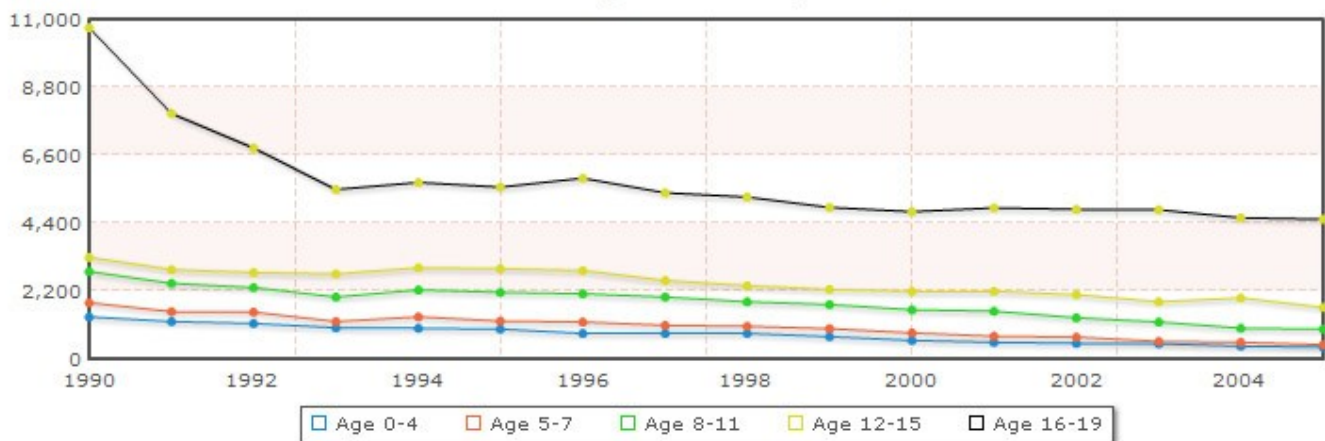


Children and road safety: a guide for parents

What are the facts?

- The number of children aged up to 19 years who are killed or seriously injured each year on Britain's roads has halved since 1990. Nevertheless, the road toll remains high: around 550 young people will lose their lives this year. About 400 of them will be in the most vulnerable 16 to 19-year age group, where casualties have hardly reduced since 1994.

CHILDREN KILLED OR SERIOUSLY INJURED
(1990 to 2005)



- Five times as many children aged 5 to 14 die in a road accident than are killed by criminal assault.
- 10 per cent of the deaths of 5 to 9-year-old boys are in road crashes; 34 per cent of the deaths of 15 to 19-year-olds are on the roads, mostly in cars.

What can parents do?

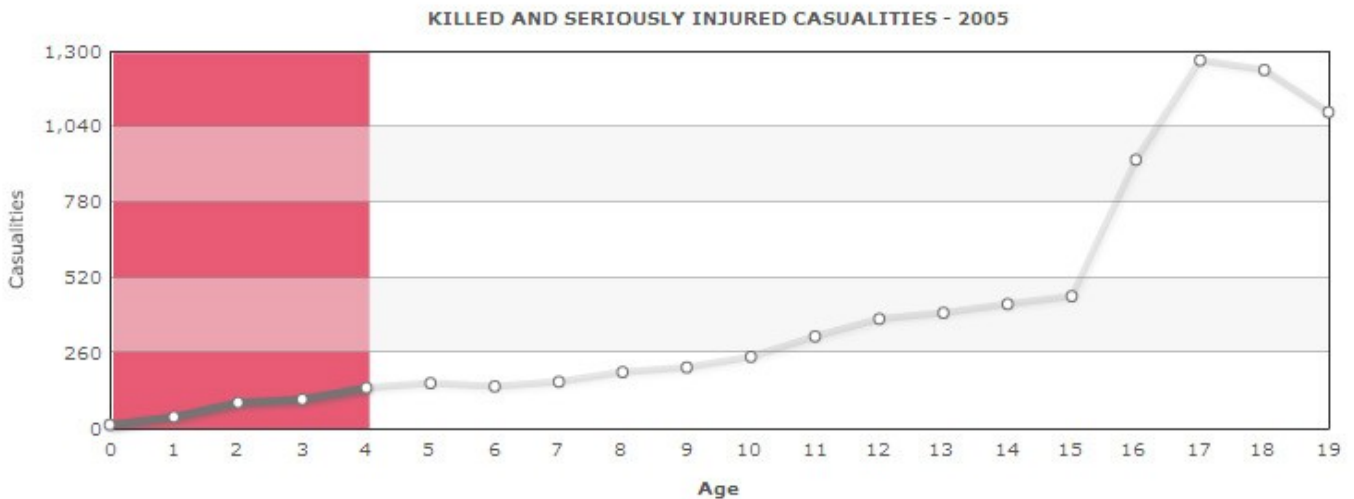
- Take control: be responsible for your children's safety, from their birth to when they become young adults.
- Teach by example: act responsibly when you drive, walk or cycle and your children will learn from your behaviour.
- Be effective: know where, when and why your children are most at risk.
- Want more information? Click on the relevant age group of your children

0-4	5-7	8-11	12-15	16-19
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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.

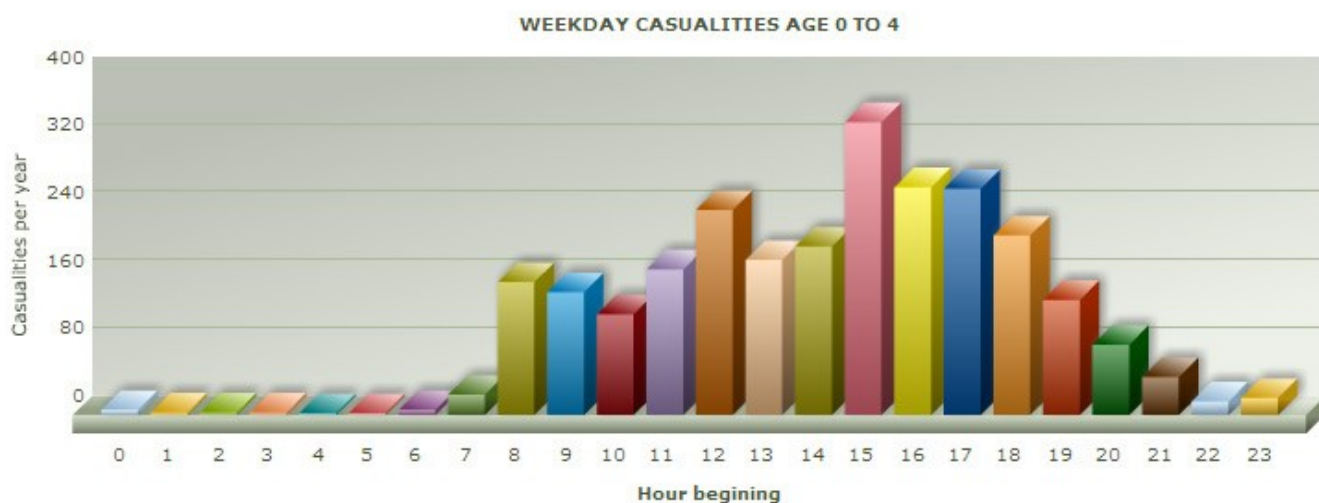
	Journeys	Fatal / serious injuries
Walk	34	65
Cycle	0	3
Car passenger	61	31

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.

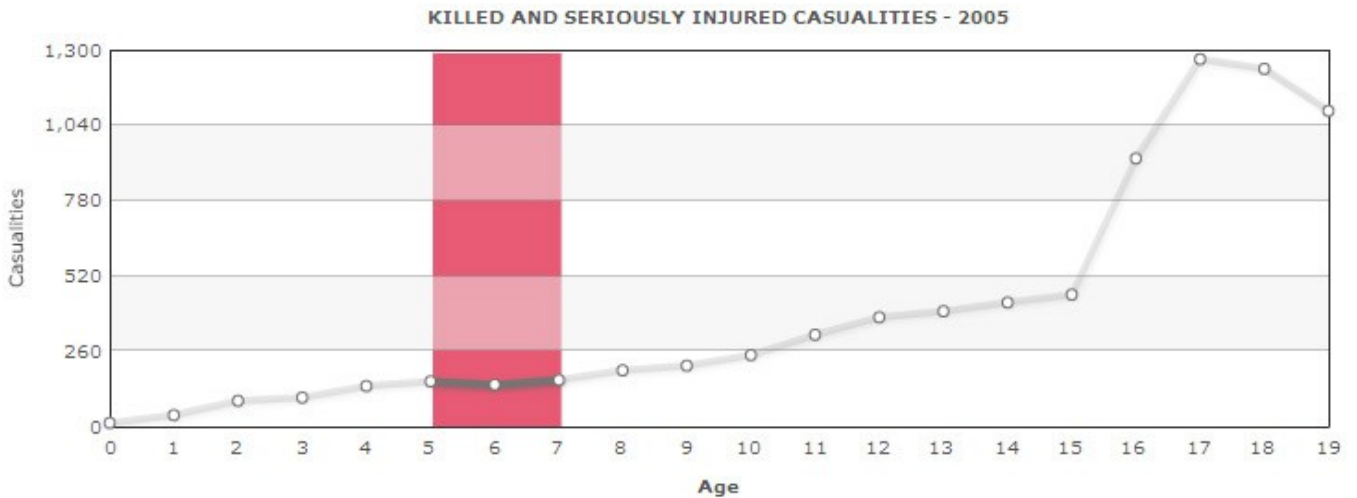
Motoring safely

- 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
- 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.

5 to 7-year-olds: safe to school

More than 450 children between the ages of 5 and 7 are killed or seriously injured on Britain's roads each year.

- Compared with older children, these are low-risk ages for road accidents.
- Most serious injuries occur when children are alongside urban roads.
- Busy main roads are a much greater risk than minor or residential roads.
- Boys are at most risk: nearly twice as many boys as girls are hurt on foot and about four times as many on a bicycle; in cars, boys and girls are hurt in equal numbers.



Which journeys carry most risk?

How a child travels – by foot, bicycle or car – affects the risk.

- A third of the journeys of 5 to 7-year-olds are on foot, but more than two-thirds of those killed or seriously injured in traffic accidents are pedestrians.
- More than 60 per cent of their journeys are by car, but only 15 per cent of deaths and serious injuries are to car passengers.
- Just 1 per cent of journeys by this age group are made on a bicycle, but 11 per cent of their fatal and serious injury accidents occur when they are cycling.

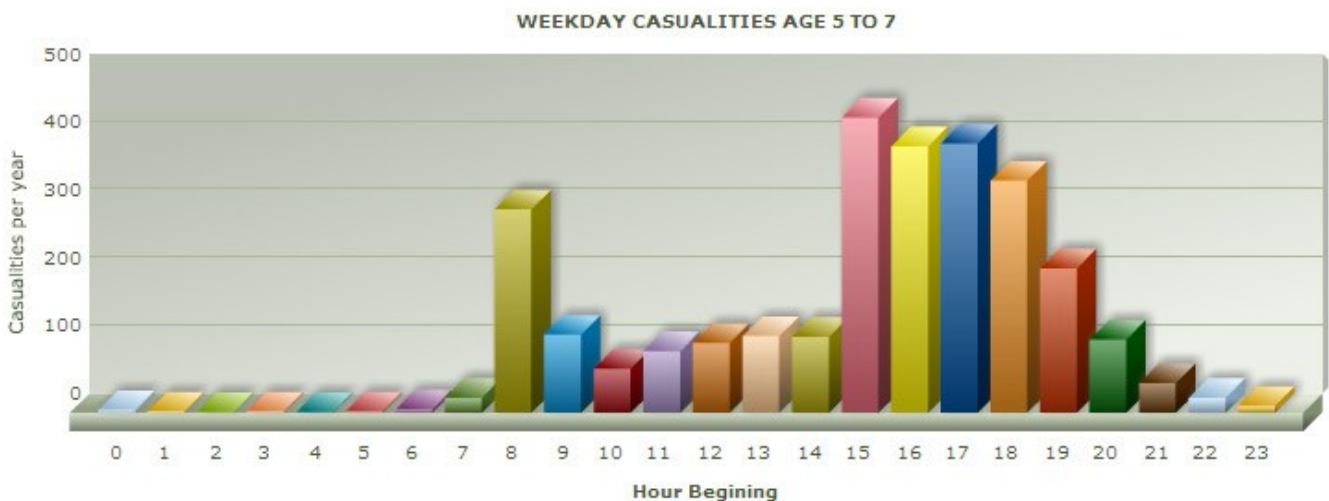
	Journeys	Fatal / serious injuries
Walk	33	71
Cycle	1	11
Car passenger	61	15

Percentage of journeys and casualties for children aged 5 to 7 in 2005

When do accidents happen?

The pattern of accidents to 5 to 7-year-olds changes between schooldays, holidays and weekends.

- Term-time casualties peak between 8-9am on the way to school, and again during the hour from 3pm after school, but remain high into the early evening as children play outdoors.
- Most casualties on the school journey occur when children are in a car or walking; in the afternoon and early evening, many more are hurt while playing outdoors.
- During school holidays and weekends there are few casualties during the morning; at lunchtime and through the rest of the day many more are hurt as they play outside.
- The risk is greatest during summer months, when children are more likely to play outside.



How can you help?

Take responsibility for teaching your children the safe 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.
- Walk the route to school with your children and talk to them about where the risks are, where it is safest to cross the road, and why.
- Don't let them run on ahead of you: always hold their hand on busy roads.
- Encourage their school to run classes in pedestrian safety if it doesn't do so already.
- 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.
- Go for rides with them and demonstrate safe and considerate cycling.
- In general, children under the age of 9 should not be allowed on the roads alone, but if you judge your children are old enough, make sure they are trained on a safe cycling course. Go to www.bikeability.org.uk or www.roadsafetyscotland.org.uk
- Only when they pass the course should you allow them to cycle alone off-road, or possibly in a defined part of a very quiet cul-de-sac.

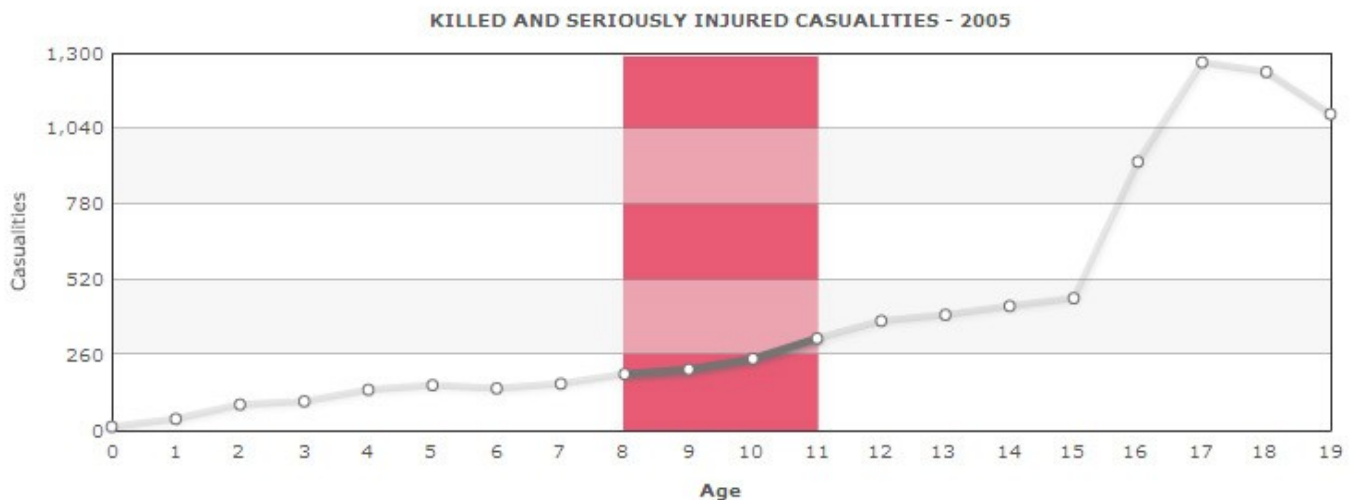
Motoring safely

- Teach by example: always belt-up, keep to speed limits, and never drink and drive.
- Drill into your children why they must always belt-up, no matter whose car they are in (almost one in 10 children aged 5 to 13 don't).
- Know and use the correct restraint for the ages of your children. New laws about child restraints have been introduced. Between the ages of 3 and 12 children under 4ft 5in (1.35metres) tall need a booster seat if they weigh up to 25kg or a booster cushion (over 25kg). Go to www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk/campaigns/childcarseats/pdf/law-leaflet.pdf

8 to 11-year-olds: urban dangers

Nearly 1,000 children aged 8 to 11 are killed or seriously injured on Britain's roads each year.

- This is fewer than for older age groups, but casualties rise as more children start to walk, cycle or play unsupervised alongside urban roads.
- Busy main roads are a much greater risk than minor or residential roads.
- Boys are most at risk: twice as many boys as girls are killed or seriously injured on foot and four times as many when cycling; the number of car passenger casualties, however, is roughly the same for boys and girls.
- Going to a new school increases risk substantially: two in five of all pedestrian accidents involving 11-year-olds happen on the way to or from school.



Which journeys carry most risk?

How a child travels – by foot, bicycle or car – affects the risk.

- A third of all journeys by 8 to 11-year-olds are on foot, but two-thirds of those killed or seriously injured are pedestrians.
- Car travel accounts for 57 per cent of all journeys but only 14 per cent of deaths and serious injuries.
- Just 2 per cent of journeys are made by bicycle, but 17 per cent of fatal and serious injuries in this age group are to cyclists.

	Journeys	Fatal / serious injuries
Walk	33	66
Cycle	2	17
Car passenger	57	14

Percentage of journeys and casualties for children aged 8 to 11 in 2005

When do accidents happen?

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

- In term time, casualties are highest during the journey to and from school -- 8-9am and 3-4pm -- but afternoon casualties spread to the evening because of activities after school.
- At weekends and during school holidays, the number of accidents is low early on, but increases from late morning, as children go out to play, until around 7pm.
- There is a greater risk in the evening during summer months, when more children play outside.



How can you help?

Take responsibility for teaching your children the safe 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.
- Walk the route to a new school with your children and talk to them about where the risks are, and where it is safest for them to cross the road.
- Encourage their school to run classes in pedestrian safety if it doesn't already do so.
- 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.

- Go for rides with your children and demonstrate safe and considerate cycling.
- 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 .

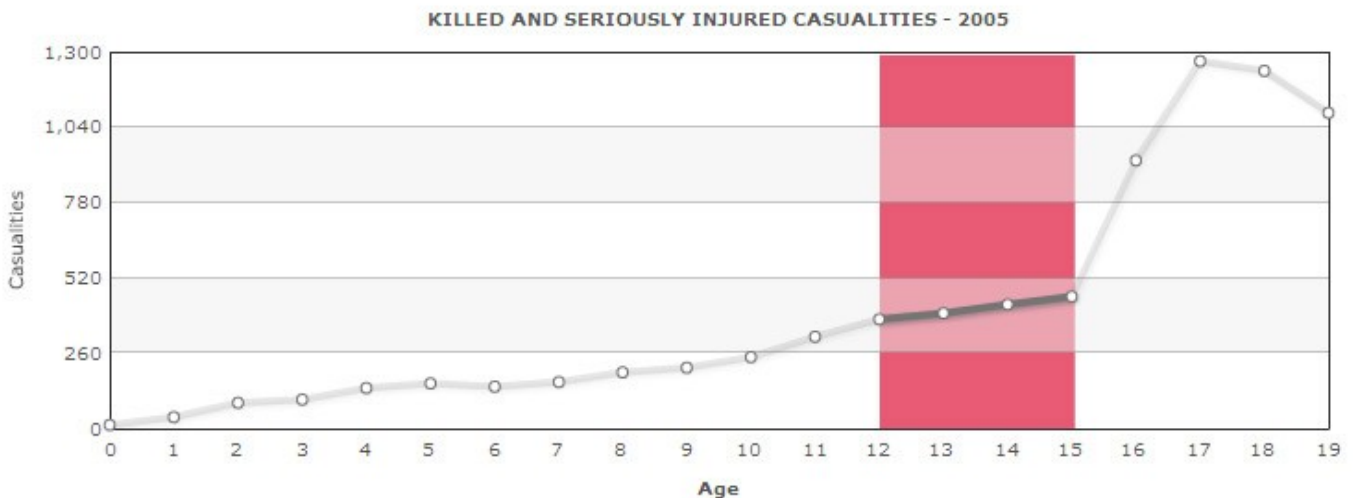
Motoring safely

- Teach by example: always use a seatbelt, keep to the speed limit and don't drink and drive.
- Drill into your children why they must always belt-up, no matter whose car they are in (almost one in 10 children aged 5 to 13 don't).
- Know and use the correct restraint for the ages of your children. New laws about child restraints have been introduced. Between the ages of 3 and 12 children under 4ft 5in (1.35metres) tall need a booster seat if they weigh up to 25kg or a booster cushion (over 25kg). Go to www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk/campaigns/childcarseats/pdf/law-leaflet.pdf

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.



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.

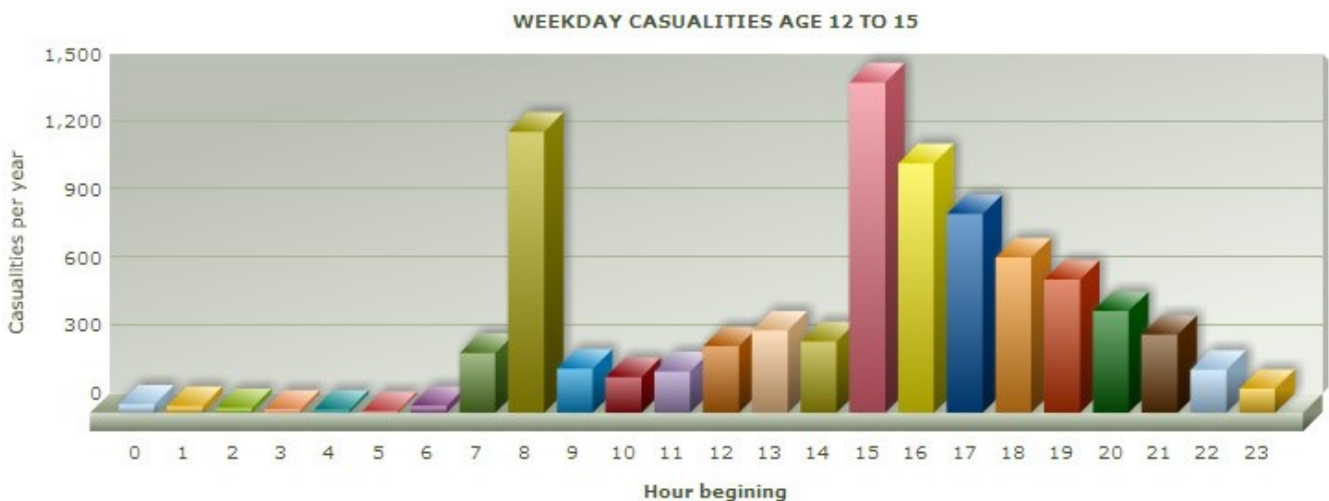
	Journeys	Fatal / serious injuries
Walk	34	56
Cycle	4	18
Car passenger	50	16

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

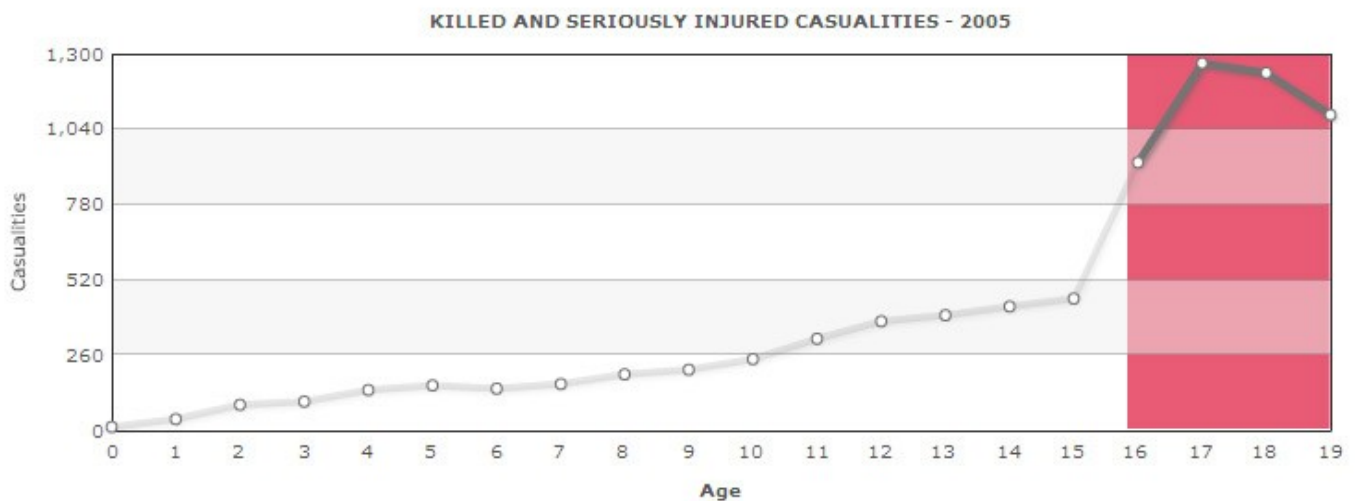
Motoring safely

- 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.

16 to 19-year-olds: driving into danger

More than 4,500 young people aged 16 to 19 are killed or seriously injured on Britain's roads each year.

- This is the age when children start to ride mopeds and motorcycles and learn to drive.
- Inexperience and a 'macho' attitude to safety combine to make them by far the highest risk age group – drivers and car passengers account for just over half of all under-19 road accident casualties.
- Young men are twice as likely as young women to be killed or injured as a driver.



Which journeys carry most risk?

Traveling by car overtakes walking as the main means of getting about for 16 to 19-year-olds.

- 45 per cent of all their journeys are made by car and more than 70 per cent of road deaths in this age group are car drivers and passengers.
- More than half of the drivers killed are driving too fast, typically at night on a rural road.
- Less than 2 per cent of all their journeys are made on a moped or motorcycle, but nearly 30 per cent of all fatal and serious injury accidents in this age group are to riders.
- 16-year-olds in their first year of riding mopeds are particularly vulnerable.

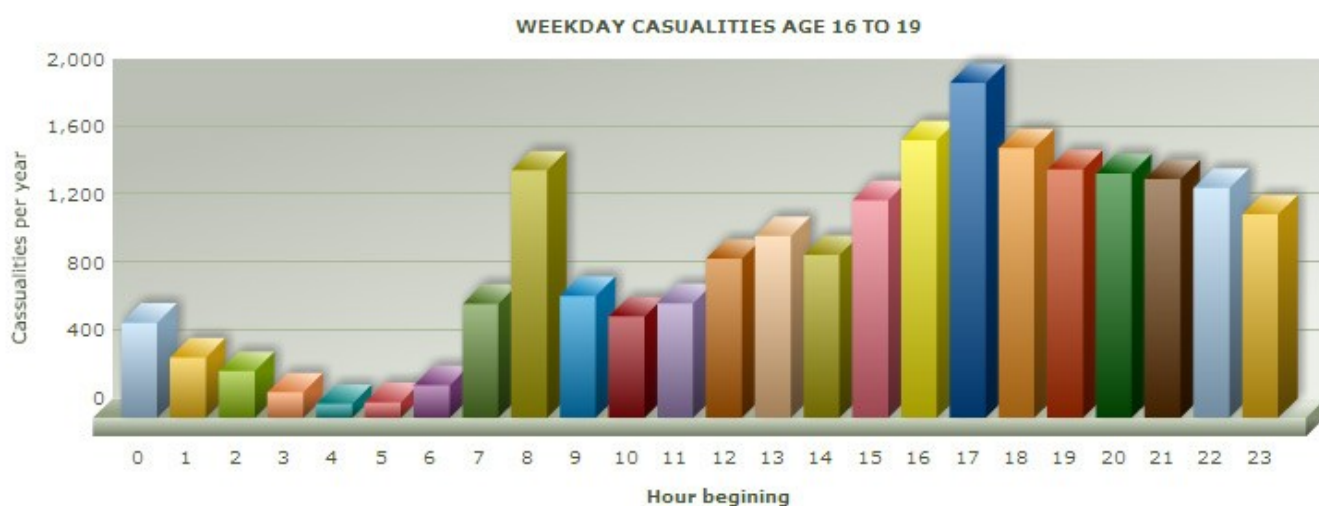
	Journeys	Fatal / serious injuries
Walk	27	14
Cycle	2	4
Car passenger	45	26
Car driver		26
Moped and motorcycle rider	1 - 2	28
bus	18	0

Percentage of journeys and casualties for children aged 16 to 19 in 2005

When do accidents happen?

The pattern of risk changes between winter and summer and between weekdays and weekends.

- Weekday casualties peak during commuting hours.
- Equal numbers of passengers and car drivers are killed or seriously injured.
- Weekend journeys in the late evening and early morning, typically returning from social activity, carry the highest risk.



How can you help?

Your responsibility to make sure that your children are safe on the roads doesn't stop when they reach the age of 16.

Walking safely

- Remind them that walking home after a party or a night out in the pub can be very risky if they ignore the basic rules of crossing roads carefully.
- Offer to be a taxi service if you feel they could be at risk walking home.

Riding safely

- Arrange for proper training before your children ride a moped or motorcycle – at age 16 as many moped riders are killed or injured as car passengers.

Motoring safely

- Continue to teach good driving by example: always wear a seat belt, stick to the speed limits and never drink and drive.
- Use a professional instructor to teach your children to drive, and help them to be safer drivers by giving them extra practice in the family car.

- Encourage them to continue training after they pass the test, through the Pass Plus scheme. Go to www.passplus.org.uk
- Don't be afraid to step in firmly if you are worried about how their friends behave behind the wheel.
- Offer to be a taxi service or to pay for a taxi if you are worried about who may be driving your children home.