



Fiona Wood Foundation

Media Release

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Every week, 17 children are treated at a specialist burns unit across Australia and New Zealand

Protect your family this National Burns Awareness Month



Kidsafe Australia is urging parents and carers to take action to prevent burns in the home as winter hits and ensure they are aware of the correct first aid measures if a burn does occur.

The call comes during National Burns Awareness Month, an Australia-wide campaign focused on raising awareness of prevention and correct first aid treatment for burns and scalds across all age groups. The campaign is run by Kidsafe Australia in partnership with the Australian and New Zealand Burns Association (ANZBA).

Data from the Burns Registry of Australia and New Zealand (BRANZ) reveals that in 2018/19, **906 children aged under 15 were admitted to burns units** across Australia and New Zealand.

Kidsafe WA spokesperson, Scott Phillips highlighted that the home is the most common location for childhood burn injuries, with statistics showing that the majority occur in the kitchen (45.9%).

Scalds from hot drinks, water from a saucepan/kettle/jug/billy/urn and hot food were the most common cause of burn injuries (56%).

“It’s important as parents and carers that we remain vigilant and take action to help reduce the risk of burns to children in the home. Along with active adult supervision, important prevention steps include keeping children out of the kitchen when meals are being prepared, placing hot food and drinks out of reach, and ensuring older children eat whilst sitting at a table to help prevent spills.”

“Particularly during winter, hot water bottles, heat bags, and heaters are also potential burn hazards for children. Restricting children’s access to these items, in addition to treadmills - which can cause friction burns - is also recommended,” said Mr Phillips.

The statistics also reveal that **nearly one third (28.7%) of children, 37% of adults (16-64 years) and 50% of older adults (65 years +), did not receive the recommended ‘gold standard’ initial first aid treatment** for their burn injury.

Professor Fiona Wood, Director of Burns Service of WA, stressed the importance of administering correct first aid in the event of a burn.

“If a burn occurs, it is critical that cool running water is applied to the burn area for 20 minutes.”

“Taking the correct first aid steps can make a significant difference in the rehabilitation and long-term outcome of the burn for the patient”, said Professor Wood.

Tahlia is 12 years old and was in the kitchen rinsing out containers for recycling. She poured hot water from a kettle into a Nutella jar which immediately shrunk from the heat causing Tahlia to drop the jar. It dropped over her foot and the hot water spilled and pooled into her shoe.

Mother Candice was in the bedroom and heard screaming from both her children. Tahlia’s younger sister thought to pull off Tahlia’s shoe and Candice immediately put Tahlia in the bath.

“I wasn’t sure if I should call an ambulance immediately, but I looked up Health Direct and went through a burns questionnaire which said for this size burn to call the ambulance. So I did”, said Candice.

Two months later, Tahlia has had one surgery and many visits to Perth Children’s Hospital for O/T and physio. Tahlia remains in a pressure garment and the focus is now on scar management with a follow up appointment in 3 months time.

During National Burns Awareness Month, Kidsafe Australia is encouraging parents and carers to download and use their [Burns Safety Checklist](#) to prevent burns around the home, and to ensure they are aware of the correct first aid steps to take in the event that someone sustains a burn:

- **Remove** - remove yourself from danger. Remove any clothing and jewellery from the burn area unless well stuck to the skin
- **Cool** - place the burn under cool running water for **20 minutes**. Never use items like ice, oil or butter as these can make the burn worse
- **Cover** the burn with a clean dressing
- **Seek** medical attention if the burn or scald is on the face, hands, feet, genitals or buttocks, is larger than a 20-cent coin or blistered

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Background on National Burns Awareness Month

National Burns Awareness Month is an initiative run by Kidsafe Australia in partnership with ANZBA. The campaign runs at the beginning of winter in June each year as there is a significantly increased risk of burns during winter months. A series of national educational and awareness initiatives will be delivered throughout the month to raise awareness regarding the prevention and correct first aid treatment of minor burns and scalds.

For more information about National Burns Awareness Month please visit:

- [Kidsafe Australia](#)
- [ANZBA](#) - the peak body for health professionals responsible for the care of the burn injured in Australia and New Zealand
- Twitter [@BurnsAwareMonth](#)
- Facebook [@kidsafeaustralia](#)

Background on Tahlia's accident

Date of Injury 29 March 2021 - deep scald to dorsum of foot

Tahlia had just completed an assignment on Fiona Wood the week prior to her accident.

Accident occurred in the morning in the kitchen where Tahlia was in the kitchen rinsing out containers for recycling. She poured hot water from a kettle into a Nutella jar which immediately shrunk from the heat causing Tahlia to drop the jar. It dropped over her foot and the hot water spilled and pooled into her shoe.

Mother Candice was in the bedroom and heard screaming from both her children. Tahlia's younger sister thought to pull off Tahlia's shoe and Candice immediately put Tahlia in the bath.

After completing the survey on Health Direct she called an ambulance which took them straight into Perth Children's Hospital Emergency.

Tahlia's scald injury was deep which resulted in skin graft surgery. The result has been fantastic and the focus is now on scar management, physio and O/T.

Mother Candice is extremely grateful and is educating the family about burns first aid. Tahlia is also participating in all the research activities run by the Fiona Wood Foundation at Perth Children's Hospital and finally managed to meet Fiona after all.



