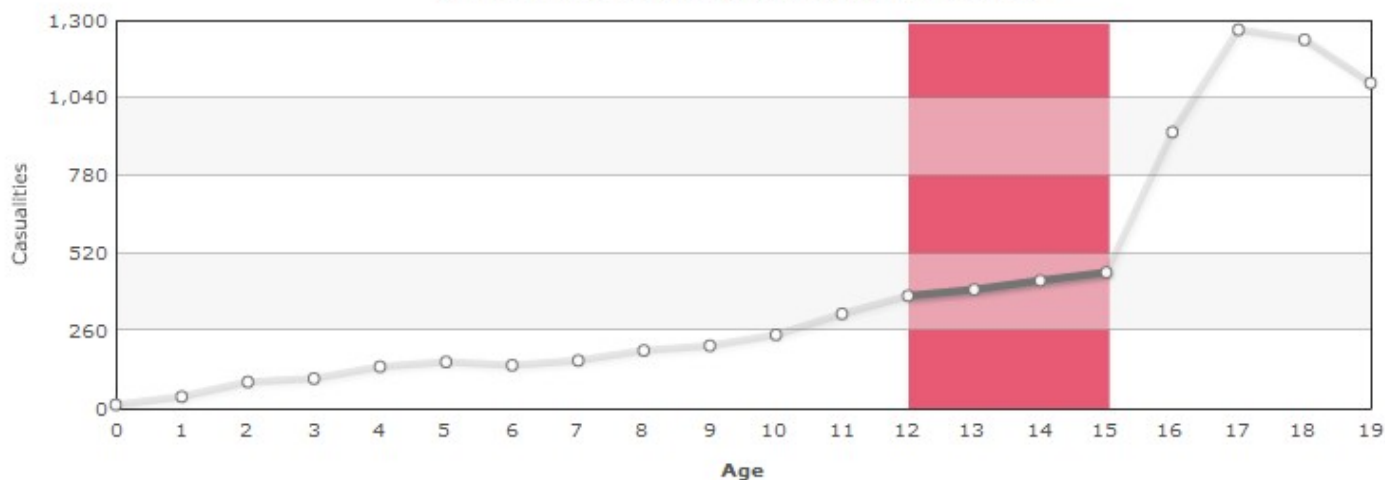


12 to 15-year-olds: walking into danger

More than 1600 children between the ages of 12 and 15 are killed or seriously injured on Britain's roads each year.

- Pedestrian and cyclist casualties both peak in this age group, as children become more independent.
- Urban roads are the biggest risk for walkers and cyclists, whereas more than half of those killed or seriously injured as car passengers are in accidents on higher-speed rural roads.
- Boys are more at risk than girls: more are killed or seriously injured when walking, and six times as many on bikes; about equal numbers of boys and girls are seriously hurt in cars.
- Most pedestrian accidents happen on busy main roads, rather than on minor or residential roads.

KILLED AND SERIOUSLY INJURED CASUALTIES - 2005



Which journeys carry most risk?

The risks change as children in this age group become older. Travelling by car increases and walking and cycling decreases.

- A third of all their journeys are by foot, but more than half of those killed or seriously injured are pedestrians.
- Although more than half of their journeys are now in cars, they result in only 16 per cent of road deaths and serious injuries for this age group.
- By the age of 15, however, the number of children injured in cars rises for the first time to the same level as the number injured while walking.

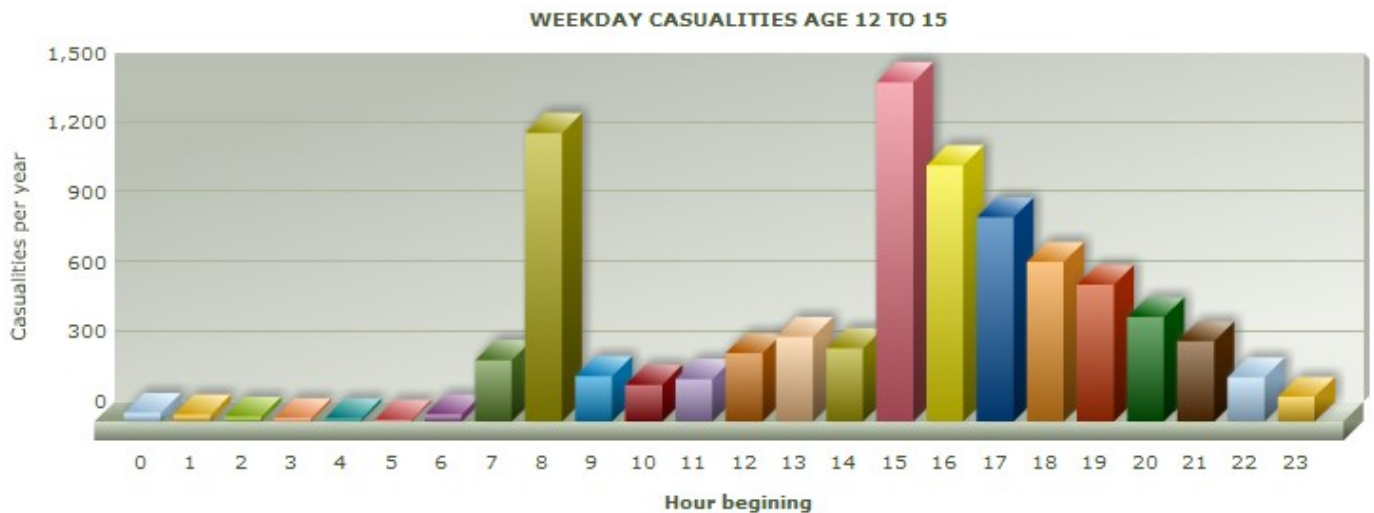
	Journeys	Fatal / serious injuries
Walk	34	56
Cycle	4	18
Car passenger	50	16

Percentage of journeys and casualties for children aged 12 to 15 in 2005

When do accidents happen?

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

- Term-time casualties peak between 8-9am on the way to school, and again during the hour from 3 pm after school, continuing into early evening leisure time
- During school holidays and at weekends, there are few accidents in the morning, but they build-up quickly around lunchtime and continue into the evening.
- At weekends, the risk is greatest during the summer months, when children's leisure and recreational activity is more likely to be outdoors.



How can you help?

As children become more independent, so the risk of them being killed or injured on the roads increases. You need to be aware of when and where your children are most at risk so you can help them to keep themselves safe.

Walking safely

- Teach by example: irresponsible behaviour is likely to be copied by children in this age group.
- Know where your children are going, who they will be with, and how they will be travelling there and back.
- Offer to be a taxi service if you feel they could be at risk walking home.
- Help them to be seen more easily by buying them light-coloured, bright clothing and reflective bands. Try the Department for Transport Think! Brand Partnerships website for advice about suitable clothing and how to obtain it. www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk/brand.htm#crs

Riding safely

- Teach by example: always wear a cycle helmet and bright, reflective clothes if you cycle, and make sure your children do as well.
- Make sure their bikes are maintained properly and have working lights if they cycle in the evening or at night.
- Make it a condition of cycling alone that your children attend and pass cycle proficiency training. More information is available from www.bikeability.org.uk or www.roadsafetyscotland.org.uk

Motoring safely

- Teach by example: always belt-up, keep to speed limits and never drink and drive.
- Adult seat belts are suitable for children aged 12 and over.
- Drill into your children why they must always belt up, no matter whose car they are in (almost 10 per cent of those aged 5 to 13 don't).
- Don't be afraid to step in firmly if you are worried about how their older friends, and particularly boyfriends, may behave behind the wheel.
- Offer to be a taxi service or to pay for a taxi if you are worried who may be driving your children home, particularly at night.