

# Family based carers: Transporting children and young people fact sheet

*DCP recognises the important role that family based carers play in transporting children and young people and the physical and emotional impact that transport can have on carers. DCP is committed to working together with carers so that children and young people are transported safely and carers are supported in this process.*

DCP wants to support carers to provide a family home environment. Carers have a special relationship with the children and young people in their care and often know the child or young person best. Children and young people can feel uncomfortable being transported by DCP so whenever possible carers are the preferred option to provide transport. If the carer cannot provide transport, it is best for children and young people to be transported by someone they know.

Carers can arrange transport for the children and young people in their care without contacting DCP apart from:

- the carer wants someone else to provide transport regularly (see 'Using other people to help')
- the carer cannot provide transport or find someone else to help (see 'Requesting help from DCP')
- the carer wants to transport a child aged 12 years or under by taxi without an adult accompanying them (see 'Using taxis and ride share vehicles')
- the carer wants to request financial help with transport (see 'Financial help with transport')
- the carer wants help from DCP because the transport poses a high risk to the emotional or physical wellbeing of the child or young person (see 'High risk transports').

Support providers will help carers with anything in this fact sheet if needed.

## Information from DCP to help with transport

DCP will include information about ongoing transport needs in the case plan.

## High risk transports

Carers can request support from DCP if transport poses a high risk to the child or young person's emotional or physical wellbeing.

DCP will:

- provide carers with a plan so that they can transport safely OR
- make arrangements to delay transport until it can take place safely OR
- provide transport for the child or young person.

## Financial help with transport

Carers can get financial reimbursement for some transports. The [Carer Reference One - Who pays for what?](#) includes details of what financial support is available.

DCP will:

- support the carer with accessing financial support for transport in line with [Carer Reference One – Who pays for what?](#)
- make sure that carers have the correct mileage form for claiming reimbursement.

Support providers will:

- assist the carer in seeking financial support from DCP.

## Using other people to help

Carers can use other people to help with transport. A DCP supervisor will need to give approval if this person will be providing transport regularly.

Carers must:

- seek approval from DCP if they want someone to provide transport regularly.

DCP will:

- help the carer identify other people who can provide transport
- ensure that eligible children or young people have access to services through other government agencies (for example, students with disabilities)
- consider other ways to support carers who do not have other people to help with transport (for example, due to a disability or behavioural needs). This could include:
  - using other professionals for transport
  - use of respite care
  - reimbursement (in line with [Carer Reference One – Who pays for what?](#))
- carry out the relevant checks for other people who provide regular transport.

Support providers will:

- help the carer identify other people who can provide transport
- help the carer to get approval for someone to provide transport regularly from DCP.

## Using taxis and ride share vehicles

Carers can use taxis (including ride share vehicles like Uber) for children and young people if they will be with an adult. Carers can use taxis without an adult accompanying children or young people if:

- they are aged 13 years or older and do not have other needs that make it unsafe for them to travel alone (for example, disability, emotional difficulties or cultural needs) OR
- a DCP supervisor has provided approval.

[www.myllicence.sa.gov.au](http://www.myllicence.sa.gov.au) has information on child restraint rules in taxis and ride share vehicles.

Carers must:

- contact DCP to get approval for children or young people to travel alone by taxi if:
  - the child is aged under 12 years or younger
  - has additional needs that make it unsafe to travel alone by taxi.

## Safety during transport

Safety is the most important thing during transport. Many carers have significant experience and knowledge to help ensure children and young people's safety. DCP and support providers can help less experienced carers to understand how to provide transport safely. It is important to consider on the day of transport if anything has changed that affects safety, including the child or young person's behaviour/mood or [weather conditions](#).

Support providers will:

- support carers with preparing a vehicle if they need help with this, such as installing car seat
- give the carer information about their responsibilities to abide by the road rules, including the requirement for child car restraints.

DCP will:

- decide whether transport for contact is cancelled due to extreme weather, based on an assessment of the safety and health of the child or young person
- ensure appropriate car restraints are fitted when providing transport to children and young people.

Carers must:

- not provide transport if it is unsafe to do so.

Carers can:

- escalate to a DCP supervisor if a child or young people is being transported by someone else and there are safety issues (for example, incorrect child car restraints) that cannot be resolved. If the issue cannot be resolved between the person providing transport and the carer, the carer can contact DCP for support.
- decide if transport goes ahead when there is extreme weather (apart from transport for contact). The carer should consider the impact on the child or young person including:
  - the age of the child or young person
  - the distance
  - if the transport covers areas where there is a [Total Fire Ban](#) or a [fire warning](#)
  - whether the vehicle has air conditioning
  - the reason why the child or young person is being transported
- contact DCP or support provider if they are unsure whether to provide transport.

## Tips for safe transport:

- Install child car restraints according to manufacturer's instructions and adjust them to fit children or young people snugly with no slack or twists.
- Do not wrap children in blankets or other swaddling before putting them in the child car restraint.
- Check the vehicle to ensure there are no loose objects which could cause injury.
- Children or young people enter the vehicle from kerb side seat for safer entry and exit, if possible.
- Try to fill the vehicle with the appropriate fuel before transporting children and young people.
- Ensure that young children do not have access to an open vehicle to prevent them becoming locked inside or being able to start the vehicle. Additional care is required when using a keyless vehicle.
- Use child locks with young children and those considered at risk.
- Supervise young children carefully when close to traffic or driveways.

## Responding to issues during transport

If children or young people are behaving in a way that places their own safety and/or the safety of others in danger during transport (including removing their own seat belt or child restraint),

Carers should:

- pull over to the side of the road
- use their knowledge of the child or young person to attempt to calm and resolve the situation. DCP recognises that carers are often highly skilled in responding to the children and young people in their care and de-escalating issues.

Carers can:

- contact their support service provider or DCP for additional support.

Carers must:

- inform DCP about any issues during transport and strategies used to respond so this information can be shared with other people who are providing transport
- contact South Australian Police (SAPOL) on 131 444 if the child or young person's behaviour is highly dangerous and there is a risk of a physical assault and/or a crime being committed
- the carer is required to contact DCP immediately after SAPOL to ensure any incident reporting requirements are known and reported as necessary.

DCP will:

- support carers with issues that arise during transport
- share information about how DCP staff/ volunteers have resolved issues with the child or young person during transport.

## Requesting help from DCP

DCP can help carers with transport in some situations. DCP recognise that children and young people can feel uncomfortable being transported by DCP and want to avoid this whenever possible.

DCP will:

- help with transporting children when the carer:
  - is unable to provide transport or identify someone else who can help
  - does not own a vehicle
  - cannot transport due to ill health, family crisis or personal medical appointments
  - is unable to provide transport to or from contact due to:
    - safety concerns (physical or emotional)
    - transport being unworkable due to relationship issues with the birth family
    - work commitments
    - the transport being unpractical for the carer for another reason.
- consider helping in other situations on a case-by-case basis, if requested by the carer
- help in different ways depending on the situation, including:
  - identifying other people who can provide transport
  - helping to reschedule the transport to a time when the carer is available
  - DCP staff or volunteers providing transport.