

Buckle Up Borrooloola



What is Buckle Up Borrooloola?

Buckle Up Borrooloola is a pilot program to save children's lives by providing access to affordable child restraints fitted to vehicles in Borrooloola. Borrooloola and Gulf region parents and families will be able to go to Mabunji Aboriginal Resource Indigenous Corporation and have an approved child restraint fitted for \$20 by qualified fitters.

Who is behind the program?

It is a joint initiative of the NT Motor Accidents Compensation Commission (MACC), McArthur River Mine and Mabunji Aboriginal Resource Indigenous Corporation, with support from Kidsafe NT and Northern Territory Police.

What does it involve?

MACC has supplied around 150 baby and child restraints free of charge to the community. Staff at Mabunji have received accredited training to enable them to correctly fit the restraints to local registered vehicles. McArthur River Mine has provided financial and logistical support to the program.

What is the role of Kidsafe NT?

Kidsafe NT has provided expert advice to the program as well as accredited training for Mabunji staff. The organisation will continue to be involved to support the program.

How much does it cost?

People having child restraints fitted will pay \$20 per seat.

Can anyone in the region access the program?

The program is open to all Borrooloola and Gulf region residents who regularly carry children under 7 in their vehicles. We are aware that grandparents and other relatives are often involved in the transport of young children. Child restraints will only be fitted to registered vehicles. Mabunji will provide the service in Borrooloola and the outstations it services.

What is the program important?

Accident statistics over the past 10 years show that Indigenous children killed and injured in motor vehicle accidents are far less likely to be wearing a seat belt or child restraint than non-Indigenous children. A survey conducted in Borrooloola earlier this year showed up to 65 per cent of children under seven were travelling in vehicles without proper child restraints. This is despite it being a legal requirement to use an approved child restraint for all children up to seven years old.

Why are conducting this program?

There are a number of barriers to child restraint use in remote communities including cost and availability of restraints and a lack of qualified fitters. This program aims to address these two issues.



What about adults and older children? What are you doing to encourage them to wear seatbelts?

We know there are also other issues including vehicle overcrowding and a culture of non-seatbelt use among adults. MACC has a range of programs in place to address these issues including education and awareness through football, sport and educational programs. We are also planning to run a specific campaign in the new year addressing adult seatbelt use. We hope that by starting with the most vulnerable passengers in cars we can help get the message through to others.

Why are you doing this only in Borroloola?

We know this is an issue that is seen in communities right across the Northern Territory. We are fortunate in having very willing community partners in McArthur River Mine and Mabunji Aboriginal Resource Indigenous Corporation who have partnered with us in Borroloola. This pilot program will help determine if a concerted effort in one community can make a difference.

Will you be doing something similar in other communities?

We already have a number of other pilot programs operating elsewhere. Each community is different and the same approach will not work everywhere. We will be taking lessons learned from this program to look at how programs can be implemented to improve child restraint use across the Northern Territory.

Will there be an amnesty for people not using child restraints?

NT Police will use their discretion for a limited time to encourage people to go to Mabunji and have child restraints fitted. However, a blanket amnesty is not considered appropriate. The priority for all program partners is to keep kids safe.

What if my car is not roadworthy?

Child restraints will only be fitted to registered vehicles.

If I start with a baby seat, can I bring it back when my child gets older and upgrade?

Yes. Baby seats can be returned to Mabunji and the vehicle fitted with a restraint more suitable for the age of the child.

What if I need to take the seat out so an adult can use the car seat? Can the restraint be refitted?

The qualified fitters at Mabunji will show you how to refit the seat in the same position yourself.

What information do I need to provide when the seat is fitted?

Mabunji will collect basic information including your name and address, the ages of the children seats are fitted for and your vehicle registration number.

How will local people find out about the program?

There will be advertising on local radio, posters around town and flyers available at a range of local stores and centres. We will also be promoting the program through local events and our program partners.