

British Triathlon Guidelines For Transporting Children in a Car

Introduction

Transporting children to and from sporting activities can present challenges. Most clubs/organisations rely on the help from volunteers and would not function without the help from them. Some of this help is needed from volunteers to transport children in a car.

It is reasonable for clubs/organisations to ensure full responsibility is placed on parents/guardians for sorting the correct transport if they are transporting their own children or they have made private arrangements with other parents/guardians.

However, where the club/organisation or coach is arranging transport on behalf of the parents/guardians for their child, the club/organisation or coach have to take responsibility to safeguard the children who they have a duty of care for.

British Triathlon strongly recommends children are not transported by coaches or volunteers alone in their car. A large amount of people will want to help out wherever they can to see children develop and enjoy themselves in their sport. But we also have to be aware there are a very small number of people who would take advantage of this situation and join a sports club to offer to help to cause harm to children.

Considerations:

- Good practice is not to transport children unsupervised in your car, if all other options have been thought of and this is the only option that is left there are a few safety measures that can be put in place to minimise the risk.
- Think about the suitability of the driver, the driver may need to undergo a vetting check, and this should be carried out by the Disclosure and Barring Service in England and Wales, AccessNI in Northern Ireland, Disclosure Scotland and Garda Central Vetting Unit in Republic of Ireland. The vetting check should be carried out as part of the wider safer recruitment procedures.
- Before traveling parents/guardians should be informed of the arrangements, including the contact details of the person who will be transporting their child, the reasons why and how long the journey will be.

- Another person who is not the driver should speak to the child before the journey to make sure that they are happy with the travel plans.
- The club/organisation must make sure that the driver has valid car insurance, a MOT and a driving licence prior to the journey taking place.
- The driver should check with their own insurance company if they can use their car for their paid or volunteer role and if they are covered.
- Clubs/organisations should ensure that where possible there is more than one child in the car being transported.
- When transporting a group of children home after an event the driver should swap round who gets dropped off last, so the same child is not always dropped off last. The best practice is dropping the last two children off at an agreed meeting place where their parents/guardians would be waiting to collect them. Or if prearranged both children can get dropped off and one of the parents houses and the other parent can collect them from there.
- The driver who is returning the children home from the event can agree a meeting point such as a family's home or the training grounds, this would reduce the risk of the same child being left alone frequently with the same child or group of children.
- The driver should have a means of communication on them in case they break down.
- The driver must have a point of contact for each child they are transporting
- Children need to be made aware of their rights to be safe and what they need to do if they feel unsafe and who to report this to. By implementing this it is creating a safe environment and children are more likely to speak out if they are feeling uncomfortable about a situation.
- Late collections provide clubs with difficult situations. Parents/guardians should be provided with the club's policy on this and addressing the issue of late collections. Clubs should have the contact details and alternative contact number of parents/guardian. Parent/guardians should also have a contact number for the club so they can get in touch to inform the club that they are going to be late for collection.

Seatbelts

Children must wear a seatbelt when they are traveling in car, please see the link below for the laws around wearing seatbelts while in the car.

<https://www.gov.uk/child-car-seats-the-rules>

Key points to remember are:

- Children over 12 years old or 135cm can use an adult's seat belt while in the car.

- Children under 12 years old or under 135cm must use the correct car seat for them, this can be seen on the link above.

Alternative Transport

Taxi's can be used by a club/organisation to transport children to and from their destination. If there is no child restraint in the taxi, children can travel in back of the taxi and use the adult seatbelt.

Parents might be asked to volunteer to drive a minibus to help the club with transportation. All passengers on the minibus must wear a seatbelt and it is the driver's responsibility to check that all children are wearing theirs. If there are seatbelts fitted on a minibus passengers must wear them, and it is up to the driver to tell passengers that they must wear their seatbelts before the journey starts.