

Information for Children's Services on transporting children in buses

For vehicles designed to seat 12 or fewer adults*, including the driver, the following legislation applies:

Children under 7 years travelling in vehicles must be restrained in suitable and approved child restraints or booster seats that are properly fitted to the vehicle and adjusted to fit the child's body correctly. Specifically, children who are:

- Under 6 months must be restrained in rearward-facing restraints
- Between 6 months and 4 years, must be restrained in rearward or forward-facing restraints,
- Between 4 years and 7 years, must be restrained in forward-facing restraints or booster seats fastened by a lap sash seatbelt.

To access the full legislation visit www.legislation.nsw.gov.au (Hint: Search for Road Rules 2008, Part 16)

For vehicles designed to seat more than 12 adults, including the driver, it is recommended that best practice is followed to transport children safely:

When transporting children under the age of 4 years:

Investigate the capacity of the vehicle to be fitted with child restraint anchor points (or additional anchor points) so that all children under 4 years can be safely transported in rearward or forward-facing child restraints. The RTA authorised restraint fitting stations can install anchor points in most vehicles which do not have them. Contact Mobility Engineering for advice and to find out where your nearest RTA authorised restraint fitter is located: <http://www.mobilityengineering.com.au>

When transporting children aged between 4 and 7 years:

- Use full booster seats (preferably with an anti-submarining feature) with lap sash seatbelts and the top tether strap anchored to the anchorage point for boosters heavier than 2 kgs.
- If seats are fitted with lap only seatbelts, investigate the capacity of the vehicle to be retrofitted with lap sash seatbelts so that all children between 4 and 7 years can be transported safely in full booster seats with lap sash seatbelts. The RTA authorised restraint fitting stations can retrofit lap sash seatbelts in most vehicles. Contact Mobility Engineering for advice and to find out where your nearest RTA authorised restraint fitter is located: <http://www.mobilityengineering.com.au>
- If lap sash seatbelts cannot be retrofitted to the vehicle and lap only seatbelts are available, they should only be used with a booster seat if an accessory child safety harness is used. The child safety harness must be anchored to the anchorage point. A full booster seat with an anti-submarining feature to hold the lap part of the seatbelt down low on the child's hips is recommended. **The harness must be checked for correct fit and adjusted accordingly every time it is used.**

In the interests of improved child passenger safety, the RTA recommends that where practicable child restraints and booster seats are used in buses.

*The *Road Rules 2008* require drivers of small buses (vehicles with 9 to 12 seats including the driver seat) that provide a **public passenger service** under the *Passenger Transport Act 1990* to ensure all passengers under one year old are appropriately restrained in a child restraint and that all other passengers under 16 years old are appropriately restrained in a seatbelt. A **public passenger service** is defined as the carriage of passengers for a fare or other consideration and must be conducted by an accredited service operator.