

Partying mother leaves baby in car for 5 hours

By [Alanah May Eriksen](#)

4:00 AM Friday May 21, 2010

A woman left her 3-week-old daughter sleeping in an unlocked car for five hours while she got drunk at a nearby house neighbours say is notorious for parties.

Her 5-year-old son was also in the 26-year-old's 1992 Subaru Legacy station wagon, but it is understood he went to find his mother and fell asleep at the house.

The occupants of a house in Tourmalin Place, in the South Auckland suburb of Wiri, phoned police on Wednesday night to say the car, which was parked in their driveway, had a baby inside.

Detective Senior Sergeant Dave Pizzini said the residents knew who the woman was, but did not know her personally.

Police found the woman at a house about 50m away. She was "in an extremely intoxicated state, to the extent she had to be assisted to walk back to her car".

Her son was in a bedroom asleep at the house but the woman had no idea where he was, Mr Pizzini said.

The two children will remain in the care of a Child, Youth and Family foster family over the next few days while a review of the incident is undertaken.

"It is deeply disappointing that a mother would leave a newborn baby alone in a car with a young sibling while she was at a party.

"We would like to thank the members of the public who saw the baby ... and notified the police."

Raewyn Vaiangina was shocked when her daughter-in-law walked into the house with a baby in her arms, saying the child had been in a car outside in the driveway.

"Baby was frozen ... she was like an ice block when she was brought in. So I just turned my heater on and warmed her up. Her lips were purple and she came in all purple.

"I asked my daughter-in-law to go and get the mum and come back. But the mum wouldn't listen to them so the next best thing I could think of at that moment was [to] ring the cops and have them come and sort it out."

The mother, who was granted name suppression in the Manukau District Court yesterday, appeared on two charges of abandoning a child aged under 6, which carries a maximum penalty of seven years' imprisonment.

She was told by community magistrate Rae Brooker that she could not have contact with her children at least until her next appearance next month unless Child, Youth and Family said otherwise.

Bail conditions also included not consuming alcohol. Her lawyer Lynn Hughes argued that if the woman's name and photos of her were published her son, who attends a local primary school, would be identified.

She also needed time to inform her mother, who was not in Auckland, about what had happened, and her elderly grandfather, who was ill.

She also strongly disputed parts of the summary of facts and publishing her name might prejudice her

defence, Ms Hughes said.

The woman did not appear to have any family supporters in court but representatives of community group Te Rau Korowai attended the hearing.

"We were having a hui ... when we heard about this case and dropped everything to come," said a spokeswoman.

The woman walked away from the courthouse alone with a plastic bag carrying cash and a packet of cigarettes.

A resident of Tourmalin Place, Susan Pomee, said there were always parties at the house where the woman was drinking, which made her furious.

"I don't know why God gave children to these people. I hope they take her to jail for a good 10 years so she learns a lesson."

By [Alanah May Eriksen](#)

Copyright ©2010, APN Holdings NZ Limited