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ISSN 0459-2034

SAFETY

Education

Summer 2007



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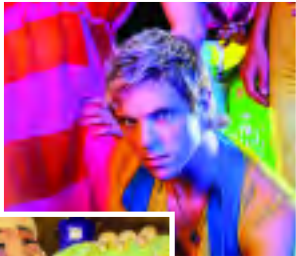
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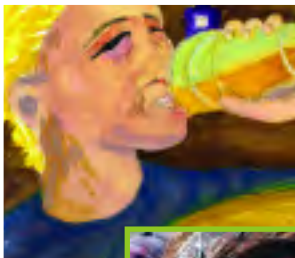
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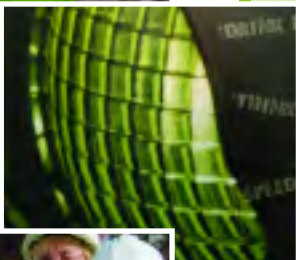
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Web site: www.rospace.com

RoSPA is a registered charity No. 207823
VAT registration No. 655 1316 49

To advertise in Safety Education contact:
safetyadvertising@rospace.com

Printed by Folium Group Limited
Minworth, West Midlands

Design and production
thecheeseroomltd
Telephone: 01827 50341
www.thecheeseroom.com
www.editorialdesign.co.uk

Stars come out to back Bike It

Pupils in Bike It schools across England had a chance on Valentine's Day's to show how passionate they felt about cycling with special 'I love my bike' events in February, thanks to money raised recently by top pop band the Scissor Sisters.

School children were given 'I love my bike' goodies like bike bells, stickers and posters to help celebrate the action day or week.

The Scissor Sisters (right) raised £1,300 for Bike It, a national project run by sustainable transport charity Sustrans, at a recent gig after hearing of its success in encouraging children to cycle to school.

The project raised to 10 per cent the average levels of cycling in Bike It schools compared to the national average of less than 2 per cent.

A whole range of activities

took place in Bike It schools up and down the country from 'love your bike' maintenance sessions where pupils decorated or 'bling their bikes' as well as making them road safe, to health workshops where pupils tested their heart rates before and after pedalling to see how cycling gets pulses racing.

There were also classroom sessions where children completed the sentence 'I love my bike because...', wrote an ode to their wheels, or discussed how cycling is helping them to love the planet. Some pupils also learnt to love and look after themselves with advice on how to be seen and be safe.

Mike Madin, Sustrans' Bike It manager, said: "We'd like to say a big thank you to the Scissor Sisters for the money they raised for Bike It. It has meant we could do something special around Valentine's Day so the pupils could show how much they love cycling to school. The give-aways, prizes and activities acted as an extra incentive to encourage Bike It school children to cycle in even more."



Honoured



Congratulations to Maggie Sims who was awarded the MBE in the New Year Honours List for services to healthcare. Maggie is senior health promotion specialist with South Gloucestershire Primary Care Trust.

She is also well known in injury prevention circles for her work as a member of RoSPA's National Home Safety Committee and the LASER Accreditation steering group.

Cash help to cut deaths

Young motorists are to be given help with the cost of advanced driver training in an effort to cut the number of road deaths in Scotland. The Scottish Executive is to provide funding towards the scheme.

The north east has the highest fatal accident rates in Scotland for drivers aged 17 to 25. A total of 62 people died on the region's roads last year.

The executive is funding a six-month pilot in the Moray, Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire areas.

It will provide half the cost of advanced driver training.

When this is added to local

authority funding already on offer, that means a £150 course could cost as little as £15.

The executive said it was obvious that road safety messages, particularly among young people, still needed to be heard.

Transport Minister Tavish Scott said there were a number of factors behind the death toll, including high-powered cars and young drivers' lack of experience.

He said the additional driving test would push young drivers to improve their standard - and could lead to cheaper car insurance.

"We hope that insurance

companies, in collaboration with running this kind of course, can indeed provide that kind of incentive," he told BBC Radio Scotland's Good Morning Scotland programme.

"I think there's a really powerful incentive - not just for Government and local government but for drivers themselves - to look at standards, look at what's happening on our roads and concentrate on measures that can improve that.

"I think the use of this kind of Pass Plus scheme, which has worked in other parts of the country, must be a step forward."

Launch of PSHE body

A new subject association has been launched to champion the quality of teaching and learning that can have a big impact on the health and well-being of children and young people. Schools Minister Andrew Adonis launched the new Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) association at a reception at the House of Lords.

Andrew Adonis said: "High quality PSHE provision is a vital means of tackling important problems including childhood obesity, teenage pregnancy and alcohol abuse.

"But PSHE is also where children and young people discover ways of enriching their lives through healthy eating and exercise, building positive personal relationships and becoming active in their communities."

He said that employers are increasingly emphasising the value of young people learning "soft skills" such as the ability to relate to colleagues and customers.

The Minister added: "Among its many functions, I envisage the PSHE association supporting the professional development of practitioners, building effective networks of subject experts and spreading best practice."

With more than 1,000 members, the new association's website has already provided a readily accessible resource available to anyone involved in PSHE.

PSHE is considered an important subject for preparing children and young people for adult life. In March the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority revealed a key role for PSHE in their new proposed secondary curriculum.

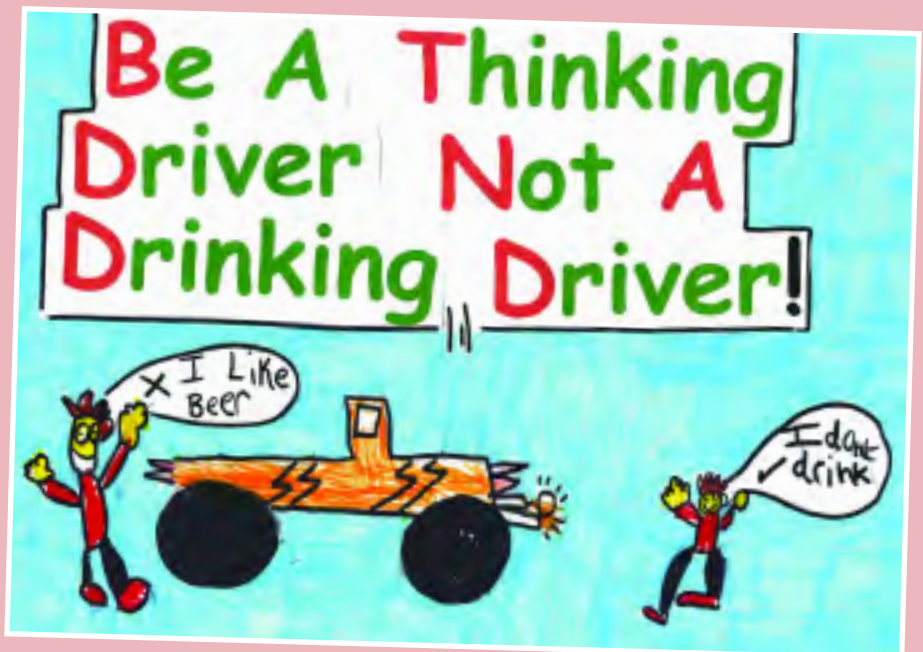
Schools provide 700 entries

All schools and colleges in the Gwent region were invited to enter the Christmas anti drink drive poster competition and more than 700 entries were received for this year's event. Josh Park of Duffyn High School and Thomas Giles of Glanhowy

Primary School were the senior and junior winners respectively.

The popular competition has been running for many years in Gwent, and is organised jointly by Capita Symonds Road Safety Team and Heddlu Gwent Police.

Recently it became an all-Wales contest with the overall winning poster being printed and widely circulated. This year the entry, pictured at the bottom of the page, by the senior winner, Josh Park, was the chosen poster.



Drama aims at young drivers



Students from Lancaster and Morecambe College witnessed a 'real-life' simulation of a high speed crash involving five young friends who have been drinking. The hard-hitting educational drama took place in front of 400 new and potential drivers at the college.

The scene of a smashed car and blood-spattered actors from the college's media department was attended by the emergency services. At the end there was a short speech from the parents of 22 year old Matthew Hannon who lost his life racing his car against a friend in January 2006.

The event was conceived by Lancaster District Alcohol Partnership and is funded by Lancashire District Local Strategic Partnership, North Lancashire Health and Lancashire Partnership for Road Safety. It aimed to give the youngsters a shocking and lasting understanding of the full consequences of drink driving and other irresponsible behaviour on the roads.

Packs promote week

To promote Child Safety Week (June 18-24), organisers of the week Child Accident Prevention Trust is offering free resource packs to people working with children, young people and families.

Aimed at health practitioners, teachers, childminders, out-of-school organisers, community workers and others responsible for children's safety, the pack contains an ideas booklet – full of facts, activity ideas, contacts, quizzes and competitions – designed to act as a launch-pad for local Child Safety Week activities, plus a colourful poster to help raise awareness about the week.

The theme for Child Safety Week 2007 is 'Safer children, healthier lives. Pass it on'.

Katrina Phillips, chief executive of the Child Accident Prevention Trust, explains: "Child accident prevention isn't about wrapping children up in cotton wool or stopping them from doing things. It's about giving children, young people, parents and carers the knowledge and skills they need to prevent serious injuries, and create environments where they can be active. We need the help of everyone working with families to 'pass on' these safety messages."

To order a free Child Safety Week resource pack:

- Join the Child Accident Prevention Trust's mailing

list via its website www.capt.org.uk

- Send an A4 stamped addressed envelope (60p) to Child Safety Week Resource Pack, Child Accident Prevention Trust, 22-26 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AJ.
- Call CAPT on 09065 151 436 (calls to this number cost £1.50 per minute from BT landlines; calls from mobiles and some other networks may be higher).

Copies of the resource pack are also available in bulk – contact irene.mitchell@capt.org.uk for more information.



First aid goes into schools

The British Red Cross has launched a first aid education kit for teachers to enable first aid training in schools.

The resource has been specially designed to allow teachers without any knowledge of the subject to teach all the key life-saving techniques. It has been produced as part of the Red Cross' Life. Live it. campaign which aims to help young people learn first aid. In an effort to reach thousands of children with some basic first aid knowledge, the British Red Cross is giving free resources to schools.

The kit is for educators working with 11-14 year olds as part of the PHSE curriculum. Topics include questioning why we should learn first aid, through to CPR and the recovery position.

The kit includes an interactive CD ROM with step-by-step guidance and video clips of all the key techniques allowing teachers without any experience of first aid to deliver the subject.

It has also been designed to minimize the amount of lesson planning for teachers who can rely on the pre-prepared material if they wish. A range of flexible lesson plans allows teachers to deliver sessions lasting an hour, or to approach the subject in more depth. Posters, bandages as well as a mannequin are included in the kits for practical activities.

Joe Mulligan, head of first aid, at the British Red Cross, said: "We want to enable schools to teach first aid. The basics can be easily taught and don't take young people long to learn. That's why we've produced a resource

which is so flexible and includes step-by-step guidance for those without any knowledge of the subject."

As part of the charity's commitment to first aid education it will be distributing free kits to 500 schools across the UK. In addition, on the launch date, every secondary school received a free CDROM sampler which included two lessons, as well as all of the supporting resources and video clips.

Mr Mulligan said: "Our aim is to get the learning out there and equip children with the skills and knowledge to respond to an accident. On average three million people attend A&E with injuries which could have been helped with first aid. We know simple skills such as knowing how to open an airway or control a bleed can be vital after an accident or injury."

To support educators delivering first aid education an online forum is being hosted by the Red Cross to enable them to share tips and best practice. The Red Cross is also running a forum for students, moderated by other young people, to allow them to discuss their experiences of learning and using first aid. Both forums can be accessed at www.lifeliveit.org

The first aid education kit costs £120 and can be purchased by calling 0800 7311 663 or online at www.redcross.org.uk/shop



Guiding teachers

Guide Dogs has launched its citizenship packs – on-line education resources for teachers in nurseries, primary and secondary schools (and schools teaching the Scottish curriculum at secondary level).

Designed to support – and directly linked to – the national citizenship curriculum, the packs provide practical and enjoyable tasks, helping to make learning interesting for young people.

Lesson plans and resources are prepared in detail for teachers. The content is written to aid the personal, social and emotional development of youngsters; from communication skills to language and literature. Young people are encouraged to empathise with those who are blind or partially sighted, value their own vision, gain a basic understanding of eye care, and understand the work of Guide Dogs.

The packs also give students the chance to design a safe street environment, using their understanding of sight loss to make a real difference to the lives of visually impaired people.

Advertising boards and overhanging hedges, scaffolding and wheelie bins; these hazards all appear on many local streets. The challenge for young people is to consider a real pedestrian environment, and as a class project, propose the re-posi-

tioning or preventing of these hazards, so that people with sight loss don't keep bumping into obstacles every time they walk along the pavement.

There are no 'cash asks' from Guide Dogs, but the citizenship packs give schools the chance to sign-up to a fundraising event – with a chance to make money for school funds as well as charity – while learning about eye care. Shades day is all about donning sunglasses – looking like the stars – while understanding why it's important to protect our eyes from harmful sunrays. To find out more about shades day 2007 – taking place on 29 June – log-on to www.shadesday.org.uk

The citizenship packs are a free education resource, which can be downloaded by logging-on to www.guide-dogs.org.uk/citizenship Register to access the packs.



Why safety and risk e

Traditionally safety education in schools has been a key aspect of the Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) Curriculum. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the focus may be on road or home safety and in Key Stages 3 and 4 personal safety and road safety may feature strongly, linked perhaps to alcohol education and driving.

Accident statistics are also often quoted as an important justification for safety education in schools. In the UK more young people die in accidents than from any other single cause.

In 2002 405,000 children in the UK had accidents at home which necessitated treatment at hospital. While most accidents in childhood are not severe many of those injuries can lead to a lifetime of disability. In 2004 in the UK 275 young people aged 0-14 died

Jenny McWhirter explains why there is a need to teach about safety and risk

in accidents.

Although generally the UK has a good record in injury prevention, fatal/ serious accidents to young people in the workplace are increasing.

Government policy offers opportunities and support for schools to focus on safety education:

In 2001 the DfES published guidance on safety education.

Curriculum 2000 includes a PSHE framework which includes safety and risk education and includes health and safety as part of the general teaching requirement for all teachers

Keeping safe is a strand in the Green Paper Every Child Matters and the National Healthy Schools Programme includes PSHE as one of four

key areas that must be addressed if a school is to gain accreditation.

Preparation for work experience offers the chance for children and young people to learn about health and safety at work.

In addition to all this the QCA has published units of work to help teachers deliver PSHE, provided end of Key Stage statements and assessment guidance to help schools manage PSHE.

Why risk education?

The concept of risk underpins all aspects of PSHE. Whether we are considering drug education, sexual health or road safety, children and young people are being asked to recognise what can cause harm (hazards), assess risk (the probability and severity of harm) and explain how to control risks to themselves and others in familiar and unfamiliar environments.

Good practice in safety education requires us to "teach safety AND teach safely". However, recent research by the Health and Safety Laboratory suggests that teachers focus more on "teaching safely" and less on helping their pupils and students gain understanding and experience of the risk assessment process as described in the general teaching requirement. Why is this?

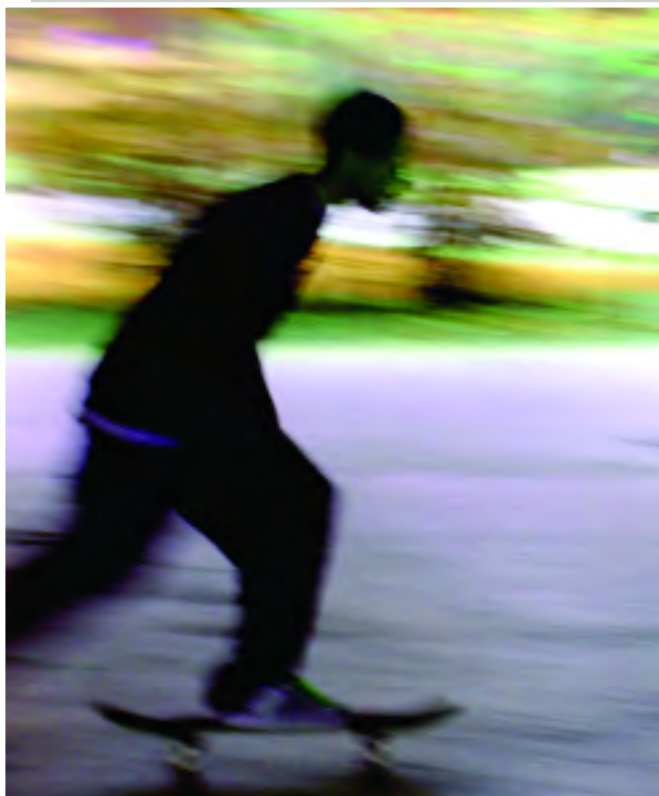
One reason may be that teachers, like most members of the public, don't understand risk in the same way that health and safety professionals do. The risk assessment process – hazard recognition, risk assessment and risk control is essentially a rational technical model and most of us simply do not op-

erate like that in our day to day lives.

Often we make judgments intuitively and unconsciously when taking care in different settings or we base our decisions on our own experience, on our feelings and on information which is easily available to us, for example through the media. We are

more likely to rate something as risky if the possible consequence is very severe, even if that outcome is very unlikely or delayed, while we underestimate the familiar risks we take everyday, such as driving, particularly if we feel in control and we derive benefit from the activity.

While it is understandable that we all assess risk differently, important decisions are made on the basis of our assessment of risk – whether to



education?



drive to a meeting or take the train, whether to invest in fencing to keep people away from cliff edges or accept that there will be rare but fatal accidents – so it's important that those decisions are made systematically and on the best available information.

The risk assessment process begins with recognising hazards. So what is a hazard? A hazard is something which might cause harm. Some hazards are obvious

because they are objects – ladders, worn carpets, garden ponds, are all hazards. Other hazards are only apparent because of the effect they have on something else – for example bottles of chemicals or food which has not been stored correctly can become hazardous. Other hazards are forms of behaviour like violence or bullying. And behaviours like neglect or inattention can increase the potential of hazards to cause harm.

How can we assess risk?

Risks can range from "intolerable" to "trivial". Risk is made up of two components – probability and consequence. Very often we focus most on the negative consequences or severity of harm, but we should always bear in mind that many activities which are potentially hazardous are also well controlled so the level of risk is actually quite low.

We also have to remember that things or activities which are hazardous also have the potential to benefit people as well as harm them. A good everyday example would be electricity in the home.

So when we make a risk assessment we are weighing up two complex bits of information – what might happen and what is the probability that the various consequences will actually occur.

Risk assessment gets even more complicated when we think about who might be affected – is the risk for the individual only or for other people? For example, if a child of school age has an accident a parent may have to stay away from work to look after them. This could affect the family finances.

We also need to ask what other factors might affect the



likelihood or the outcome. There are health risks associated with drinking alcohol, but the risks change if we also drive a car when we have been drinking.

Finally we have to recognise that the level of risk associated with many hazards is affected by our experience of that hazard and the environment. A child may learn to look both ways before crossing a road, but does she also know that she should do this in a car park? So we have to take into account the unfamiliarity of the environment and the possibility of some unknown or unforeseen hazards when assessing risk.

Of course we cannot and should not expect the youngest children in school to be able to take responsibility for formal risk assessment. However, research suggests that as they mature children and young people are increasingly capable of contributing to structured risk assessments.

Practitioners tell us that where schools have involved children in assessing risk and setting school safety rules,

the children are both more likely to comply with the rules and contribute to enforcing them.

Schools have a statutory duty to take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the safety of pupils and staff on school premises and when taking pupils off site. However, it is also vital to share with them the skills of recognising hazards, assessing risks and taking steps to control risk. Otherwise when young people gain greater independence from parents and teachers and move on to unfamiliar environments such as the workplace, they are likely to have accidents and injuries.

More generally, understanding risk is all about helping young people to make sound judgements when coping with uncertainty. It is an important life-skill which they can take with them into adult life.

See the next page for an example of an activity which could help pupils to understand how risk assessment can help them to keep safe in a familiar environment: the classroom.



Lesson plan: Safety and risk education

Risk assessment activity for pupils aged 9 - 13 years

Aim:

To help pupils understand how to assess risk.



Intended learning outcomes:

- Pupils will be able to recognise some familiar hazards, assess the level of risk and explain how the risks can be controlled.
- Pupils will be able to recognise where the risks associated with some hazards have been controlled.
- Pupils will be able to carry out a simple risk assessment in a different but familiar environment.

Ask the pupils if they know what is meant by the word "hazard". Collect up their answers and display the following definition.

A hazard is something which might cause harm. Some hazards are obvious because they are objects or situations – cliff edges, hot liquids, moving vehicles, broken glass, deep water are all hazards. Other hazards are only apparent because of the effect they can have on something else – for example food which has not been stored correctly can become hazardous. Worn parts in machines can cause accidents. Plastic bags can suffocate. Other hazards are forms of behaviour. So bullying and neglect are all hazards because they have potential to cause harm.

Invite the pupils to look around the room. What objects could be hazards? Examples might be back packs, chairs, trailing wires. These are all trip hazards – people might trip and fall. What might be the consequence of a fall in the classroom? Collect up the pupils' responses. These might include:

Nothing
A twisted muscle

A graze or bruise
Looking or feeling silly

A head injury

Ask the pupils if they can decide which of these outcomes is

The most severe? The most likely?

Based on both of these factors, which of the different trip hazards is the most risky? Who is most at risk? Are some people more at risk of tripping than others? What could be done to reduce the risk to everyone in the room?

Explain to the pupils that what they have done is take part in a risk assessment. Risk assessment is something we do every day although we usually don't stop and think about it the way they have in this activity.

Now ask the pupils to look around the room again.

Are there any hazards which have been controlled? An example might be the use of a toughened glass panel in a classroom door, or a self-closing spring on the door. Doors in schools and other workplaces often have glass panels so that you can see if someone is standing outside the door before you open it towards them. The glass is toughened so that you can't cut yourself if you push on the glass section. Doors often have self-closing mechanisms to prevent them slamming suddenly and as part of fire safety.

Ask the pupils to work in groups and identify other hazards around the school – for example in the gym, or hall, the laboratories, on the playing fields. What steps have been taken to control the risks?

Review and reflection:

What other hazards have the pupils identified? What steps have been taken to control the risks? Do they have any other suggestions for controlling these risks?

Pupils have been learning about the risk assessment process. This involves:

- Recognising hazards (possible sources of harm)
- Assessing the risk (possible consequences and how likely they are to occur)
- Suggesting actions to control risk to self and others in a familiar environment

Follow up activity:

Ask the pupils to carry out a risk assessment in another familiar environment, for example their bedroom or kitchen at home, the garden, local park or playground.

Next time you are planning to take pupils off site, share the risk assessment process with them. What hazards do they think they will face, what will be the risks. Which risks are severe? Which are trivial? Which risks should they pay most attention to? What can they suggest to help to control the risks?

Encourage the pupils use the risk assessment process in other aspects of PSHE such as drug education or sex and relationships education.

Improving safety delivery

A study into improving the delivery of road safety education was presented by John Wicks and Carry Stephenson from the MVA Consultancy.

During the research, road safety officers were surveyed about the factors influencing the delivery of road safety education, training and publicity (RSETP) and how its profile could be raised.

Primary and secondary headteachers and teachers were surveyed about the effectiveness of current RSETP and how its impact could be increased.

The study, which also included a literature review, case study interviews, and a planned stakeholder workshop, aimed to identify how road safety officers and teachers could best work together to maximise the delivery of high quality road safety education and to identify examples of good practice.

The findings of the road safety officer survey included:

- The school environment is

Jo Stagg reports on highlights from the RoSPA National Road Safety Congress

- the main area of work
 - Work with children and young people is the largest proportion of work
 - School travel plans and initiatives, such as walk to school week and in-school cycle training, are the main activities
 - Other road safety education is given less attention.
- A frustration at the short-term nature of many road safety appointments and limited opportunities for career progression were also reported. There was a sense of intrinsic satisfaction with work, based on the results being achieved, rather than extrinsic satisfaction, based on pay, training or recognition.

The survey responses from primary school headteachers revealed that road safety education was ranked as the second most important of five aspects of PSHE (healthy eat-

ing, sex and relationships education, road safety education, positive environmental education, and drugs education), with healthy eating being the most important.

Among secondary heads, road safety education fell to fourth in the rankings.

Other responses from the school surveys included:

- In primary schools, class teachers are most actively involved with the delivery of road safety education, along with RSOs, but in secondary schools it is delivered mostly by PSHE coordinators
- Primary schools reported

good support and opportunities to work with police and RSOs, but there was less evidence of external support from local authorities for secondary schools

- Primary school teachers perceive they lack personal skills for the delivery of road safety education, but lack of time and resources are seen as the main barriers to more effective delivery in secondary schools.

Among the issues arising from the study was an agreement between RSOs and teachers that there needs to be more guidance and direction from central and local government and improved communication channels between all practitioners.

The study's final report is due out in the spring.

Cycle training



Pete Zanzottera, senior consultant with Steer Davies Gleave, gave delegates an overview of Cycling England's new Bikeability scheme.

With pilot schemes launched in September, he said 3,000 children had so far received training. A national launch was due in March and the aim was that 300,000 people would receive training in

2008/09, with a vision for 2012 that every child could access Bikeability.

Bikeability sets a national standard for adults and children, and incorporates three levels of training:

- Learning to control
- Making easy trips
- Cycling where you want.

For more information, see www.bikeability.org.uk

New message

A powerful new road safety education toolbox for secondary schools was presented by Kate Wheaton, education adviser at Road Safety Scotland.

Crash Magnets consists of interactive activities, video clips, interviews with young people, games and an on-line forum, all supported by striking graphics.

To engage young people in their mid-teens, Ms Wheaton said road safety education must be relevant to their world, reflecting present styles and trends. And, she said, it was important that it was embedded within the wider curriculum, having particular links to health, citizenship, peer education, future education and personal and

social development.

Peer pressure is one of the key issues addressed by the toolbox.

"A young person not wearing a seatbelt is not an act of defiance," said Ms Wheaton. "It is a way of fitting in – it is as simple as that."

Other topics covered by Crash Magnets include pedestrian and driver issues linked with distraction, speed and speed limits and drink and drug driving.

An evaluation by Heriot-Watt University found that Crash Magnets lowered intentions to speed in the future and lowered the acceptability of not wearing seatbelts, speeding, drink-driving, and attitudes towards driving violations in general.

How youngsters see risk

Road safety from a young person's perspective was addressed by three presentations.

Dr Jenny McWhirter, RoSPA's

safety and risk education adviser, introduced the benefits of "draw and write" projects to assess where children are in their thinking about safety

issues, rather than where experts are.

Such exercises, she said, could provide information about the range of road-relat-

ed hazards which children and young people are aware of, the age at which their awareness peaks, how gender influences their learning needs and gaps in their understanding.

Jackie Green, professor emerita at Leeds Metropolitan University, also spoke about draw and write research. Her study was designed to discover the role played by parents in road safety education at different stages of their child's development.

The research showed what parents could do to help. This included:

- Be a better and more consistent role model
- Know the current advice/rules being given to children and young people by schools and road safety officers
- Give proper explanations
- Provide opportunities to practise skills in judging the best place to cross and safe distances
- Check on their child's behaviour
- Continue into the teenage years, but be relevant.

"Parents are genuinely concerned about their child's safety, but could do better," said Prof Green.

Dr Richard Kimberlee, senior research fellow at the University of the West of England, presented the Streets Ahead on Safety Project.

The project in East Birmingham involved young people as service users and decision-makers to improve road safety. It included meetings between young people and road safety engineers and environmental audits being conducted in the local area.

Among the outcomes, said Dr Kimberlee, were greater opportunities for contact between schools and parents and an encouragement to engineers to "get on with it".



Tom Mullarkey, RoSPA chief executive with Tracey Prescott on the Silk Group stand

The impact of Kerbcraft

Researchers from the University of the West of England outlined the impact of a pilot network of practical road safety training schemes.

The pilot network, consisting of 103 schemes in local authorities in England and 12 in Scotland, is based on the Kerbcraft model and has been funded by the Department for Transport and the Scottish Executive.

Courses last for 12-16 weeks and use 30-minute roadside sessions to teach three key pedestrian skills to five-to-seven-year-olds:

- Finding a safe place to cross
- Crossing safely between parked cars
- Crossing safely at junctions.

Parents or local volunteers are trained to deliver skills training to the children in a non-didactic style, with chil-

dren discussing strategies and issues between themselves and with the trainers.

Kirstie Whelan, senior research fellow, presented the findings of an evaluation study which compared the pedestrian skills of 118 children who had undergone the training with those of a control group of 212 children who had not taken part in Kerbcraft sessions.

Trained children showed a significant improvement in choosing safe routes for crossing the road and significantly outperformed the control group at each stage of the parked car strategy and each stage of the junction strategy.

Prof Elizabeth Towner, professor of child health, summarised the impact of the pilot network on school communities and volunteers.

Schools which took part in the evaluation study reported a range of benefits including to children's learning and behaviour and relationships with parents, and recognised that Kerbcraft was founded on sound educational theory.

Volunteering as a Kerbcraft trainer also brought with it a range of benefits, including social contacts, more confidence and employment opportunities.

Congress delegates also heard about local successes from pedestrian training schemes run by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, which used students from local colleges as volunteers, and Lancashire County Council, which has trained 44,937 children to date through the Right Start scheme.

Safe as houses in Gateshead

The Gateshead Housing Company and its partners have launched a new scheme to remind youngsters how to stay safe when improvements to homes are going on.

The 'Safe as Houses' campaign has been launched as over £1m a week of improvements are carried out at hundreds of homes across the borough by the housing company.

As well as telling children and their parents about the dangers around a home that is being modernised, the campaign also reminds them to keep away from building sites and depots, which can be a potentially fatal area for young people to be in.

The simple, seven-point plan to keep youngsters safe is:

- Keep your distance from building sites and scaffolding.
- When work is going on stick to playing fields and playgrounds.
- Keep children and pets away from work areas.
- Watch your step inside your home. Beware of things you could trip on and take care in work areas.
- Keep children away from dangerous tools and machinery.
- Watch out for overhead dangers outside your home.
- Be sure to follow any instructions you are given.

Bill Fullen, chief executive of the housing company, which is set to spend up to £330m on improving thousands of local homes by 2010, hopes parents spell out the dangers of playing near building works to their children.

He said: We want to remind parents and guardians to remind young people about the dangers of playing near building sites or where work

is going on.

"Of course that applies to everyone in the household as well - so please take care and hopefully as well as having a better home to live in, we can all be safe as houses too."

Parents can also ask for a copy of the Health and Safety Executive's 'Stay Safe' interactive comic and the company's Major Works Compact from their on-site tenant liaison assistant when work is carried out.

It is also hoped to also run a series of site safety sessions in local schools and community centres in the future as part of the campaign.

Frank Haslam Milan Ltd, Gateshead Council and Morrison Facilities Services Ltd, who are carrying out repairs and improvement work across the borough for the housing company, have also backed the Safe as Houses campaign.

Crucial Crew get message

Stoneleigh Park is a wide open space, famous as the showground for the Royal Agricultural Show. As you drive into the imposing entrance the right hand track directs coach loads of teachers and children towards the annual Crucial Crew event operated over a fortnight every autumn.

This is the story of one group's experience during the day.

Waiting to receive each new batch of guests for the day was red-coated Jane Lees, road safety officer and joint coordinator of the whole scheme.

During the day each group of Years 5 or 6 children experienced nine areas of risk and received extensive training in the basic resuscitation technique and recovery position



By Colin Morris

members of the ambulance service. Their teachers accompanied them, carrying a clipboard to collect the scores awarded by each scenario presenter.

A firefighter established with his group that they knew about the dangers of fire and the importance of raising the alarm. Making a 999 call was a vital skill which one of the group practised in the hearing of the others. The whole group were involved in sending the correct information about the location of the fire. While smoke from the inflatable house swirled around them, the call was made successfully.

Two TNT representatives showed the group the enormous

size of a truck and located four blind spots where the driver would not be aware of a bicycle or a person around the vehicle. Reminders about the importance of cycle helmets were included in this session; most children wore them most of the time (but "why not every time?"; they began to think). During the day there was evidence that people had remembered about the four blind spots for a truck driver from an event some years ago: safety messages delivered with a real truck can be easily recalled.

Safety Street was an effective way to maintain pupils' attention on information from trading standards. Having thrown a ball through the hole in a painted brick wall,

Continued over

Crucial Crew get message

the ball landed in one of five boxes marked electrical goods, fireworks, food, age-related sales or cycling. Each ball in the box brought a challenging question for the individual who threw it, or for the whole group to consider:

- What is the age-limit for buying fireworks? (18)
- What is wrong with this television? (faulty wiring in the plug)

Two gas engineers explained the dangers of gas once it has escaped in the home and demonstrated dramatically with a burst balloon, the likely consequences of switching on a light in such circumstances. The group discovered how to switch off the gas supply and one of them knew about ventilating the rooms to dispel the gas.

A community police officer asked the group to wait on a pretext and then watched from cover to see the outcome of a stranger approaching. The person with a terrier was a plain-clothes police-officer but as far as the children were concerned he was a stranger to them. Their teacher was disappointed to find that five of her pupils went with the man (to help him scare rabbits !!) in another part of the park but at least there were four children who decided this was not a good idea. Discussion with the group drew out reasons why some went with a stranger and equally why some of them stayed.

Why did the road safety officer have a ventriloquist's dummy sitting on a booster seat? Why were children rolling eggs along an imaginary road? Recent legislation about child car seats means that those under 12 and less than 135 cm tall should need a booster seat otherwise their neck or other body parts could get caught and injured with a standard seatbelt. The dummy's neck could suffer safely to make this point.

An egg was analogous to a



human body, having a soft shell containing 75 per cent water. So the children found that rolling a replica egg at speed resulted in severe injury and a teacher doing the same with a real egg showed that even years of experience as a driver brought a similar tragic result.

With blue plastic tarpaulins as water, the group learned about three categories of rescue, should they find someone in danger of drowning.

Having sought help via phones and passing adults, they practised shouting/encouraging advice, throwing and using a lifeline without getting pulled in themselves and lastly supplying a variety of available buoyancy aids to their conveniently stranded teacher.

Outside a converted electricity sub-station, the group

was informed about the great power of electricity and its associated dangers. This included telephoning the local supplier, should a ball, for example, become trapped inside a sub-station.

Finally, the group identified 10 hazards in a simulated living-room which would be particularly dangerous for younger children.



Pretty coloured liquids can be poisonous

LASER centres sign up

Three permanent centres have registered a request to accredit to the LASER scheme and one centre has returned their stage one accreditation documents.

Annual event accreditation documents are complete and in the final read through before release in April, and co-ordinators have begun registered their request to accredit.

The LASER web site is now approaching 1,000 visits a month from 23 countries. Malta, Sweden, Korea and Japan are in direct contact with the accreditation team.

The 'schemes location' area of the site has recently been updated. If you know of any events which are not yet on the site please contact

John Vallender jvallender

@rospa.com, or if it is more convenient use the designated contact us link on the scheme location pages.

The 2007 season of annual events has begun. John Vallender will be using his time to visit at least one event each week. Thanks and appreciation go to Donna Abdy for arranging to meet at York 'Crucial Crew, Ian Feathersone and Sue Yoxall for their welcome at Wandsworth 'Junior Citizen', and Annie Davey for her help at Staffordshire Moorlands 'Crucial Crew'. Co-ordinators reading this note who wish John to visit them please contact him on 0121 248 2114.

Over the last few months John has been writing and testing an automated 'on line assessment'.

The prototype assessment is to be piloted with a number of events later this season in Cornwall. In addition to providing evidence for use at a local level the assessment is designed to report anonymous results to a central collated database.

If all works well RoSPA will be able to map, by geographic location, levels of safety knowledge and behaviour pre and post intervention. Co-ordinators and scenario managers will have access to this data so they may better evaluate the impact of their safety interventions. Co-ordinators and agencies can find out more about this pilot and the development plans for future on line assessments by contacting John.

NEW CATALOGUE



Soar to a Safer Future!

Introducing RoSPA's Occupational Safety and Health Catalogue, 2007!

RoSPA is a registered charity and a uniquely comprehensive safety organisation. With over 80 years experience RoSPA is regarded as a leading influence in safety and health.

This year's catalogue sees the introduction of new:

- Occupational training courses
- Regional course locations
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- Publications, posters and videos/DVDs



Request a free copy and find out how RoSPA can help you with all your health and safety solutions

Email your full name, address and telephone number to osh@rospa.com

Alternatively please call 0870 777 2227

www.rospa.com



Make play as safe as necessary, not as safe as possible



Play in the Natural Environment

RoSPA's International Play Safety Conference 2007

This year's Conference will focus on helping providers towards developing and maintaining quality play spaces that integrate with the natural environment.

The Conference recognises that a child's engagement with the environment is often the most valuable function of play spaces. It is therefore essential that the needs of children are catered for whilst ensuring that they are as safe as necessary.

With presentations from National and International industry experts, and a wide choice of topical workshops, this event is an unrivalled forum for networking.

This key event is a must for:

- Chief Leisure Officers
- Playground Managers
- Parks and Open Space Managers
- Playground Area Constructors
- Indoor Play Facility Operators
- Landscape Architects
- Planners
- Holiday and Homes Parks Operators
- Commercial Site Operators
- Local Authority Members
- Parish and Community Council Members
- Environmental Health Officers

Thursday 14th June
Hatfield Park, Loughborough University, Leicestershire

Book your place online today: www.rospa.com/play

Call: 0870 777 2120

Email: events@rospa.com

www.rospa.com

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