

## Travel safely with young children

The best way to travel safely with child passengers is to

- buckle them up in an approved, correctly fitted child restraint or booster seat that is suitable for their age and size
- check they are buckled up correctly –
  - o the straps are straight, not twisted, and are clear of the child's face
  - o the fit is snug, not loose
- make sure they sit in the back seat (see [NSW Road Rules](#) 266.3/3A)

Before you leave, make buckling up a positive experience

- talk together about the need for all passengers to buckle up and stay buckled up, awake or asleep, no matter how short the journey
- agree on simple rules for all the children and adults in the car. For example:
  - o if anyone unbuckles, the car stops
  - o stay buckled up until an adult unbuckles your restraint or booster

<sup>1</sup> Koppel, S. Charlton, J. Kopinathan, C. & Taranto, D. (2011). Are child occupants a significant source of driving distraction? *Accident Analysis and Prevention*, 43(3), 1236-1244.

<sup>2</sup> Haque, M. M. & Washington, S. (2013). Effects of mobile phone distraction on drivers' reaction times. *Journal of the Australasian College of Road Safety*, 24(3), 20-29.

## Avoid distractions as you travel

Many activities distract drivers. Some are child-related – checking on them, chatting with them, passing them food/drinks, etc. To reduce driver distraction, keep your children busy or pull over if they become distressed.

Other distractions include talking with front seat passengers, eating/drinking, grooming, adjusting mirrors, technology-related. These can distract drivers for around 18% of a journey.<sup>1</sup> Conversations on hands-free or handheld mobile phones distract drivers by shifting their attention away from the primary driving task.<sup>2</sup> Avoid distractions during your journey – keep your eyes on the road to significantly reduce potential crash and injury risks.<sup>1</sup>

## Enjoy your travel with young children

### Plan ahead!

Wherever possible, plan long journeys to fit in with your children's sleep patterns. When they are awake, keep them busy and happy with activities they enjoy.

### Take breaks regularly!

On a long journey, take a 15 minute break every two hours. Revive at safe stopping locations such as country towns, scenic points, service centres, parks and roadside rest areas. Plan your rest stops with the [online interactive Rest Area Map](#) for NSW. During major holiday periods and long weekends, [Driver Reviver stops](#) operate throughout Australia. When these are open, they offer some free refreshments for all to enjoy.