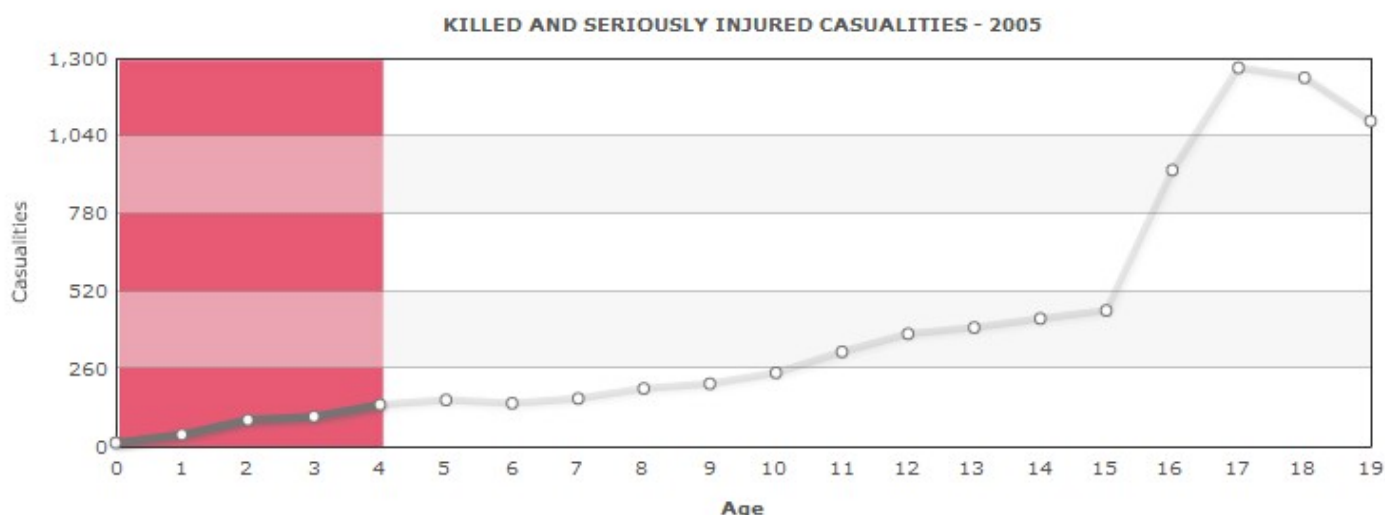


## 0 to 4-year-olds: first steps to safety

Children in this age group have a low risk compared with older age groups, but even so, nearly 400 a year are killed or seriously injured on the roads.

- Boys are most at risk: twice as many boys as girls are killed or seriously injured as pedestrians or on a bike; the number of casualties as car passengers is the same for both.
- Virtually all the pedestrian accidents are on urban roads – less than 1 per cent happen on rural roads.
- Most serious injuries are from accidents on pavements and roads.
- Most serious injuries in cars are the result of children not being in an infant carrier or child seat, or because these are not fitted properly.



## Which journeys carry most risk?

Children in this age group are not competent to travel on their own.

- A third of their journeys are on foot or in a pushchair/buggy, but two-thirds of those killed or seriously injured are pedestrians.
- A third of serious injuries to children aged 0-4 occur when they are in a car; this is significantly more than for the next age group, suggesting that some parents don't use an infant carrier/child seat, or are not yet experienced enough to fit it properly.
- Riding a bicycle or tricycle carries some risk of being hurt, but the number of children seriously injured is very small.

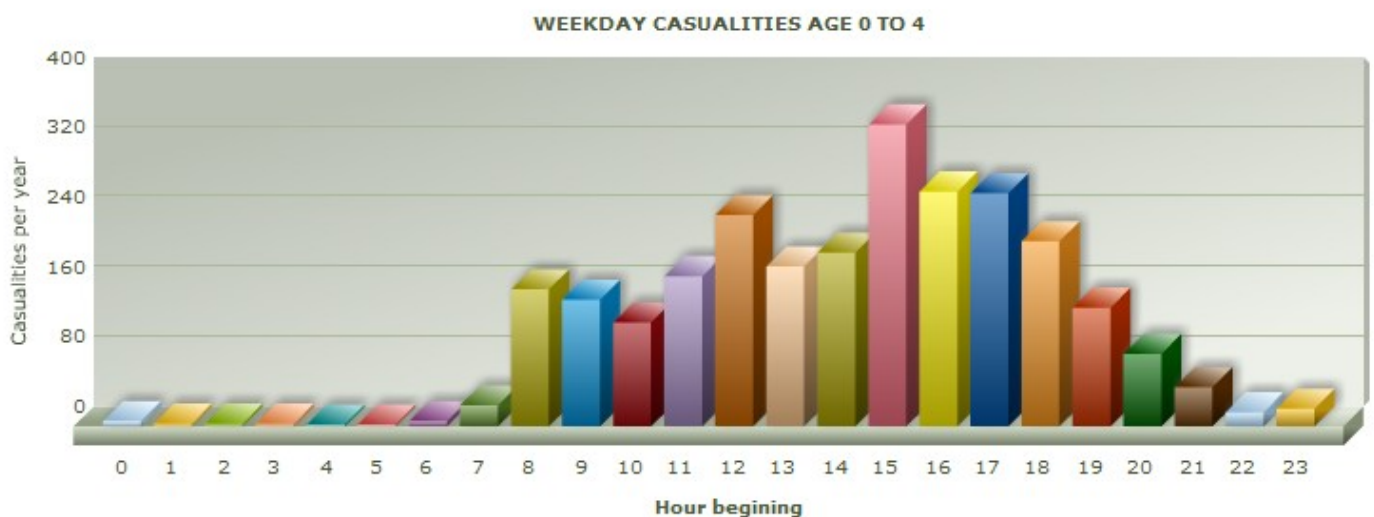
	<b>Journeys</b>	<b>Fatal / serious injuries</b>
Walk	34	65
Cycle	0	3
Car passenger	61	31

**Percentage of journeys and casualties for children aged 0 to 4 in 2005**

# When do accidents happen?

The pattern of risk changes between schooldays, holidays and weekends.

- During the week, the peak time for casualties is between 3-4pm, when parents collect young children from childminders or nursery school, and older siblings from school.
- During weekdays, most casualties in the 0-4 year age group are car passengers, though between 3-4pm, more are pedestrians.
- At weekends, most casualties occur between 11am and 7pm, with most in the early afternoon; there are equal numbers of pedestrian and car passenger casualties.
- In the summer months, particularly July and August, when more children are outdoors, casualties are highest between 3-8pm.



## How can you help?

Start to teach your children the rules of the road and explain why they are important.

### Walking safely

- Teach by example: always stop at the kerb, always use a pedestrian crossing if there is one, and always wait for the Green Man, even when the road is clear.
- Talk to your children about roads and traffic and explain to them why roads are for vehicles and pavements are for people.
- Don't let them run on ahead of you: always use reins or hold their hand.
- Don't let them play in the street.

### Riding safely

- Teach by example: always wear a cycle helmet and reflective clothes if you cycle, and make sure your children do as well.
- Go for rides with them, but only on safe cycle ways, and demonstrate safe and considerate cycling.
- Never let them cycle on a road.

### Motoring safely

- Teach by example: always use a seat belt, keep to the speed limit and don't drink and drive.

- Know and use the correct restraint for the ages of your children. New laws about child restraints have been introduced and it is vital that car seats are properly attached -- many injuries are caused by seats coming loose in an accident. Check details of child restraints on the Department for Transport website.

[www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk/campaigns/childcarseats/pdf/law-leaflet.pdf](http://www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk/campaigns/childcarseats/pdf/law-leaflet.pdf)

- Insist that your children always belt-up, no matter whose car they are in (about 3 per cent of children aged 0-4 travel unrestrained on the back seat).
- Never use a rear facing infant carrier on the front passenger seat in a car with an activated air bag – in a crash the air bag will explode and the child will almost certainly be killed by it.