



Episode 3: Pure Safety
with Rachel Waia (Tiny Hearts Education)

Pure Safety

The importance of first aid.

Tiffany: Hi everyone. I'm excited to welcome our guest today, Rachel Waia, mum of two and co-founder and director of Tiny Hearts Education. For those if you haven't heard of Tiny Hearts, they offer baby first aid and birth education all around Australia. They also have a birth story podcast called Bump, Birth and Beyond, which shares women's birth experiences.

Rachel has an extensive education background, and I've been lucky enough to have had the opportunity to work with Rachel over the past few years for our Nesting Workshops and other collaborative ventures with Purebaby. Today will be discussing first aid and its importance for first-time parents, and how to be prepared before bringing your little one home. There's a lot of valuable information in today's episode so get ready to take some notes everyone. And don't forget, if you've missed anything you can read more about it in our blog which will be in our episode notes or description. Hi Rach, thanks so much for joining me today.

Rachel: Thanks, so much for having me, Tiffany. I'm really excited to chat to everyone today.

Tiffany: It will be great. I'm sure our listeners are very keen to learn more about this important topic today. I would have loved to have known a bit more before having my first baby. Looking back on things now and knowing what I know now, I think I feel really lucky that I didn't have any major health issues with her actually, and I don't think I would have been as well equipped as I would be now that's for sure. Did you gain your qualifications before having your two kids and in your view did that help? And also, I guess what do you think is the most important thing or the reason why people need to know about first aid before becoming a parent themselves?

Rachel: Well Tiffany, I was really lucky to be able to participate in CPR and first aid training since I was 15 years old. So, the school that I went to really passionate about giving us life skills, and I guess it the time I probably didn't appreciate how important that was or how much that would model my career.



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Rachel: (cont...) So, I've held a current CPR certificate and first aid certificate since I was 15, and I'm not going to tell you how many years that has been, but it's quite a while, and unfortunately in that time I have had to use the skill set several times.

So yes, I was qualified before having both my children. But, saying that there's a whole lot of things that are paediatric specific that aren't covered in normal first aid courses and I suppose that's where Tiny Hearts is so different to a normal first aid course that you would do with work or school. You know, there's things in there like febrile convulsions and managing temperatures and bacterial infections and viral infections, that would have no idea about sometimes until our child is sick and our doctor will brief us, or until you know we all turn to Doctor Google.

So, I think that's why Tiny Hearts is such important course for new or expecting parents to do. Just to prepare you for those things that you may see as a new and expecting parent, and I think it's so important to have this information before you do have your children, and a lot of the people that do the course are either brand new parents they are expecting, or they might be doing a refresher, and the reason is because prevention is better than cure. Knowing what to do in the event of an emergency before the emergency happens is definitely going to give you that peace of mind and that experience at the time rather than waiting until something has happened and then going wow, I wish I'd known.

Tiffany: Yeah definitely, definitely. I can't wait to hear some more hot tips today and I'm sure the people at home can't wait as well. Let's get right into it because I think there's so much to cover today and this topic is massive. I'm so passionate as well about keeping my children safe and knowing more about all of the aspects of child safety today that I know you would have these amazing topics that to cover today that we're all going to want to know more about. So, what do you feel are the most important things you need to know before little one arrives home, do you feel?

Rachel: That's a really great question because I get asked this all the time. Rachel, you know what should I make sure that I have? What are the things that are really, really important?

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Rachel: (cont...) So we've created a bit of a list for new and expecting parents and we definitely give them access to information like this during the course and after the course, but the number one thing you should do before your bub arrives is just make sure that you have a safe car seat. Have it professionally fitted, but also hang around so that the car fitter can tell you how to fit it.

What I found really useful when I had my children is knowing how to fit a car seat correctly myself, and the reason is you know my husband and I both drive different cars to work I would usually do the drop offs and pickups, but if that changed at all and we had to change our car seats, I didn't want to have to pull out an instruction manual to try and figure or then you know plan that far in advance to get it rebooked in. I think it's really important you know how to do these things yourself.

The experts or the people who to talk to about your car seats and how to get it fitted - go to your baby stores like your Baby Bunting and stores like that that do have the most up to date information on the products. But really, you want to make sure that it complies with Australian standards. You want to make sure that it's five or six-point harness, and that newborns are rear facing. However, the advice does change based on age, and there's so many different options out there. But having a safe car seat to bring your baby home with it is by far up there with the top things that you need to know.

Tiffany: Yep.

Rachel: Now, the next thing is having a nursery. Making sure your nursery is safe, it's set up and you're ready to go for when you bring that gorgeous bub home. I think the most important parts are also the most exciting part of this whole journey is one: finding out your pregnant, and the second thing is doing the shopping and looking at all the products and getting up to speed with your education and really preparing wholeheartedly for this bub and the new journey that your family is going to embark on. So some things that you should have in your nursery: of course a change table, your nappies, your wipes, make sure you've got a comfortable feeding chair, your cot, and obviously want to make sure there that the cot mattress is firm fitting and again meets the Australian standards, bottles, breast pumps, of course having some dummies - one of my children loved their dummies, the other one was not crash hot on them. And then of course all the cute clothing. Clothing is the fun part, I think!



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Tiffany: Definitely, definitely! I think it'd be so overwhelming working out what your baby needs because there's so many products out there, Rach. So, I think highlighting some of those most important things everyone needs to know about is really fantastic because it can be so difficult to find your way through that, that mess of everything that's available today so yeah, really, really appreciate your insight there because you know there are key pieces of furniture, key things you need to consider when you want to make it safe, and also functional.

Rachel: Absolutely, and I think even the time - like my eldest son is 10 and my youngest is 5 -and the five years between one and two, things change, like guidelines change what was available like I've got two boys and I remember when Malakai was born, I would not have access to the most amazing outfits and then Huxley came along, and it was a whole new different trend, different outfits, different wraps, it was just yeah, it's a lot of fun and just yeah the shopping and having all of these things is just the best part I think - before the baby arrives of course.

Tiffany: Yeah, absolutely. So, what would be the next must do before bring your little one home, in relation to setting up your home? What's your next tip?

Rachel: So, the next one I would say is make sure you've got a safe pram. Prams are obviously a transport device where, we're busy in everyday life, and of course having a new family member doesn't change that.

So, just making sure that you've got a safe pram, again speaking to the experts in what's going to suit you and your family and fit in the back of your car. But again, meeting those Australian standards, having a five point restraint harness that goes about around baby's waist and also their legs, you want to make sure it's got parking brakes, if it does have a carry basket check to see that when you load up with groceries, or the nappy bag, or whatever you might be carrying, that it doesn't tip, and then of course what should be number one but I'm a bit biased though, lifesaving education.

So, whether that be before bub arrives and doing a birthing course and getting unbiased education to a holistic approach to you and your baby and that experience or doing the first aid component of your education.



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Rachel: (cont...) So, we offer that in several different methods to cater for people all over Australia and different learning types as well, like you mentioned that start I have an extensive background in teaching.

I am an expert when it comes to adult learning and that environment and I really, really am passionate about making sure that when people do come to our course they feel nothing but confident when they leave that room and this information could sometimes be the difference between life and death and prevention is cure, and knowing exactly what to do at a time when your baby's need you the most and it's not about panic, it's about staying calm and working through that in a systematic way and that's what we're so passionate about here at Tiny Hearts so, that should probably be number one but we'll leave it down the list after a safe car seat and the pram and obviously the shopping. So, the next piece of advice I would have for you is make sure that you have some parenting resources. So, whether that be on your phone in the form of apps, so Tiny Hearts has an app available, but some other pregnancy and parenting apps as well. I know when my sister had her last baby, she was constantly looking for good resources that she could trust.

Tiffany: Wow, these are some wonderful tips, Rachel, and so useful for first time parents. I'm sure those listening have been taking lots of notes in getting prepared in their minds about what they need to do and the types of things they'll need to do before bringing their little one home and I thank you so much for giving all this because it really is useful and I think I would have loved to have had this conversation with you, or to have been able to have these resources given to me before bringing my little, my first daughter home - 19 years ago now!

So, I think yeah, a lot has changed, and all this information is so relevant. So, just wondering as well, what would be 5 must have items in a first aid kit? Because over the years I've developed a bit of a first aid kit and I think I've got a pretty good one now, but I think for first-time parents it would be really difficult to know what you need for your bub and for little kids.



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Rachel: Yeah, not a problem. I think, I hear this a lot. I'll ask in the class now 'pop your hand up if you've got a first aid kit' and majority of people pop their hand and I say okay, make sure that you go home and go through that first aid kit and check expiry dates, because the chances are that it's, you know you've had it for years or you know if you're anything like me you might need a couple extra band aids are at home so I take them out of work first aid kit, but having a paediatric specific first aid kit is really important and a lot of people don't realise the difference between a normal first aid kit and a paediatric.

So, essentially the difference is that everything is smaller. So your bandages aren't as long, you know your plasters or your band aids aren't as big, and obviously because they're smaller than us so, having paediatric specific our first aid kit at home – one, it's a great gift idea but two, its life saving stuff in there.

So, some things that you should have in your first aid kit is a resuscitation mask. In the event that you do have an unconscious and not breathing normally child or infant, it's important that we do CPR to the best of our ability including compressions and breaths. Having a resuscitation mask gives us a better seal around the patients nose and mouth, which delivers a better concentration of oxygen to the patient and in turn, hopefully we see a really good outcome from that.

Your everyday for your cut's grazes and lacerations, we need band aids, band aids and more band aids, and of course bandages for those bigger lacerations that we might see. Kid's skin is much more thinner than ours, so they're more prone to when falling over getting a bit of a graze so I've forever been putting plasters and band aids on little knees and elbows.

The next one would be a thermometer. It's important that you have a thermometer before your bub arrives and the reason is as new and expecting parents, we tend to worry a little bit about temperature. So, the normal temperature for infants, children, and even adults is 37 degrees, and your child will have a temperature once that he is 38 degrees. But, there's no way of knowing what your child's normal temperature, is unless you take their temp when they are completely healthy. So, having access to a thermometer in the early days is really important.



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Rachel: (cont...) The next one I would say is antiseptic. I'm forever putting antiseptic on especially my 5-year-old. He falls out of trees, he climbs the fence to talk to the neighbours, you know he's on his bike, his skateboard, his scooter, he tried out his older brothers roller blades the other day, and I think oh my gosh, he's constantly hurting himself, so the antiseptic - we clear out the graze, we put some antiseptic on it and we put a band aid on it and he's very specific about what colour band aids he wants, at the moment favourite colour is green at the moment, everything is green.

And then the last one that I find that solves pretty much every problem in our house maybe it's a stubbed toe, fallen off the couch or a bumped head - whatever it is, is a cold pack. They're our number one go-to. We keep it in our fridge and simply as soon as someone starts crying someone goes the fridge, he gets the cold pack out and it tends to solve a lot of injuries in our household.

Tiffany: Great! I think it's so great to have all of these explained because obviously you can think I might use this for this, like for instance the thermometer or antiseptic, but having you explain them all I is a lot better. I think what I always say to people look "you don't know what you don't know", so having someone who's experienced and someone who's a professional in their area is going to be able to give you the information that you just don't know about so that was really, really helpful thank you so much.

So, where can people source some of these items from I mean obviously you said you've got your own kit, but just wanting to know where they can also source these and also setting up your babies nursery - when you're setting up the cot and things like that what are some of the main safety considerations? Because I think that you get told a little bit about you need a cot, but you know and you've told us a little bit about wanting the Australian standards cot, but I guess other things to do with setting up that nursery in just a bit more detail would be really useful.

Rachel: So the first aid kit contents, I mean you can go to the local chemist and you can speak to the pharmacist there I mean pharmacists are experts when it comes to medication and also with a wide range of things such as wound care and they know a lot about infants and babies, so you can definitely speak to them about some of those items. To answer your question about safety and the baby's nursery.



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Rachel: (cont...) So, like you everyone's like, I need a cot, I need the furniture, but how do we know it's safe? Yes of course, we've got Australian standards, but it's also about setting up at nursery. So, with the cot, you want to make sure that it's not near a window, in the case that your child grows, and they stand up, the last thing we want is an injury including a window or glass especially with our children. The next one is making sure that it's away from the curtains or blind cords so if it is close to a window, you want to make sure that it's not pushed up against the window or not next to those blind cords.

If they are, some of us are restricted space, make sure that they are shortened and secured tightly to the wall as this can be obviously a bit of a strangulation hazard. Some other safety measures like, bumpers, toys and decorative items in the cot, we don't want any of that in the cot when bub is sleeping. So, of course when bub is out of the cot and you've made the bed, of course you can put some decorative items, some toys and their favourite cuddly things in there, but it's really important when they're sleeping that that's not in there just to make sure they're in a safe sleeping environment. We don't want any electric blankets, and of course when it comes to the cot mattress, it needs to fit snug. So, no gaps around it, and again, there's lots on the market so just checking that it does meet that Australian standard.

Another thing that used to be a bit of a recommendation was like lamb's wool underneath bub to keep them warm. So, they don't actually recommend any soft bedding underneath bub at all, and they should be sleeping on their back on a firm and flat mattress. And so, they are really important things to take into consideration when you are setting up the cot. The last recommendation I would have is in regard to infant and children toys. I think it's really important to make sure that we read the labels on them and make sure that they're age appropriate that our infants and children are supervised when they are playing with toys, so if something was to happen, that we can act quickly.

Even looking at the choke test check test that you can you can download from the Internet or from our website, just to make sure that the toys pass that, and then making sure that they're not in the cot when bub is in the cot as well.



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Tiffaney: Yeah, great. I love those tips. I think it could be so helpful to have some guidelines to follow when you're creating a safe environment for little one, because it can be really hard to know what the standards are and what is recommended now because I think things have changed much over the years, like you said about the lamb's wool and what you said about safety considerations with fixing things to the wall. All of that information is just so vital because they might not have even thought about it before if you're not a parent already.

So, I think that's so important. I remember worrying about visitors coming as well when I had my first and not knowing I guess, how to be safe, how to keep my baby safe? What I should ask them to do before coming to visit? Do you have any tips around that? Because I think it can be overwhelming with thinking about how many people might come, whether they've got clean hands whether they've been exposed to any germs and you know your baby is so precious and tiny when they first come home so any hot tips around that?

Rachel: Absolutely. Again, this is a question we get asked all the time in our classes and definitely on our social networks as well is, you know what are some things that I need to communicate you know to the visitors and the family? And this is something I was very passionate about especially when I had my last son.

I was making sure that everyone was vaccinated, everyone had their whooping cough vaccination, and if they didn't - Craig and I, my husband and I, were very comfortable telling people that we didn't want them to visit at this point. But, I appreciate that people are always like that, so some things that you could also do is just pop something up on your own social media or send a text message around to let everyone know that bub's going to arrive soon and if everyone could just respect the fact that we are welcoming our new baby and there's a few things that we would really appreciate them to follow.

So, avoid popping in and just dropping in, you know, what if they've had a really horrible night? Or they haven't slept, the house is a mess, the last thing they need to worry about is visitors. I know usually people are coming from a really nice space, but just send a text ahead or even a phone call saying "hey, would you mind if we pop in at this time?"



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Rachel: (cont...) Again, like I said get vaccinated with whooping cough immunisation, if you haven't had your booster. If you're feeling sick, stay away. Even if that's a little sniffle and you don't think it's much our infants don't have a great immune system, they can't really fight off anything, so we don't want to make the newborn bubble hard for any parents - it's already a tough gig with sleepless nights and regular feeds and navigating a new relationship, and we definitely don't want to add sickness in the mix there. So, alongside that, no kisses. Try not to kiss the bub.

I know it's so hard because newborn babies, all you want to do is kiss them and cuddle them and love them, but if we can avoid doing that. Don't post photos on social media, let the new parents enjoy their new baby and let them post when they're ready and maybe share a post. I know we're all proud, I'm definitely proud auntie to Wolfe and my sisters two, and I'm sure my brother is starting to think about babies as well soon, and something that I was really cautious of is it's their moment, and let them enjoy the moment and although I was so excited and I spoiled them rotten, and when they posted photo I mean I was the first to share and that's how I showed my support there.

Don't create more work, so if you're going to come over, don't expect that tea or coffee or the piece of cake, pop over, even if there's some washing there, fold it for them, make mum or dad a cup of coffee and offer to hold bub you know while they do that, or let them go have a shower why you hold bub, if they're comfortable with that. Don't over stay your welcome this was something that I was very cautious of as well when, especially when Wolfe came along, Nick had a 2 year old as well as a newborn, and I was you know very proactive about trying to help all the time, but it's knowing that line of OK, everyone needs a bit of family time and so that cue to leave.

And don't be offended, if they don't want you to come over it's not because they don't want to see you, it's just because life is busy, and they're trying to enjoy every second of that newborn bubble, so just respect that and if you are going to visit if they have said yes, come on over - bring a gift!



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Rachel: (cont...) Whether it be some food, whether it be you know a voucher for something, a bunch of flowers, bring mumma something because she's doing all this amazing work or, even dad something they're doing all this amazing work and they're navigating such a new space and if you're already a parent then you know what that time's like - as much support as you can give this is definitely the best.

Tiffany: Yeah there's some great tips. I think it can sometimes feel like it's a revolving door of people visiting in those first few weeks when you bring that little one home, and I think it can be really hard to know how to deal with that, and if you don't feel comfortable asking for what you want, or you don't necessarily like to be telling people what to do, I think now is the time to really think about that and think about you know, what's important to you? And how you're going to want to communicate that with everyone, so those tips are great.

So, thank you so much for your time today, Rachel, it's been wonderful. Your experience as both a mother and in your paediatric work, as well as you know, Tiny Hearts Education has been so invaluable to share today. I'm sure that all the listeners at home have got a page full of notes and some great ideas on how to create a safe space for the little one and the new addition that they'll be bring home soon into their into their lives and creating that amazing space and feeling educated before they bring their little one home.

Rachel: It's been my absolute pleasure. Thank you so much for having me today, Tiffany, and I hope that everyone listening along has got some great tips and tricks out of today's podcast. Thank you.

Tiffany: Yeah, I hope so too, and I really think they have learned a few things. All of the listeners today I feel that they will have taken some things home like I have too, even just myself looking back and thinking about all things I wish I'd known.

If anyone would like to learn a bit more about baby first aid, please head over to www.tinyheartseducation.com to book into one of their courses. They have online and private face to face courses that are available you can also find them on Instagram at @tinyheartseducation. Have a wonderful day everyone.