

Surviving Public Transport

Jade Willis-Sawh writes about her experiences - not all good - of dealing with the very real problem of taking a pushchair on public transport.

I have not been a mother travelling on public transport for long, but for the two-and-a-half years I have done so it has been a bit distressing.

I have had/still having bad experiences with bus drivers, normal everyday passengers, other people with pushchairs or buggies and also wheelchair users.

Sometimes I feel that people don't understand the struggles mothers or people pushing prams actually have to go through during their days out using buses and trains. It is the same for wheelchair users.

There are plenty of buses that are built to accommodate prams and wheelchairs, whereas certain tubes and national rail stations don't have the facilities for prams and wheelchairs to get around.

Even though buses are made accessible for pushchairs as well as wheelchairs, I feel the attitude of certain passengers is totally out of place.

There are sometimes lone passengers I come across who feel that they have no need to move from a fold down seat where a pushchair can be placed, when a driver lets me on the bus.

I have also had a few problems with bus drivers who all seem to have their own view on what should happen on the buses. It feels like there is no set rule for how many pushchairs can be allowed on a bus, for example one driver let me on along with another three pushchairs. But there was also a driver who had on one pram and told me I couldn't come on.

I have also been told to leave a bus because a wheelchair user needed to get on when there were two pushchairs.

I don't think its right to be told to get off just because a wheelchair user needs to come on. It's a nice thing for the driver to want to accommodate the wheelchair user. But it should be common sense that if there is not enough space on a bus you will have to say no (they find it easy to say to me).

Just like other passengers, me and other parents or people with buggies pay for our journeys on the bus and trains.

And just like wheelchair users me and other people with buggies have a bit of a struggled day getting on and off of buses and in and out of shops (some we're not allowed in).

So I feel we deserve some respect instead of being looked down on.

About this article

This article was written by Jade Willis-Sawh, a member of Headliners' Project Subway group at [Coram Parents Centre](#).

2 comments

pushchairs on buses

So miss willis-sawh thinks that it is "nice" that bus drivers want to let wheelchair users on buses! Doesn't she realise that the space she thinks of as a push chair space was specifically designed to finally allow wheelchair users access to buses. Pushchair users are only allowed to use the space if no wheelchair user needs it.

The reason that some drivers only allow a limited number of unfolded pushchairs in the bus is both for safety, in case of accidents, and so that a pushchair can be folded to allow a wheelchair to be accomodated.

If you choose to take the wheelchair space then you should expect to be asked to fold it if a wheelchair user needs it. You are healthy and abled bodied and your child wont need a pushchair for life. The wheelchair user will need his/her wheelchair for life and could do with some consideration from you.

tas smith from London, 19 July 2008 20:01

Something needs to be done

I go through the same as you. Drivers make their own rules with no consequences, if they dont like the look of you they can refuse you. I have been on a bus where there was a space for another pushchair a stroller tried to get on and was refused. The next stop a larger pushchair was allowed on! Not only do we have the drivers to deal with but the passengers some even with pushchairs who feel they shouldnt have to move for you. SOMETHING HAS TO BE DONE! We mothers fathers and carers who are abused and treated as lesser citizens need to get together and do something about this and soon! We have enough to deal with without people feeling they have the right to abuse us for no reason

Aaliyah from London, 02 July 2008 21:05

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