

# **British Transport Police urge parents to check on their children and know where they are**

**British Transport Police (BTP) is urging parents and carers in Scotland to check on their children after groups of youths have been traveling across the network despite the country being in a national lockdown.**

BTP has been concerned about the safety and wellbeing of children travelling unaccompanied on the network outside of the Covid regulations and has been running weekly operations since January to identify and protect these children.



During this period 24 targeted operations have identified over 40 young people who were then either collected or returned home to their parents and carers.

In some cases, children as young as twelve travelled from Helensburgh to Partick and others were identified as travelling from Dalmuir to Airdrie.

BTP Inspector Chris Shields said: “We urge parents and carers to ensure they know where their children are and have conversations with them to remind them of the Covid guidelines that are currently in place.

“One of the most concerning aspects from our operations has

been the number of young people we spoke to that were the opposite side of the city from where they live without parental consent or knowledge.

“The railway is not a playground and large groups of youths as young as 12 years-old have resulted in increased patrols to ensure there is safeguarding in place for children and young people who are traveling on the network.

“We all have a responsibility to protect vulnerable children in our community and I would encourage people to be on the lookout for young people who might need help and report any concerns they may have so we can make sure they don’t come to any harm.

“Passengers continue to be our eyes and ears and they can help us by reporting crimes and concerns by texting 61016.”

Earlier this year BTP partnered with Barnardo’s ‘See, Hear and Respond’ campaign, which aims to provide access to immediate support for children and their families who may be struggling with the consequences of COVID-19 and wider problems.