

From 19 February 2026, unaccompanied minors under the age of 15 will no longer be allowed to travel without a parent or guardian on NSW TrainLink overnight services as part of the new Unaccompanied Minors Policy.

Minors (aged 12 – 15) may still travel unaccompanied on services that are not considered overnight services.

Here are some helpful tips on supporting unaccompanied minors travelling alone for a safe and comfortable journey.

Tip 1: Build confidence before the big trip

- **Start small:** If possible, practice short journeys on public transport to build their confidence and teach them how public transport works before any longer distances.
- **Walk through the itinerary together:** Make sure they understand the sequence of the trip (including all scheduled stops) to minimise surprise or uncertainty.
- **Create a simple written travel plan:** Hard copies and digital copies of the times, platform numbers, emergency contacts, and steps to take if something changes supports them to feel prepared and equips NSW TrainLink staff with the right information to help.

Tip 2: Pack smart and stay organised

- **Prepare a travel essentials kit:** Make sure to pack snacks, water, a phone charger, a small amount of cash, any ID they'll need, tickets, and hard copies of their travel itinerary and phone numbers.
- **Label luggage clearly:** Add their name and a parent contact number to all pieces of luggage, inside and out.
- **Include comfort items:** A book, headphones, portable gaming device, a journal, or other familiar and fun items can make the journey nicer and more relaxing.

Tip 3: Teach safety without creating anxiety

- **Talk about awareness in a calm, practical way:** They should be aware how best to look after themselves; know how to find their seats, who to talk to in case they need help, how to protect belongings and identify important signage and guidance.
- **Practice asking for help:** Ensure they can comfortably ask for help from a safe adult in case they need to. Sometimes practicing specific statements can make this feel easier like “hello, would you be able to please help me find X?” or “I’m getting off at X, would you mind helping me off when it is time?”
- **Discuss what to do if plans change:** Occasionally unavoidable disruptions may mean plans change. Have a plan for if this happens; like speaking to staff to call their parent/guardian to let them know.

Tip 4: Set clear communication expectations

- **Agree on check-in points:** Find a cadence that works for you both. Consider a call or text when they have boarded, and when they are arriving.
- **Enable location services together:** If they have a smart phone or smart device, location services can be activated to allow for parental visibility. Show them how location settings work on their device and have a conversation about why it’s helpful when travelling.