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Outrageous number of drivers fail to restrain kids in cars

RACQ has slammed the actions of thousands of drivers who had risked children's lives by failing to properly restrain their precious cargo.

Data from the Department of Transport and Main Roads and analysed by RACQ revealed more than 1700 people were fined for the offence in 2018.

RACQ spokesperson Lauren Ritchie said motorists in the Northern police region, covering areas like Cairns and Townsville, were the worst offenders with 446 drivers caught for driving with a child under seven unrestrained.

"Failing to properly restrain a child is inexcusable. It's truly shocking drivers are risking the lives of babies and children," Ms Ritchie said.

"Police caught drivers either incorrectly restraining their child, having their child in an incorrect restraint or some not having their child restrained at all.

"You're not only risking a child's life, but you could be fined \$400 and three demerit points. Not to mention double demerit points for any repeat offences within a year."

Ms Ritchie reminded parents and carers it was equally important their children were in appropriate car seats for their age.

"Babies younger than six months must be in a rear-facing seat, but best practice is to keep them rear-facing for as long as possible for an extra level of protection," she said.

"Once your child is seven years old it doesn't automatically mean they can come out of a booster seat. They should be 145 centimetres tall so the seatbelt does its job properly in a crash. Shoulder height markers on child restraints indicate when it is time to upgrade.

"While a car seat can be costly, it can be the difference between life and death."

Infringements issued in Queensland by police region during 2018:

Northern	446 (+58 double demerits)
Southern	407(+68 double demerits)
Brisbane	259 (+67 double demerits)
Central	210 (+38 double demerits)
South east	149 (+34 double demerits)

Media inquiries: RACQ spokesperson Lauren Ritchie 0427 137 022; Principal Media Advisor Clare Hunter 0427 261 932.

RACQ is Queensland's largest club and peak independent motoring organisation. We were formed in 1905 to represent the interests of the State's first motorists and today campaign for safer drivers, vehicles and roads on behalf of the 1.6 million members who own the Club. We offer those members a vast range of motoring, insurance, finance, entertainment and travel services and benefits, and each year respond to more than a million calls for roadside assistance.