



Advice to social workers on transporting children by car

Children must be carried in an appropriate child restraint seat from birth until either they are 135cm (4'5") tall or 12 years old, whichever comes first.

- Children under 3 years must use an appropriate child restraint in the front or rear of a vehicle. It is illegal to carry a child in a rearward-facing child seat in the front if there is an active front passenger airbag. The airbag must be deactivated or the rearward-facing child seat must be placed in the rear.
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- Children aged 3 years to 135cm tall (approx. 4'5") who are under 12 years must use an appropriate child restraint when travelling.
- Children aged 12 years and over (or younger children over 135cm tall) must wear a seat belt. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that children under 14 years old use an appropriate child restraint or wear their seat belt.
- If an appropriate child restraint is not available, children over 3 years old may travel in the rear using an adult seat belt. This exception is for emergencies and unplanned situations.
- If it is not possible to fit three child restraints in the rear of a car, then two children up to 135 cm in height must travel in child seats and the third child may use an adult seat belt on its own. This exemption does not apply to children under 3 years old.

Suitable restraints are:

Rearward facing baby seat	Birth – 15 months
Forward facing seat	15 months – 4 years
High-back booster seat	4-6 years
Booster cushion	6 – 11years