

25 November 2022

Queenslanders ignore warnings not to leave kids or pets in cars

RACQ is urging parents and pet owners to keep their keys close, revealing it had responded to more than 1,900 incidents of children and pets who have been locked in vehicles over the past 12 months.

The warning comes as new RACQ research found the temperature inside a typical car parked outside can increase by 10 degrees within just 10 minutes*.

RACQ Team Manager Patrol Operations Howard Strasser said these findings should serve as a serious reminder that it is never safe to leave children or animals in a vehicle, regardless of the timeframe, weather or situation.

"Leaving a sleeping child in a car for a short time while you pay for fuel or grab something from the shops can have deadly consequences," Mr Strasser said.

"The temperature inside a vehicle can quickly reach dangerous temperatures, even if the weather outside doesn't feel particularly hot."

Mr Strasser said RACQ Roadside Assistance teams receive on average five calls every day for either children or animals locked in cars.

"While many of these cases are accidental, concerningly year after year we see the same volume of callouts.

"Generally, parents give their keys to their child to play with when they're putting the groceries in the car, or they leave the keys in the car with the dog and the dog steps on the lock button.

"We urge parents and pet owners to keep their keys close at all times. Avoid using them as a toy or distraction for children, and when buckling in your child or pet don't put them down in your car.

"Accidentally locking your child in a car is an extremely stressful situation for everyone involved, and we often find parents waste time trying to work out what to do or who to call.

"If a person or animal is locked in a car, please give us a call on 13 11 11. We treat children locked in cars as the highest priority.

RACQ is Queensland's largest club and peak independent motoring organisation. We were formed in 1905 to represent the interests of the State's first motorists and today campaign for safer drivers, vehicles and roads on behalf of more than 1.7 million members who own the Club. We offer those members a vast range of motoring, insurance, banking, entertainment and travel services and benefits, and each year respond to more than a million calls for roadside assistance.

“If you’re ever concerned about the health of a child, call emergency services immediately.”

Media enquiries: RACQ Communications Advisor Emma Green 0447 718 864.

*Test was conducted in February 2022 in a dark coloured vehicle.

Note to the editor: There were 1930 callouts for children and animals locked in vehicles (1069 children, 861 animals) between 1 November 2021 – 31 October 2022.

Top 10 Locations

Local Government Area	Children/Animal lock ins
Brisbane	388
Gold Coast	296
Moreton Bay	158
Sunshine Coast	158
Logan	147
Ipswich	75
Townsville	72
Toowoomba	59
Redland	58
Mackay	53

^Other locations available by request.

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