

ROSPA

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SAFETY

Education

Autumn 2007

A young child, likely a girl, is the central figure in the photograph. She is wearing a grey beanie with horizontal stripes in shades of blue, green, and brown. Her eyes are closed or looking down, and she has a focused expression. She is wearing a red scarf with white and black patterns. She is surrounded by lush green ivy that is climbing up a tree trunk. The background is a dark, wooded area with some fallen leaves and a blue bag visible in the distance.

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Billy represents Youth Parliament

Billy Jones, the Isle of Wight's Member of the Youth Parliament, was chosen to represent the UK at a major international conference. He is one of only two young people from the UK Youth Parliament to represent the young people of the country at the World Youth Assembly on Road Safety.

It comes in the same week the United Nations Road Safety Week got underway with the conference in April at the Palais des Nations in Geneva in Switzerland. The event was modelled on the format of the UN General Assembly, involving delegates from countries all around the world.

The event also saw the launch of the "Youth Declaration for Road Safety". This is a document describing the views of young people on what they, their parents,

teachers, government leaders and others can do to improve road safety, which it's hoped will spur action around the world.

In addition to adopting the "Youth Declaration for Road Safety", delegates had the opportunity to hear from road safety experts, present on national and local road safety activities involving youth, and participate in working groups on how to implement the declaration in their home countries.

Earlier in the year Billy attended the Island's Road Safety Conference at Farringford House in Freshwater Bay, it is hoped some of the ideas and schemes he saw in Geneva could help inspire safety improvements on island roads.

Billy Jones said "The International Assembly on Road Safety is a fantastic opportunity to make further

steps towards improving the safety of drivers and others, not just here on the island, but nationally. It's such a great honour to be representing my country on an issue which I feel so strongly about. To an international audience, I will be hoping to raise such issues as revising current

speed limits in 'danger areas' and increasing driving awareness among young road users. This assembly is also a great opportunity for me to gain confidence and experience which will improve my ability to represent the island as its member of the UK Youth Parliament."



Billy (centre) surrounded by members of the Isle of White Youth Council

Physics students have a gas

A school visit to gas detection specialist Crowcon's Abingdon, Oxfordshire headquarters was a great success. Organised in conjunction with the Industrial Trust, the visit introduced GCSE physics pupils from Cooper School in Bicester to the importance of gas detection as an essential safety requirement in today's industrial

and domestic environments.

The students were shown examples of what can go wrong when gas safety is not strictly adhered to - often with tragic consequences - and were given working demonstrations of equipment by Crowcon's in-house training specialist. They also had a tour of the manufacturing and service areas of the factory.

"All the students thoroughly enjoyed the visit," commented Stefan Kukula, Crowcon's technical director. "They asked lots of pertinent questions and seemed to appreciate that what we do can have a direct impact on their own lives. The visit went so well, in fact, that we are thinking about making it a regular event. Not only did the students like it, but the staff who got involved found it very rewarding."

The Industrial Trust is the UK's leading provider of curriculum focussed, in-company educational experiences for young people and their teachers. By taking them out of school and into companies, the Trust not only enables young people to link classroom concepts with real world contexts,

but also to learn about rewarding careers available within industry.

Each visit is carefully designed to meet the educational requirements of the visiting students, with the Trust working in partnership with the school and the company to develop an effective programme. For more information visit the Trust's website at: www.industrialtrust.org.uk.



South Wales crashes aim at youngsters

A new joint initiative, aimed at reducing road traffic collisions involving young people, was launched at Coleg Gwent Ebbw Vale.

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service and road safety officers from 10 local authorities in South Wales, have joined forces to bring a new initiative to students in sixth forms and colleges across the region. Fire and rescue officers deliver the road show, which is funded by the local authority road safety teams using a special grant from the Wales Assembly Government.

The event involves groups of around 30 students who all receive an initial theory presentation at the college. This focuses on the domino effect and shows how one road crash can affect lots of different people in addition to the actual casualties and their families.

Photographs taken by fire and rescue officers at road collisions are used to illustrate the main causation factors of crashes involving young drivers. Practical advice is offered and the students are invited to discuss the issues and ask questions.

Following this the students

are taken outside and presented with the sight of a real crashed car, mounted on a trailer. This vehicle, a Vauxhall Corsa, was previously involved in a collision which saw its 18 year old owner lucky to escape with his life, primarily because he was wearing his seatbelt.

With this strong visual still present, the students are then talked through the dangers involved in driving such as; drink and drugs, inappropriate speed and the proper use of seatbelts. The students are also shown around a working fire engine, complete with all its rescue and cutting equipment, including the body bag. This further emphasises the drive safe message.

At the launch, principal road safety officer, Penny Thorpe, said, "Young drivers aged between 17 and 25 are over represented in road collision statistics. They often think they know it all when in fact their over confidence and inexperience can lead to tragedy. The crashed car roadshow shows them exactly what can happen and that it could happen to them."

The crashed car road show will be visiting most colleges across South Wales.



Raising awareness

Ed Balls, the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, launched a major consultation on children and young people's safety in July. Staying Safe provides the opportunity for the Government to consult with parents, children, young people and the children's workforce on children's safety.

Staying Safe aims to:

- Raise awareness of the importance of safeguarding children and young people
- Promote better understanding of safeguarding issues, encouraging a change in behaviour towards children and young people, and their safety and welfare
- Ensure work in this area is coherent, and effectively co-ordinated across Government, by outlining existing work in this area
- Reinforce existing activity by proposing new actions to plug gaps and improve linkages

Staying Safe makes proposals for new/additional action in 11 areas:

- Play and taking part in positive activities
- Understanding and managing risks
- A safe workforce
- Addressing new threats to children's safety e.g. technology
- Helping Local Safeguarding Children Boards to make a

difference

- Improving practice in children's social care
- Reducing numbers of accidents
- Addressing parental problems which have a negative impact on children's welfare, such as domestic violence and substance misuse
- Improving safety on the streets, including tackling bullying outside school and reducing problems caused by guns, knives and gangs
- Highlighting the role of the public in children and young people's safety
- Better safeguards for children into/going out of the country

The consultation will run until October 31, including a range of activities for local authorities and their partners to explore this vital area of work.

For more information about the consultation, see www.ecm.gov.uk/stayingsafe. To download copies of the consultation document, see www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations.

For hard copies of the consultation document, summary version and consultation response form, contact: DCSF Publications, PO Box 5050, Sherwood Park, Annesley, Nottingham NG15 0DJ. Tel: 0845 602 2260 Fax: 0845 603 3360

Please quote DCSF reference number: 00571-2007 DOM-EN.



Lancashire start involving parents

Prospective parents and young children are learning about road safety issues in a new way thanks to an innovative guide.

Small Journeys has been launched by Lancashire County Council's Road Safety Group and is split into two resources. There is a handy A5 booklet for health visitors and a guide aimed at pre-school care providers.

The information-packed road safety guide for play-schools, childminders and nurseries includes information on pedestrian safety, safer outings with children, child car seats, being seen and much more. It also features A3 pictorial aids which can be used to teach road safety themes such as 'Stop', 'Holding hands' and 'Looking and listening'.

Clare Farrer, deputy group manager said: "Road traffic accidents are the leading cause of child fatalities and we hope that by using this resource road safety awareness will be ingrained in children from a young age. By involving parents this helps the messages to be reinforced at home."



The guide has been piloted by childcare establishments in the county. Jill Eckersley, manager at Busy Bears Day Nursery, Preston said: "We have found this to be a really useful package. The resource is bright and colourful and the children can identify with the characters."

The health visitors' guide can be used as a toolkit for

them to share with prospective and new parents. It includes passenger and child pedestrian safety as well as advice on the use of seatbelts in pregnancy.

Sue Greenwood, a senior manager in North Lancashire PCT, said: "Health visitors have vital early contact with families and Small Journeys is a really helpful resource for them to be able to discuss

with parents."

Small Journeys is part of the Journeys series of resources. The first to be launched, Primary Journeys, is currently used in 350 primary schools and Secondary Journeys is due to be launched later in the year.

For more information or to request a copy of Small Journeys call: (01772) 531048.

Support officers help Kerbcraft



Three Heddli Gwent Police community support officers joined Catherine Levy, Kerbcraft co ordinator for Newport, at St David's Roman Catholic Primary School to help promote United Nations global road safety week in April.

The three officers, PCSOs Lowri James, Jamie Cooper and Si Khan assisted in training children from Class Y1, showing them how to find a safe place to cross the road, how to cross safely at a junction, and how to cross between parked cars when there is no other safe place to cross.

Safety posters take top honours

Three pupils from Newall Green Primary School in Wythenshawe are celebrating after taking top honours in ISG Totty Building's site safety competition.

Siobhan Merryfield, James Johnston and Becky Leigh are the envy of their classmates after producing the winning designs for the poster competition, which the contractor organised as part of its £830K project to build a new extension to increase classroom capacity at the school.

ISG Totty Building set the pupils the challenge of designing a site safety poster highlighting the dangers posed by construction sites, with the winning entries displayed across the school.

Group health and safety advisor, Dr David Resendez, led the judging panel and found the selection of the eventual winners a difficult process. "The competition is designed to make children actively think about what specific dangers they may encounter around construction sites."

The pupils were presented with a framed copy of their winning entries and £25



worth of vouchers by construction industry ambassador Ivor Goodsite at a ceremony in front of the entire school.

Walk celebrates five successful years



The Road Safety Unit celebrated five successful years of Kerbcraft child pedestrian training, with approximately 1,500 children from Neath Port Talbot schools, teachers, staff and volunteers participating in a 2.5km walk around Margam Country Park lead by Henson Hedgehog, Neath Port Talbot's road safety mascot.

The scheme is reliant on volunteers to help train the children alongside the child pedestrian training co-ordinator and child pedestrian training support officer. All volunteers are recruited via the schools involved. Kerbcraft is currently running in 29 schools in Neath Port Talbot. To date nearly 2,000 children have participated in this scheme.

Splinters

By Florence Young, aged 12

Splinters of glass.
Skid marks.
Blood.
I look up, tears in my eyes.
What have I done?
Why did I do it?
A lamp shines down on them.
What should I do?
My life, my world
Was in that car.
Sleeping.
Sleeping peacefully.
I can see their faces,
Smiling, smiling in their sleep.
Who would have thought it would be their last?
The thought brings new wells of tears.
I turn. I run.

No losers in Staffs safety campaign

Staffordshire County Council's "Don't be a loser" road safety campaign is offering young people the chance to find out just how much their behaviour puts them at risk on the roads.

The innovative new online "Riskometer" device, which can be found at www.dontbealoser.org.uk, offers young people the chance to find out exactly how much danger their behaviour as a driver or passenger places them in – and is one of the first of its sort in the UK.

By running through a series of questions about the type of driver or passenger you are – including age, sex, and length of time you've held your licence – and the type of risks you take, such as speeding, driving a vehicle in poor condition or driving late at night, the Riskometer produces a personalised 'risk profile' for everyone who completes the test.

This enables young people to realise the dangers they could be placing themselves and others in on the road, and also provides them with a printable report containing the information they need to reduce their risk.

Adrian Hide, road safety manager at Staffordshire County Council, said "Young male drivers make up just 10 per cent of Staffordshire's population but they are involved in a massive 40 per

cent of crashes which result in death and serious injury – not just to themselves, but also to passengers and friends.

"Many young people don't realise the additional risks that everything from driving while listening to loud music to succumbing to peer pressure can generate, and we wanted every young driver or passenger in the county to be able to find out more about how to be safer on the roads."

The Don't be a loser campaign has been formulated to take the message out to a youth audience using the media and the language they enjoy – with posters and postcards already on display in cinemas, schools, colleges, universities, cafes, bars and gyms, as well as being distributed via driving instructors and libraries.

The posters and postcards drive young people to www.dontbealoser.org.uk which contains an interactive game based on the MTV Pimp My Ride concept, allowing young drivers to test how much they really know about the road; as well as a range of information on how to improve their driving. The website will now also be the host for the Riskometer, which will also be promoted via viral e-mail mailings.

For more information on the campaign, visit www.dontbealoser.org.uk.



Tufty on Mars

Hit TV series Life on Mars involved Tufty in a key storyline from 1973. Gene Hunt, played by Philip Glenister, donned a Tufty suit as a disguise while he was suspended from duty.

He is seen here with Sam Tyler (John Simm) plotting his escape in the BBC cop show. Other members of the cast were shown carrying out road safety instruction in schools.

Glasgow 2008

RoSPA's Road Safety Congress 2008 will take place at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Glasgow on February 25 -27. The theme is "Securing Wider Engagement In Road Safety".

One of the key challenges for road safety is to encourage positive engagement from individuals, communities, organisations, the media and government. However, this can be difficult because road safety can be portrayed as boring, as the 'nanny-state' infringing personal freedom, or as unimportant. At best, a lack of engagement can mean that road safety policies and activities are not as effective as they could be; at worst, there can be active resistance to, or deliberate disregard of, road safety measures.

Congress will explore the potential for, and benefits of securing wider engagement in road safety, reasons why this can be difficult, whether we are reaching all the key audiences in the best ways, and successful ways of doing so and of working across organisational boundaries.

A call for papers and booking form is currently being produced and will be published in June. Go to <http://www.rospace.com/events/index.asp> to register to receive a copy when it is published.



Give the children exciting play

Children need opportunities to interact with nature, an international conference heard.

Delegates and speakers from across the world discussed the benefits of play in the natural environment at RoSPA's International Play Safety Conference.

Against a backdrop of media attention surrounding the issue of whether children are being unnecessarily wrapped in cotton wool, the conference began by hearing how play in general – plus its associated bumps and scrapes – was an integral part of growing up.

Keynote speaker David Yearley, head of RoSPA Play Safety, said: "Accidents will happen during play and they form a vital part of the process through which children learn. Even injuries such as skeletal fractures are fairly common in childhood, but we must, of course, endeavour to avoid serious injury and death.

"The playground is a way of providing children with the opportunity to have these accidents in a setting that has managed the risk for them. We do not seek the unachievable goal of absolute safety – indeed, this would be far more deleterious in the long term. We do seek to provide exciting, stimulating and challenging environments in which our children can explore the full extent of the environment in which they live."

Turning to the importance of play in natural settings, Mr Yearley said: "As humans, we are in a unique position in that we can create a man-made environment in which to live. However, we cannot forget that much of the world is not man-made and it would therefore appear to be folly simply to create fully man-made environments in which our children can play.



"If children are to have a full understanding through play of their abilities to interact with the world around them they must have as full an exposure to the entirety of the environment as we can afford to give them."

The benefits of play in natural environments were outlined by Helen Woolley, a senior lecturer at the University of Sheffield's Department of Landscape. She referred to a significant body of research, stretching back to the 1970s, which has looked into the issue and discovered mental, physical and social benefits.

Studies had, for example, found that: greenness supported a sense of community and was a buffer to stress; children with attention deficit disorder functioned better after activities in green settings; and children who played in a forest had a statistically significant increase in motor fitness, balance and co-ordination.

The case for natural play was also shown to be more generally supported. Dr Ute Navidi, director of London Play, highlighted the results

of a children's survey in which 48 per cent of 7-14-year-olds in London said they played mostly outdoors, but 86 per cent said they preferred to.

The conference also looked at the practicalities of providing opportunities for children to interact with the environment, plus the associated concerns about play design-

"We do seek to provide exciting, stimulating and challenging environment"

ers and operators feeling restricted by standards and legal implications.

Gerry O'Sullivan, director of The Children's Playground Company, which works according to the principles of play designer Claudia Gust, gave delegates an insight into practical ways of incorporating natural and challenging elements into play spaces.

Dr David Eager, Associate Professor at the University of Technology in Sydney, Australia, outlined a life-cycle management process for playgrounds that encompass-

es the time from the inception of a project right up until the disposal of equipment.

Through a workshop led by Clive Dodd, director of the Australian Play Safety Institute, delegates were able to discuss in more detail the issue of the certification of the natural environment. Mr Dodd outlined how the guiding principles of risk management could be applied equally to both the manufactured and natural play environment.

Experience of what is already happening around the UK to maintain the natural environment in urban play spaces was also shared during workshops.

Delegates left the conference, held at Holywell Park, Loughborough University, challenged to look for ways to incorporate natural elements in the play spaces they provided.

David Yearley said: "I hope that we can stimulate the development of exciting and challenging play opportunities for our children that combine the excellent utility of playground equipment with the unrivalled bounty that nature can provide for us. I think our children deserve it."

The children go down

By Jenny McWhirter



In education we hear a lot about learning by doing, but when it comes to safety and risk education we are sometimes a little unsure how to deliver this.

Members of the LASER forum (Crucial Crews, Junior Citizen projects and permanent safety centres such as the Risk Factory in Edinburgh) give 10-11 year olds a chance to develop some strategies for managing risk in everyday situations.

Outward bound activities and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme offer young people the chance to develop their skills in recognising hazards, assessing and managing risk in a variety of unfamiliar settings.

But what about the youngest children in the education system? Traditionally, instinctively, do we do everything we can to keep them safe, discourage them from taking risks and perhaps, inhibit the learning which might come from those missed opportunities?

Recently I visited Sunny Brow nursery school in Rochdale where 3-4 year olds are learning about risk outdoors through a 'forest school'.

In Denmark, where the idea originated, forest schools are an integral part of all pre-school education. Children spend extended periods outdoors in all weathers, getting to know the environment and using it as a platform for



to the woods to learn

learning a variety of social and practical skills.

The aim is to provide opportunities for "positive experiences and participation in

grown woodland has now become one of its greatest assets.

The site is bounded by a high fence enclosing the

stream is a golf course. Narrow, muddy, paths twist their way between low growing brambles, shrubs and mature trees. The paths are far from smooth, with tree stumps, bricks and other debris from older buildings on the site poking through.

Apart from clearing brambles to make the paths and lopping off eye level branches, very little has been done to 'improve' the area with

conspicuous safety measures. The stream is not fenced off and the rubble has not been removed.

But Janet Cook, the teacher who initiated the project at Sunny Brow said she has fewer accidents in her forest school than she sees on conventional playgrounds for nursery age children.

Part of the reason for this is the routines established with the children before they go

In Denmark, where the idea originated, forest schools are an integral part of all pre-school education

engaging, motivating and achievable tasks and activities in a woodland environment, helping to develop personal and social and emotional skills".

Sunny Brow Nursery School is based in a large Victorian house set in its own grounds in Middleton, but surrounded by the trappings of a modern urban environment. The school already makes good use of the gardens, but an area of over-

school grounds and a narrow stream at the foot of a steep bank. On the far side of the



Site risk assessment

Location: *Sunny Brow Woodland*

Name: *J. Cook*

Date: *November 2006*

Description of site: *Owner, debris, dogs, flora and fauna, access, vehicles, water, interesting features, other comments - owned by school; mature trees with bramble under growth, occasional litter, small stream (golf club land drain) adjoining golf club*

	Hazard	Risk	People at risk	Existing preventative measures	Probability (p) 1 - 5	Severity (s) 1 - 5	Rating (p) x (s) 1 - 25
1	<i>Eye level branches</i>	<i>Damage to eyes</i>	<i>Adults and children</i>	<i>Regular cutting back</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>
2	<i>Bramble under growth</i>	<i>Trip and scratch</i>	<i>Adults and children</i>	<i>Regular cutting back</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>
3	<i>Dead wood</i>	<i>Fall and hurt/injure</i>	<i>Adults and children</i>	<i>Regular testing and removal</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>
4	<i>Small stream</i>	<i>Wetting and drowning</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Strict monitoring - limited access</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>
5	<i>Slippery path</i>	<i>Slip</i>	<i>Adults and children</i>	<i>Slow cautious movement</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4</i>
6	<i>Under lying debris</i>	<i>Trip and impact</i>	<i>Adults and children</i>	<i>Warning - caution, observation</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>6</i>
7	<i>Rubbish, litter</i>	<i>Cuts, scratches</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Removal with protective gloves</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>

Your Comments

If visiting this site your recommendations will be followed.

Your main concerns: *Some hidden, ancient brick work (leaf cover during Autumn); plenty of warning required.*

Your main positive features: *Beautifully, protected site. Sheltered. Limited public access.*

8	<i>Noxious plants</i>	<i>Choking, poisoning</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Informed warning</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>
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Toddlers' forest experience

out into the "forest". These include safety signals – A hand in the air means "stop and listen to me", a whistle means "stop what you are doing and come to me". A rucksack containing a first aid kit, a walkie talkie, a mobile phone, a change of clothes and a hygiene kit is always to hand.

plore, play and discover the forest for themselves. Time flies and a whole morning passes quickly for the children and the adults.

Janet explained that the children benefit in many ways from the experience. The greatest effects can be seen in their confidence, self es-

"The greatest effects can be seen in their confidence, self esteem and communication skills"

There is also a high ratio of adults to children and clear boundaries for managing behaviour. Discipline is good and the children are offered a range of activities to keep them busy (and warm!). On the day I visited children were using magnifying lenses to examine the early signs of spring on the ground, in the trees and in the water and making willow flowers with a local artist in residence.

If the sights and sounds of the forest distract the children they are able to go off and ex-

teem and communication skills. They also take responsibility for their own safety – Janet gives the example of a girl who asked to wash her hands because she had touched a fungus growing under a tree and of a boy who ran on a slippery path, tripped over a tree stump, got up, brushed himself down, told himself loudly that he was not supposed to run there today, and carried on with his game as if nothing had happened.

Alongside curriculum plan-



ning, risk assessment is an important part of Janet's preparation. She found the Level 2 GNVQ course (Forest School Assistant Practitioner) excellent preparation for this role. Before each visit to the forest Janet inspects the area and then shares what she has found with the children, explaining, for example, that because of the recent rain the paths are slippery, that they might slip and then discussing with the children what they need to do to be safe. As Janet explains, the children are taking risks, without being at risk.

The forest school at Sunny Brow has been in full use since the beginning of the last school year. Children and

staff have been out in all weathers, except very high winds where the risk from falling branches was high. If it rains they shelter under a tarpaulin strung between two birch trees. A heavy frost turns the forest into a new, fairytale like place.

At present, Sunny Brow's forest school is in use only one day a week, but Janet and her colleagues are considering how to open up this facility to other nurseries in the area. If you would like to know more about forest schools, opportunities for training and how to join in with this exciting approach, visit the Forest Education Initiative website <http://www.foresteducation.org> and contact your nearest cluster.

Project is my pleasure

By Alyson Robinson

Safety Challenge is the annual safety project run in Peterborough for Year 6 pupils and it has just completed a very successful fourth year with the teachers saying they are looking forward to next year and putting Safety Challenge in the year plan for the school. To date 10,000 pupils have taken the challenge and are now safer citizens.

Safety Challenge is administered by Peterborough City Council with the co-operation of a number of partners including Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service, St John Ambulance, Peterborough Accident Prevention Group and Peterborough Primary Care Trust.

Safety Challenge is a unique project as, rather than the pupils going to a fixed or temporary site, we go into each of the 54 primary schools in Peterborough with a set, 11m x 7m and 2.5m, tall each day to deliver the seven scenarios. Each scenario has a graphical backdrop to help set the scene and make it as lifelike as possible. The areas covered are fire, water, road, rail, home, drugs and first aid.

The project challenges pupils to think about areas of danger in everyday life and recreation that they may not currently consider as potentially dangerous. Safety Challenge has been designed to be as hands on as possible as this is the most effective way of pupils retaining what they have learnt.

At the water scenario pupils feel 'What lies beneath' the surface of a river and lake such as rats, rubbish, crisp packets, bottles, shopping trolley, fishing wire, sand and stones, they rescue the presenter from the 'river' and talk about the action to take.

In the fire scenario the pupils are told that someone is upstairs asleep and are

then faced with a fire under the stairs which have a broken banister and are littered with toys. They are taught to GET OUT, STAY OUT, DIAL 999 and then make a 999 call.

When the pupils get to the rail scenario they are on the platform, the presenter starts a game of catch across the track and the ball lands on the track. When a child steps onto the track, as inevitably at least one does, the sound and lights of a train are activated.

At the road scenario the pupils talk about wearing cycle helmets and seatbelts. They are shown a tissue box and a house brick and find out that if the tissues are on the parcel shelf that it becomes the weight of a house brick in an accident.

When a child steps onto the track, as inevitably at least one does, the sound and lights of a train are activated

The pupils are encouraged to wear cycle helmets to protect themselves from injury and ultimately their family from heartache. They are encouraged to wear fluorescent and reflective clothing.

When doing first aid the pupils learn "Danger, Response, Airway, Breathing" and put each other into the recovery position.

The teachers then cover home safety and drug safety scenarios in the classroom where the pupils are given a range of items. The pupils have to think about what they would do with the items to keep them safe at home, the items include scissors, a sharp knife, broken glass, bleach, overloaded sockets, matches, candles etc.

At the drug safety scenario the children are taught about prescription and over the

counter medicines, legal but potentially harmful items such as tobacco, alcohol, solvents and caffeine. They are also advised what to do if they are offered anything which they cannot identify, such as possibly illegal items.

This year we introduced a pre and post safety challenge questionnaire for the pupils

to assist with the evaluation of knowledge before and after participation. Schools are encouraged to do follow-up work such as designing posters, doing presentations and assemblies to other groups in the school, writing newspaper articles or acting out a television news report.

The importance and success of doing follow-up work shows its value when I go back to talk to the children. If they have completed such work then the evidence is that the retention of information and facts is far greater and pupils are much more forthcoming with the answers.

Follow-up sessions for the current year are now underway and time will tell how effective the programme has been again once the questionnaires have been evaluated.

Funding of the project is

part Peterborough City Council and Peterborough Primary Care Trust as well as sponsors. We are very grateful to have received funding from Perkins Engines for all four years to provide each child with a drawstring bag with a reflective exclamation mark on it, we also have received substantial support in graphic design from Signs Express Peterborough, sound effects from Pyrotech and van hire from Global Self Drive.

Over the years Masterfoods, Anglian Self Drive, Norbert Dentressangle, John Lewis and Russell Fire have all given financial support. EDF, RNLI, TrackOff, Network Rail St John Ambulance and the Fire Service all provide information leaflets and activity books for the pupils.

Working on Safety Challenge is tremendously rewarding. To see how the pupils enjoy the activities and respond to what they are learning is fantastic. When I visit the pupils again and see the effort they have put into their work and realise how much they have retained it is very satisfying. To know that the project I work on is helping our young people stay safe makes it a pleasure to come to work every day.

Alyson Robinson is the Safety Challenge co-ordinator with Peterborough City Council.



First for Lifeskills

Lifeskills – Learning for Living has become the first safety centre to receive accreditation through a new Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and Department of Health scheme.

The LASER (Learning About Safety by Experiencing Risk) centre in Bristol helps children and other members of the community learn about home, road and leisure safety in an enjoyable and practical way. It uses realistic settings to stress the importance of: taking personal responsibility for your own safety; assessing risks; and learning how to cope when faced with dangerous or difficult circumstances.

A supermarket, houses, garage, road, garden, electricity substation, dark alleyway, building site, playground, stream, railway, farm and countryside make up the 10,000 square metre facility, with sound effects bringing the "village" to life.

LASER Accreditation indicates that Lifeskills – Learning

for Living, which is based at The CREATE Centre, Hotwells, has met a set of quality standards covering partnership, programme management and evaluation.

There are about 200 safety schemes across the UK that fall under the general LASER banner. Some are permanent centres, such as Lifeskills, and others are annual events.

RoSPA worked with scheme providers to publish a set of LASER Good Practice Guidelines in 2003, and was then commissioned by the Department of Health to establish an accreditation service for safety centres across England

Accredited schemes are entitled to use the RoSPA/ LASER Accreditation logo as a symbol of trustworthiness and quality. Accredited status is maintained through annual reports.

For more information about LASER schemes, see www.lasersafety.org.uk, call John Vallender on 0121 248 2114 or email jvallender@rospa.com.



100,000 see Streetwise

A huge cheer went up as Streetwise, Dorset's award winning safety centre, welcomed its 100,000th visitor from among a class of nine and ten year olds from St Osmund's Middle School in Dorchester.

Streetwise centre manager, Alison Curtis, said "We were particularly delighted to be able to mark this milestone by presenting an engraved glass block for the children to take back to the school."

This school visit was one of around 10,000 visits by

Dorset school children, which are fully funded by Dorset Fire Authority every year. Darran Gunter, Dorset Fire and Rescue Service Chief Fire Officer and trustee of Streetwise said, "Every year the centre caters for more than 75 per cent of the children in the two target year groups, year 2 and year 5 – and reaching our 100,000th visitor now means that approximately one out of every eight people from Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole and has visited Streetwise."

Risk factory opens in Scotland

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents welcomed the establishment of the first purpose-built centre in Scotland to help children

learn how to cope with risks. The Risk Factory will serve people in the Edinburgh and Lothian area.

More than 8,000 primary

school children are expected to attend in the first year to identify and experience potentially dangerous situations and understand how to keep themselves and others safe.

The centre in New Mart Road, Edinburgh, has realistic sets including a road, house, bus, farmyard, beach and building site.

Errol Taylor, RoSPA's deputy chief executive, said at the launch "In today's increasingly sedentary and over-protective environment, where computer games and cars have replaced walking to school or building dens in the woods, children are no longer learning simple practical skills such as judging speeds and distances.

"It is vital for them to recognise the potentially

hazardous objects or situations they could meet at any time in everyday life."

RoSPA is one of more than 50 partners from local and national organisations which have helped to set up the centre with sponsorship from local companies and leadership from Edinburgh City Council.

The Society used its experience with similar centres in England to assist in planning and providing best safety education practice, as well as training volunteers in home safety issues.

Although primarily aimed at children, the scenarios can be adapted for use by all ages and community groups. They tackle everything from what to do in a house fire to dealing with bogus callers.



Visitors examine the cycle accident scenario at the Risk Factory

Pupils pioneer project

An exciting road safety project has been run in a partnership between King Edward VI Handsworth School in Birmingham and the charity Envision.

Envision is a young charity, operating throughout England, established with the aim of involving young people in the challenges which face society, to provide them with the skills and confidence to make a positive difference. Envision seeks to prove that teenagers are not apathetic and disengaged as they are so often portrayed.

By sending young people, mostly students and young professionals, as volunteers Envision supports 16-19 year old 'A' level students in developing their own projects. The volunteers are facilitators who enable the students to focus on the issue of their choice. The students can establish a social/environmental project of their choice.

From September 2006 to Easter 2007 the Envision team at King Edward VI Handsworth met once a week to work on their project. After

much discussion the students decided they wanted to raise awareness about road safety.

The students focused on primary school children. The students wanted to both improve road safety knowledge in a group they thought were vulnerable and test their own abilities as much as possible. They recognised the positive effect of peer education and the significance of educating children from an early age about the importance of road safety.

"We felt honoured to have been able to teach these children important safety skills"

The students researched road safety information using the internet and Birmingham City Council road safety department resources. The information was presented in a format which would be both interesting for the children and educate them on road safety.

This is what one of the students, Zara, wrote about the project. "Our Envision team,



from King Edward VI Handsworth School in Birmingham, focused on the issue of road safety among local children. Being aware of figures for

mention Catherine in a 'Spike' the hedgehog (road safety mascot) costume, descended upon the local Welford Junior and Infant school. We educated approximately 50 local children on road safety by conducting workshops for two Year 1 classes, involving fun and games based around the Green Cross Code and various types of crossings.

"The result was that the children were extremely enthusiastic, fast learners, and, of course, fond of 'Spike' the hedgehog. The teachers were impressed by our initiative. We felt honoured to have been able to teach these children important safety skills and hope they will be safer on the roads because of it."

This project has several positive aspects for road safety groups. The students independently agreed to this project showing the importance they attach to road safety and ensuring that the next generation has the knowledge they need to stay safe on the road.

Road safety educators now have tangible proof that the hard work and time they have been putting in is hitting home. The project also offers an insight into how road safety education can be taken forward. Could partnership working with schools and peer education be the next step in communicating long-term road safety messages to children?

Road safety educators can provide children with road safety information via a group of people the audience immediately identifies with and respects. At the same time this gives A level students the confidence and the belief that they can involve themselves in society to make a positive difference.

For more information about Envision visit <http://www.envision.org.uk/>

Thanks to junior RSOs

Primary school children from more than 100 schools in London were thanked for taking on the role of junior road safety officers.

To recognise the children's hard work during the last year, they were invited to at-

tend "Street Safe Live"; a fun-packed, educational and interactive road safety show. The children acted as secret agents and used their road safety know-how to compete against other teams and help characters such as Bond-

styled Double '00Safe' to complete a mission to make the fictitious Scary Square safe.

The day celebrated the second year of Transport for London's Junior Road Safety Officer scheme, which involves schools 'recruiting' Year Five and Six pupils to take the lead in promoting road safety issues among their peers.

The day included an awards ceremony where some of the most exceptional Junior Road Safety Officers won prizes for their own imaginative 'Street Safe' ideas in song, words and art.

Walk to school month

The theme for International Walk to School Month in October is around the local environment and how walking to school can help create sustainable local communities. Every child who takes part will be encouraged to pledge to be a "Street Ranger" by walking to school, using sustainable transport, supporting local shops, not dropping litter etc.

Promotional packs have been sent to every local authority in the country. Materials are available at www.walktoschool.org.uk

Focus on traffic dangers

Kent Fire and Rescue Service is to introduce a pioneering education film which aims to hit home to young people the seriousness of road traffic collisions.

Written and directed by KFRS staff, 'Rush' – a short film – tells the tragic story of how five teenagers celebrating their last day of school, and a young couple bringing their newborn baby home from hospital, come to collide on a Kent road one fateful afternoon. By showing the horrific aftermath, this short film aims to educate young people on the potentially fatal consequences to themselves and to other road users of being involved in a serious road traffic collision.

Rush will be delivered by KFRS's education team in all Kent and Medway secondary schools from September 2007 as a new addition to Key Stage 4 education programme. The film breaks away from the traditional approach to education films, using movie-style visual techniques, modern music and shocking graphic images to capture the attention of young people.

Bryan Cope, chairman of the Kent and Medway Fire



Makeup artist Nicky Baker Clarke prepares some injuries

and Rescue Authority, said: "This production marks an important step forward in our

is yet another great example of the innovative work being carried out by Kent Fire and

"We are extremely proud of this production and are confident it will have a far-reaching impact"

approach to educating young drivers and passengers to be responsible for their own and others' safety while driving. It

Rescue Service to reduce deaths and casualties on Kent's roads."

Chief Fire Officer Charlie

Hendry said: "Rush builds on the successes achieved with the award-winning film, Elements, already part of the Key Stage 4 education programme. Kent Fire and Rescue Service currently leads the way in it's field in producing material which really strikes a chord with young people on serious issues such as road traffic collisions, arson and antisocial behaviour.

"Our approach is unique in many ways because of its involvement of young people in all stages of the film, including at research and script writing. We are extremely proud of this production and are confident it will have a far-reaching impact when it is delivered to secondary schools later this year."

The Rush project was paid for out of a reward grant from the Government to KFRS for the successful completion of a Government-set fire related target to reduce the number of deaths and casualties in house fires. This target was part of the first Public Service Agreement - a contract between Kent County Council and the Government to deliver innovation and improvement in local services.



Director Chris Newberry with actors Rebecca Wicking and Lee Mara



Filming the air ambulance take off for a scene in "Rush"

Site safety winners

Pupils at Pot Kiln School, Great Cornard, Suffolk, designed their own posters warning other children not to play on construction sites in a competition organised by East Anglia-based house-builder Lovell.

Lovell is currently building 23 new homes on land next to the school and arranged the poster competition as part of its ongoing campaign to spread the message to children and



Some of the prize-winning poster designers: (left to right) Kubra Barnwell; Kayleigh Knight; Alex Palmer; Amani Bainbridge; Chloe Peacock and Dion Duke.

young people that construction sites are not playgrounds.

Lovell regional health, safety and environmental manager Darryl Hammond and health, safety and environmental adviser Paul Bocz visited the school to talk to all

160 pupils. Children watched a film made by Lovell featuring the company's cartoon 'hard hat' characters, Laura and Lenny, who help children understand that construction sites are dangerous and should never be treated as playgrounds.

As part of the visit, Lovell also set youngsters a competition to design a poster warning other children that construction activity is dangerous and that they should stay clear of building sites.

Darryl and his colleagues returned to the school to

present prizes to 18 pupils whose pictures were chosen from more than 100 entries. The first prize winners received a collection of goodies including a £15 book token, felt tip pens and a Lenny and Laura cuddly toy.

"The standard of entries was impressive and it wasn't easy choosing the winners," says Darryl Hammond. "The children really took on board what we were trying to get across – and clearly understood the importance of the message. They came up with some excellent ideas."

Best foot forward

250 schools in deprived areas across the country have joined the Department of Health's 'Schools on the Move' National Pedometer Programme.

Between September and March 2008, 45,000 pedometers will be distributed to encourage schoolchildren to become more active and help reduce levels of obesity.

Public Health Minister Dawn Primarolo said "Pedometers have been proven to increase the amount of physical activity undertaken by not only young people but by their families as well. When

this scheme was piloted, we found that children were so keen to improve their step count they often persuaded their families to get more active by going for things like a country walk, or visiting local fitness clubs."

All schools will have access to online resources that can be used inside and outside the classroom. Children will be able to chart their pedometer progress by logging onto a dedicated website that will help them set step targets and understand what impact being active has on their health.

Cycling needs time

Following the announcement that a £7.5million annual package of Government funding to help boost sustainable travel to school is to continue for another two years, the UK's national cyclists' organisation, CTC, called for cycling to be given as much school time as swimming.

The Travelling to School project is a joint initiative between the Department for Transport and the Department for Children, Schools and Families which encourages children to walk, cycle, or take public transport to school.

CTC Director, Kevin Mayne, said: "We would like to see cycle training in the school curriculum in the same way as that other life skill, swimming, which whilst a thoroughly sustainable means of transport, is not very practical for getting to school."

Bike it expanding

Bike It, the project encouraging more children to cycle to school, is now expanding to around 100 additional schools with 11 new Bike It officers taking up their posts up and down the country by April.

The project, managed by sustainable transport charity Sustrans, will build on last year's success in several towns and cities in England, where cycling levels of 10 per cent were achieved in participating schools - 10 times the national average.

With the new Bike It officers in post, a total of around 200 schools will be benefiting from the project by summer term. Participating schools are selected for their enthusiasm for cycling.

The project's expansion has been made possible by continued funding from Cycling England and the

cycle industry levy, Bike Hub, with additional funding and support this year from many partner local authorities.

Any teachers interested in getting Bike It in their schools can fill out an on-line survey; it's only by registering that Sustrans can make the case for more funding. Visit www.sustrans.org.uk/askforbikeit

The project, aimed at 9-12 years olds, works first by raising awareness about the benefits of cycling. Next, steps are taken to enable the young people to cycle to school - this could be new cycle parking, or cycle training sessions. The third stage is all about action - organising events and incentive schemes to encourage the children to cycle more often, such as bike to school breakfasts and weekly cycle to school days.



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