Committees

## Kidsafe Advisory Committee

Established in 2020, the Kidsafe Victoria Advisory Committee was formed to inform, discuss, share and explore child injury issues and prevention strategies. The committee is composed of leading sector stakeholders across industries such as health, welfare, research and emergency services. The Coroners Court of Victoria also provides support to the Committee with updates on child fatal injury trends.

### Members:

- Associate Professor Warwick Teague, DPhil Oxford, FRACS, FRCS – The Royal Children’s Hospital, Melbourne
- Deb Tsorbaris – Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare
- Dr Janneke Berecki-Gisolf – Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC), Victorian Injury Surveillance Unit (VISU)
- Superintendent Paul Gardiner – Victoria Police
- Kim Howland – Municipal Association of Victoria
- Ciara Millar – Coroners Court of Victoria
- Helen Cunningham – Queen Elizabeth Centre
- Robert Roseby – Monash Children’s Hospital
- Danielle Smith – Monash Children’s Hospital
- Sudha Joseph – Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- Trudy Marr – are-able

Please visit [kidsafevic.com.au](https://kidsafevic.com.au) to view bios on each committee member.

## Safe Seats, Safe Kids (SSSK) Project Control Group

The SSSK Project Control Group provides strategic direction and leadership to ensure the Safe Seats, Safe Kids program is delivered successfully and effectively by Kidsafe Victoria and Neighbourhood Houses Victoria. With representatives across government, welfare and emergency services, the group aims to ensure the program is delivered on time, within budget and carefully considers all stakeholders.

### Members:

- Melanie Courtney – Kidsafe Victoria (Chair)
- Jason Chambers – Kidsafe Victoria
- Kathy Taylor – Kidsafe Victoria
- Keir Paterson – Neighbourhood Houses Victoria
- Cameron McRae – Neighbourhood Houses Victoria
- Melinda Spiteri – Neighbourhood Houses Victoria

- Louise Purcell – Department of Transport
- Sjaan Koppel – Monash University Accident Research Centre
- David Young – Transport Accident Commission
- Blake Harris – Transport Accident Commission
- Detective Senior Sergeant Sarah Carmichael – Victoria Police
- Daniel Pennefather – Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

## Farm Safety Council

The Farm Safety Council provides advice to the department regarding the delivery of the ‘Making our Farms Safer’ commitment and the safety component of the Smarter, Safer Farms initiative. Members of this council include government, training organisations, worker and farmer unions and health services. Jason Chambers represents Kidsafe Victoria on this committee.

## Play It Safe By The Water Committee

The Play it Safe By The Water campaign is a Victorian Government led partnership working to raise awareness of water safety within the Victorian community. Other members of the committee include Life Saving Victoria, the Department of Justice, Aquatics and Recreation Victoria, Surfing Victoria, Yachting Victoria, YMCA, Worldwide Swim School, Belgravia Leisure and Swimming Victoria. Gretchen Waddell represents Kidsafe Victoria on this committee.

## Infant and Nursery Products Alliance of Australia (INPAA)

The primary focus of INPAA is to establish safety standards, injury prevention strategies and forums to promote the safe purchase and use of nursery products. The committee is made up of a number of members including industry suppliers, retailers, manufacturers and service providers. There are also a number of active working groups which Kidsafe is involved in, with Rob Wise representing Kidsafe on this committee.

## The Achievement Program

The Achievement Program’s vision is for every Victorian to be healthy, well and participate – at work, in school or in early childhood care. Kidsafe Victoria aligns with the safer environments benchmark, assisting early childhood services across the state to create safe environments for children.



# Treasurer's Report

## Justin Siebert



**I am pleased to be providing my second Treasurer's report for Kidsafe Victoria Incorporated (Kidsafe Vic) to the Annual General Meeting.**

During 2023-24, Kidsafe Vic has continued to fulfil its mission and ensure that child safety remains a priority, as well as meeting its obligations to numerous funders and stakeholders.

The total revenue brought to account for the year was \$2.76M, up from \$2.16M during 2022-23. A significant part of the increase is due to the Nursery Equipment Program. Additionally, we have annually indexed funding from the government that contributes to our administration costs. I would like to recognise and thank the Victorian Government for the ongoing support we have received. Their ongoing commitment to our organisation is essential to ensure our sustainability.

Our surplus for 2023-24 is \$24k. This has increased our retained earnings to \$183k. We are in the process of determining what an appropriate level of reserves are to ensure the sustainability of the organisation for the future, and the pathway to achieving this level of reserves.

As some of our programs are funded in advance our cash position is solid with Cash At Bank of \$631k.

Our liabilities are largely made up of Unspent Grants / Unearned Income \$902k; this amount contains a contribution to our future administration costs.

Our Full Time Employee (FTE) equivalent is forecasted to remain stable at 9.75 in 2024-25.

We remain grateful to Monash Children's Hospital for providing us with space to operate at their facility.

We are thankful that Stacey Price and her team at Healthy Business Finances continue to supply us with accounting support that contributes significantly toward us achieving our mission.

I am grateful for the support provided by the other members of the Finance Subcommittee, namely Erica Edmands, Mark Stokes, David Mylonas and Heather Morecroft.

The outlook for 2024-25 will include a further increase in revenue as it will incorporate a full year of operation of the Nursery Equipment Program and at greater capacity.

Justin Siebert  
BBus MBA(Exec), FCPA GAICD CA  
Chair of Finance And Risk Management Subcommittee

