

Restraint of Children with Disabilities in Motor Vehicles

We recommend the same procedures for adults

- People with disabilities often require special consideration when being restrained in motor vehicles. While a medical certificate will exempt a person wearing an approved safety restraint, there remains the need to provide restraint options for people with disabilities.
- Restraining a child with a permanent disability requires long-term solutions that need to be reassessed as the child grows.
- The Seat Belt Buckle Guard is specifically designed and designated as suitable for use by a person with a cognitive or behavioural disorder where they do not understand the need to remain restrained when travelling in a motor vehicle.
- The Seat Belt Buckle Guard is made from clear plastic to conform to Australian Standard AS/NZS 4370, which recommends that the protector allow full view of the buckle.
- The Seat Belt Buckle Guard should be prescribed by a health professional who is familiar with the client's physical and physiological status and lifestyle. A health certificate is to be obtained by the carers of people with disabilities who are unable to be seated safely and comfortably using an approved safety restraint and therefore require alternative seating restraint. A copy of the health certificate should be kept in the vehicle the user is travelling in at all times. The prescription form and health certificate should be forwarded to the supplier of Buckle Guard for reference.
- The Seat Belt Buckle Guard can only be used with the permission from the parents or legal guardian. If anyone else is using this device, they must have authority and instruction from the client's parent / guardian. This includes carers, centre staff, bus drivers, taxi drivers etc.
- Carers should have access to all available information about motor vehicle travel of children with disabilities, e.g. fact sheets or pamphlets.
- Organisations responsible for transporting people with disabilities should develop policies and procedures designed to assist in achieving safe travel.
- The driver of the vehicle must be familiar with how to release the Seat Belt Buckle Guard.
- The Seat Belt Buckle Guard is *not* to be used to restrain the client except for travel in motor vehicles.
- The Seat Belt Buckle Guard is *not* to be used to restrain children who are not diagnosed as having a disability that requires alternative restraint.