

ROSPA

ISSN 0459-2034

SAFETY

Education

Summer 2008



Putting risk in its place

11th & 12th November, Hilton Hotel, Blackpool



National Home Safety Congress 2008

Regulating for Home Safety

Call for papers:

Can regulation provide a solution to a reduction in home injury, or are people becoming reliant on the safety equipment now available for home use?

The 2008 Congress will explore the range of solutions aimed at achieving the right balance between complacency and paranoia. Should the home environment be as safe as is necessary rather than as safe as is possible? The event is aimed at home safety practitioners and/or those who have a professional interest in safe domestic products and services. There will also be a programme of workshops and exhibitions.

How to submit

A range of topics will be discussed, looking at the issues surrounding regulation:

- Regulations and their contribution to consumer safety
- The relationship between Regulation and accident rates
- What is the appropriate level of Regulation for safety in the home? Should there be more or less?
- Thermostatic Mixing Valves should they be mandatory in the rest of the UK, as they are in Scotland?
- Can children's play be both safe and exciting?
- What is the nature of independent living for the over 85s?

The home should provide a safe environment, a place where people of all ages can enjoy a relaxed and happy time. However, thousands are killed or seriously injured in the environment in which they should feel most safe.

If you are a safety practitioner and/or have a professional interest in safe domestic products and services, and would like to share your ideas and successes with others by making a presentation at RoSPA's National Home Safety Congress, please submit an abstract of approximately 500 words.

One presenter for each paper which is accepted, will be entitled to attend the Congress free of charge. This includes accommodation and travelling expenses.

Submitted papers should include the following: Name, title of paper, contact details, and job title of presenter:

Deadline: Friday May 23rd 2008

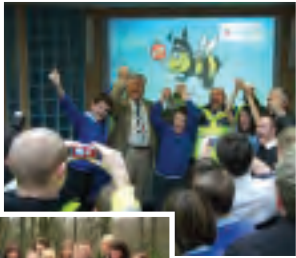
Please submit abstracts to:

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RoSPA
The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

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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
please contact:
safetyadvertising@rospace.com

Printed by Folium Group Limited
Minworth, West Midlands

Design and production:
The Cheese Room
Graphic Design Studios
www.thecheeseroom.com
01827 50341

Green Cross man joins the launch

The original Green Cross Code Man joined Jack Straw at a Blackburn school in February for the launch of a road safety awareness campaign.

Mr Straw and actor David Prowse, who was most famously known as Darth Vader in the original Star Wars films, visited Crosshill School, Blackburn, to back a DVD aimed at promoting road safety to children.

Created by Blackburn based songwriter, JC and animator Brian E.W. McNulty featuring PCSO Mark Dixon, 'Just Like me, by Buzzy Buzzy Bee' is a fun, animated DVD, which promotes the message 'Be Seen, Be Safe'. JC and PCSO Dixon wrote the lyrics and worked with animators in America to produce the DVD. PCSO Dixon also sings the vocals.

Jack Straw joined David

Prowse to launch the DVD. The DVD features artwork from some of the pupils at the school after PCSO Dixon ran a poster competition.

Crosshill is a school for children with complex needs and learning difficulties, aged between 11 and 16. It also offers resources for other pupils, parents and professionals.

The DVD will be distributed to all primary schools in Blackburn and PCSO Dixon hopes it will help to raise awareness of road safety.

He said: "A lot of hard work has gone into this project and I am delighted with the support it has received. Education is key to raising awareness of road safety among children and this DVD is a fun way for us to get a very serious message across. I am extremely grateful to everyone involved for their help and support and to Mr



Prowse and Mr Straw for backing this important campaign."

David Prowse, 72, has visited more than 700 cities around the world and spoken to half a million school children about road safety. He said being the Green Cross Man was the best job he ever had.

The "Green Cross Code Man" was a superhero character created in the 1970's to help raise awareness of road safety. Mr Prowse, a 6ft 7ins tall body builder and former Mr Universe played the road safety superhero for 14 years.

Head of Crosshill School Mike Hatch said: "This is a great example of the community and schools working together. Staff and pupils have thoroughly enjoyed being involved with the project. The tune is so catchy the pupils are regularly heard singing it around the school. If Bob the Builder got to number one, I don't see why this tune shouldn't."

Listen to the mp3 version of the song on <http://www.broadjam.com/johnnyuk123>

Copies of the DVD can be obtained from mark.dixon2@lancashire.pnn.police.uk

Fire awards for two young men

Two young men from south east Northumberland have received prestigious awards for their commitment to Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service.

Michael Froud and James Aspin were both presented with the Community Safety Award by Chief Fire Officer Brian Hesler at a special awards ceremony at Linden Hall Hotel, Longhorsley.

Rob Clow, head of Northumberland Community Safety, said: "These two young men became involved with the fire service's community safety academy at times when their lives have not been taking the direction they would have maybe wished. But both young men have grasped the opportunities given to them, moved forward, and become credits to the fire and rescue service,

their families, and most of all to themselves."

Michael Froud was a student on the first ever FIREworks programme in October 2002, while he was a pupil at Ashington High School. FIREworks was a 10 week, day release course for Year 9 High School students who may have low self esteem, poor communications skills or be at risk of not fulfilling their full potential in education.

The FIREworks course inspired Michael to continue his involvement with the fire service and he became the first member of the Ashington branch of the Young Firefighter's Association in May 2003, and he is still a member today, more than six years since he first joined.

Rob Clow said: "As a member of the Young Firefighter's

Association, Michael has supported every activity we have organised, including numerous fundraising activities and is currently taking a lead role in the film being produced by the Ashington branch focusing on reducing hoax calls to the fire and rescue service."

James Aspin joined the second Fired-Up! programme at Ashington Fire Station in January 2007. The 32 day programme is aimed at encouraging young people who are not in education, employment or training to achieve qualifications and skills to improve their future employability. During the 10 week course James demonstrated massive enthusiasm and aptitude for the programme.

When James graduated from his course in March 2007 he was awarded the

fourth Stage of the Level 2 BTEC Award in Basic Firefighting Skills. This is the highest award available, with only 74 students nationally having achieved it.

Rob Clow said: "James has also become involved with other programmes which we run and took the opportunity to become a volunteer assistant instructor on the Fired-Up! programme in April last year. He really excelled in this role, which challenged his communication, organisational and practical firefighting skills, and he rose magnificently to this challenge.

James is currently enrolled on the Uniformed Services Course at Northumberland College and whenever possible he still works as a volunteer in the community safety academy and has been a real asset to the team."

Burnley getting message across

The Accident Prevention Team, East Lancashire Primary Care Trust, held their second Burnley safety town event in November at Burnley Youth Theatre, through funding from Burnley Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. These multi-agency safety events have allowed the team and their partners to pass on key safety messages to just under 1,000 school children in all.

"Once again we received excellent feedback from teachers, pupils and visitors who attended Burnley Safety Town. The week went fantastically well and I would like to pass on my thanks to all involved for all their hard work and enthusiasm," said Rosemary Acton, Burnley safety town co-ordinator.

Year 6 pupils from local schools took part in six interactive sessions, showing them the risks they might be exposed to when they are in their homes or out and about. These sessions included a visit to North West Ambulance Service where the children were told how to make an emergency call and were made aware of the dangers of hoax 999 calls.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service highlighted the importance of having a fire plan and the best actions to take in the unlikely event of a fire in the home. The children also

had the opportunity to go in the 'smoke tent' to experience how low down they would need to be in a smoke filled room.

Police officers from Lancashire Constabulary informed the children about the importance of personal safety and the children were made aware of the importance of security marking their property with their postcode and house number using a UV pen (which they were provided with at the end of Safety Town).

Pennine Road Police and Lancashire Partnership for Road Safety set up a road traffic accident crash scene for the children to investigate possible causes of the accident. This interactive session gave the children the opportunity to discover the answers for themselves, making them understand why it is essential to wear reflective clothing, a cycle helmet and a seatbelt at all times.

Other sessions focused on poisons around the home. Project workers from ACAP discussed with the children what a poison is, where they might find them and the importance of not touching, smelling or tasting unknown substances.

The children could then explore the kitchen and shed to make it safer for younger children to visit. The falls preven-



Children entering the smoke tent



Poster winner Ann Bullock, centre, from Heasandford Primary School, had her poster displayed in the main entrance to Safety Town

tion team gave the children the chance to dress up as an older person while playing a balancing game and walking round 'Trip Terrace' to see life from a different perspective. This enabled the children to discover for themselves the hazards some older people face and some things they could do to reduce the risks for older people falling.

Prior to Safety Town ACAP project workers visited the schools and the children completed a safety quiz, giving an indication of their prior knowledge before attending the event. The children then completed this quiz at the end of Safety Town, using the interactive software Qwizdom. This allowed ACAP to fully evaluate the objectives of the event. After the quiz the children all received a 'goodie bag' containing various items, including safety leaflets, pencils and a UV marker.

Prior to Safety Town all the Year 6 pupils who were due to attend the event were

given the chance to enter a 'poster competition'. The pupils were asked to design a poster advertising Safety Town. A poster was chosen from each class to be entered in the final. The posters were excellent and included some really important safety messages.

The winner, Ann Bullock from Heasandford Primary School, had her poster enlarged and displayed in the main entrance to Safety Town all week. She was also invited to bring two friends and cut the ribbon to announce the grand opening of Safety Town week and was awarded a prize of a Woolworths gift voucher.

"It is to the credit of the practitioner that they engaged in so much practical activity. The children I joined in the afternoon were clearly 'learning by doing'. I came away with some very good and innovative examples of interactive safety education," said John Vallender, ROSPA accreditation programme manager.



Children learned about the importance of emergency calls

Orkney film focuses on school buses

Road safety is everyone's responsibility. That's the message behind 'Hometime', an educational film which has been produced locally by the Orkney Road Safety Forum.

The group intends to raise awareness of school bus safety, particularly pupils responsibilities when crossing country roads after getting off the bus.

The film highlights the need for pupils to avoid distractions when crossing the road and uses talking on a mobile phone as an example.

Drivers are also reminded of their responsibility to be alert as they pass school buses and be on the look out for pupils crossing the road suddenly.

The DVD was filmed in a similar way to the film 'Sliding Doors', with one sto-

ryline showing the correct, safe way to leave the bus and the other demonstrating the possible outcome of an accident.

The film will be shown to upper primary and secondary age pupils in schools around Orkney and pupils will be encouraged to discuss the issues raised by the film. The DVD is also to be distributed to all road safety units across Scotland.

More than half of Orkney's school pupils travel daily on the school bus. The equivalent of a class of young people is killed on Scotland's roads in an average year.

The film was produced on location by the Orkney Movie Group, using local actors and school pupils and was created with funding and assistance from Highlands and

Islands Fire and Rescue Service, Northern Constabulary, NHS Orkney, Orkney

Islands Council, Orkney Coaches, British Red Cross and Sacro.

End to red tape

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents has welcomed news from the Government that red tape which stops teachers from taking children on school trips is to be slashed.

Tom Mullarkey, the chief executive of RoSPA, said: "This is a major step in the right direction towards simplifying regulation and reducing bureaucracy.

"The important thing is that children have a safe and excellent learning experience and any impediment to that objective needs to be revisit-

ed. Teachers need support and guidance, not endless, unnecessary form-filling."

The measures to make it easier for teachers to take pupils out of the classroom were announced in the Staying Safe action plan launched by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. Among the proposals is a quality "badge" scheme for places such as museums, field study centres and historic houses, which would help reduce the bureaucratic burden on teachers by letting them know which ones manage safety effectively.

RoSPA believes school trips are a vital part of the learning experience. They can help children to understand and manage risks, and everything possible should be done to encourage them.

Simple measures the charity recommends schools to take include:

- Ensuring teachers have the necessary competence and skills to lead the trip they are planning
- Involving young people in the risk assessment process
- Ensuring parents are fully aware of what is planned so that they are happy their children will want to participate
- Making sure what they actually do is relevant to the learning experience (not making last-minute decisions to introduce new activities which have not been properly thought through)
- Having a plan B and plan C in case circumstances (eg weather, travel arrangements) alter while on the trip.

'Missing Matthew' award

Lancashire Partnership for Road Safety is celebrating the news that its new film "Missing Matthew", which has been taking Year 11 pupils in Lancashire by storm, has swept aside quality competition in the British Association of Communicators in Business Awards to take class winner in the film category.

The film tells the true heart-breaking story of the Hannon family who lost their 22 year old son Matthew, in a car crash.

Experts from the communications industry who judged the competition, said: "My daughter had her first driving lesson the week before I reviewed this DVD - I started out as a reviewer, but having watched the DVD, I realised I had become a consumer. That transformation shows how compelling the scripting and production of Missing Matthew is.

"The DVD captures the viewer's attention and holds it throughout. The first sec-

tion was particularly evocative and dealt sympathetically and in a true-to-life fashion with the reactions of those who loved Matthew.

"In the second section, the choice of PC Andy Spouse was inspired: his delivery of his experiences was clear.

"Dividing the content with PC Mark Royal-Evatt was successful. His explanation for parents of the warning signs that they should take an interest in their children's driving was memorable because it was so well-structured. I could remember virtually all of the points he made after my first viewing.

"Best of all is the trigger to action at the end. It certainly made me think, because this is a truly excellent production. It is a wake-up call to parents and young people alike."

Louise Birkett, CiB Central chairman, says: "Standards in the CiB Central awards are always extremely high - I'd like to congratulate everyone behind Missing Matthew and

wish them every success with their campaign."

Linda Sanderson, communications manager for Lancashire Partnership for Road Safety said: "Young drivers aged 17-24 make up just 16 per cent of drivers on the roads in Britain, yet they are involved in 52 per cent of all road deaths. The feedback we have had from pupils and teachers is incredible... hundreds of Year 11's have been stunned into silence.

"This film could really make the difference between life and death and anyone who works with or lives with youngsters who will soon learn to drive, or who have just started, needs to see this film which can be watched free of charge at www.safe2travel.co.uk.

Anyone who is keen to know more about the Lancashire Partnership for Road Safety 'Wasted Lives Education Programme' can speak to Kat Whitemoss on 01772 534 592.

Coroner helps safety drive

Seventeen to 25 year olds account for just eight per cent of all car driving licences in London, but are involved in 18 per cent of all collisions

The consequences of speeding were brought home to young drivers in a series of hard hitting workshops set up by the London Safety Camera Partnership, led by Transport for London.

Students from 20 London boroughs attended the "Risk It and Lose It" workshops involving a mock inquest held by a real Coroner, a dramatic filmed reconstruction of a crash and presentations from members of the emergency services and people affected by real life crashes.

In 2006, 4,419 drivers and riders between 17 and 25 years were involved in speed-related collisions on London's roads.

The "Risk It and Lose It" road safety event explored the issue of risk-taking behaviour, and considered the role of both the passenger and the driver in vehicle collisions. The



theme of the event was "If you speed, or are a passenger in a speeding vehicle, you risk losing your life, your licence,

your friends and your freedom", addressing both the physical and social consequences of dangerous driving.

In addition to the dramatic Coroner's court mock inquest, presided over by Assistant Deputy Coroner, Lorna Tagliavini, students competed in a quiz show devised with the Drivers Standard Agency, and seeing a reconstruction of a collision scene, complete with emergency services officers describing the horror they face when recovering a collision.

Christine Fitzgerald, road safety communications manager, London Safety Camera Partnership, said, "Young drivers are far too heavily represented in collision statistics. Some of the reasons for this are young drivers can be over confident behind the wheel and often do not understand the consequences of speeding.

"Risk It and Lose It aims to make young drivers not only think about the physical consequences or excessive speed like death and serious injury, but also the social, emotional and psychological consequences"



Setting principles for education

As RoSPA's risk education advisor I receive regular requests to review safety education resources produced by other organisations, to endorse resources by the addition of the RoSPA logo, or to make links from the RoSPA website to sites belonging to other organisations where resources can be accessed.

Of course, it is flattering that other organisations value the endorsement RoSPA might offer, but this is rarely a straightforward matter. While those developing resources strongly believe they are making a real and valuable contribution to keeping children and young people safe, they rarely have reliable evidence to support those beliefs.

Indeed, if like Kerbcraft or similar well funded resources, their new DVD, leaflet, website or Theatre in Education project had been properly evaluated, RoSPA's endorsement would not be needed. The evidence would speak for itself. So how is it possible to judge the worth or value of a resource which has had little or no formal evaluation?

Recently RoSPA was invited to work with the PSHE Association (<http://www.pshe-association.org.uk/>) to research and develop the principles for effective safety education. This work was in turn commissioned by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) as part of the new Child Safety Action Plan (<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-00151-2008.pdf>)

'Safety' included injury prevention and personal safety, which in turn included bullying, child abuse prevention and violence prevention. The literature on each of these topics is huge, especially

By Jenny McWhirter

when you consider how the injury prevention aspects of safety education is fragmented into road safety, water safety, railway safety – to

recommended a more positive approach to the lesson.

This began with a list of all the activities where a person their age might wear a safety

'Adopt positive approaches which model and reward safe behaviour, within a safe, supportive environment'

name just a few!

Using mainly existing reviews and summaries of the literature published in peer reviewed journals over the last 10 years we have been able to establish 10 principles which can be used both to review safety education resources, but also, importantly, as a starting point for the development of resources.

Principles for effective safety education (see http://www.rospa.com/safetyeducation/info/ReviewSE_briefing_paper.pdf) for a more detailed description of the principles

The literature review, a short briefing paper and a check list for auditing practice can all be downloaded from the safety education section of the RoSPA website (<http://www.rospa.com/safetyeducation/index.htm>) or from the PSHE Association website.

In draft form one of the lesson plans invited children to describe why children of their age do not wear cycle helmets. What this would have done was enable the children to rehearse and reinforce all the negative messages they had learned about protective helmets.

Based on the tenth principle 'Adopt positive approaches which model and reward safe behaviour, within a safe, supportive environment' we

helmet and why, before asking what reasons younger children might give for not wearing a helmet. Then, putting the children in the role of expert, we suggested asking them what they learned and what they knew from experience about why children of all ages should wear cycle helmets.

Children were then asked to collect up and vote on the best reasons and finally to review other protective clothing for the different activities they had listed.

While still being able to challenge some of the reasons for not wearing safety helmets the overall tone of the lesson is positive. It also builds on and validates children's existing knowledge about the benefits of wearing a cycle helmet and other protective clothing and enables them to choose the positive messages which work best for their age group.

Applying the relevant principles on a lesson by lesson basis gave the overall resource a greater chance of being used effectively to prevent head injuries, based on the best available evidence.

In another example a media company Child's Eye View recently evaluated one of their latest resources 'Keeping healthy, Staying safe' using the audit tool,

based on the 10 principles (also on the RoSPA and PSHE Association websites). This is what they fed back to us:

The 10 principles constitute a very clear and usable guide to help teachers assess the value of a safety education resource, and to audit their provision of existing resources. Teachers would find the principles of use, also, in informing the planning of their safety education delivery, and as part of CPD. Similarly, the principles would be of value to developers of safety education resources, in order to optimise impact in terms of content, approach and relevance. The principles would have provided very useful markers while

The 10 goals for assessment

1. Encourage the adoption of a school approach, within a safe environment
2. Use active approaches to learning (including interactive and role play)
3. Involve young people in their own learning and stay safe
4. Assess children and young people's understanding of safety
5. Teach safety as part of a wider social and health curriculum
6. Use realistic and relevant scenarios
7. Work in partnership with other organisations
8. Address known risk and hazards
9. Address psychosocial aspects of safety, e.g. confidence, resilience
10. Adopt positive approaches which model and reward safe behaviour, within a safe, supportive environment

Education

producing 'Keeping healthy, Staying safe'.

It is not the intention that every safety education resource or activity should slavishly address all 10 principles. Indeed given their emphasis on whole school, whole community approaches, and the importance of starting where young people are, it would be impossible for any external provider such as RoSPA or other safety organisations to do so. However, with an understanding of the principles we can all develop resources which fit better with the published evidence for effective practice, and which teachers can then choose to build their whole school approach to safety.

Golden rules assessment

of, or reinforce, a whole the wider community to teaching and learning (experiential learning) real decisions to help them

ng people's learning needs a comprehensive personal lum

t settings and resources

protective factors aspects of safety

ce, self esteem, self efficacy es which model and reward safe, supportive environment

We support the third annual

Look After Your Head

BE SAFE!

Wear a helmet whilst riding your bike or this could happen

Helmet

Even snails wear helmets!

You could be dead or being zipped into a body bag

Anyway, better safe than sorry! A lot better than run over by a lorry.

So, wear a helmet

Be Safe and right, Be alive tonight!

Each year, nearly ninety thousand children between five and eleven will suffer a head injury*. Being smart and wearing a proper helmet can reduce the chance of a serious head injury affecting for ever of your life.

Part of Brain Injury Awareness Week 31 March - 6 April 2008

supported by:

RoSPA

The British Red Cross Society

Endorsed by the BMA

BRAIN INJURY REHABILITATION TRUST

Leading school

Stillwell Trust

* National Child Injury Survey, December 1997

Now we have the principles, RoSPA can be more transparent about why we endorse some safety education resources and not others. It is also easier to communicate our ideas to those who approach us when they are starting out on developing resources.

Recently BIRT (the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Trust) asked us to review a

draft set of lesson plans to be offered to schools to support their annual Look After Your Head campaign. This campaign runs in schools close to their brain injury rehabilitation centres and includes a poster competition for primary school pupils to be used in the campaign the following year.

Tackling young drivers and promoting walking

RoSPA's Road Safety Congress has always given delegates the opportunity to hear about initiatives which are ongoing across the country.

This year's event was no different, with a wide range of projects presenting their work.

Steve Whitehouse and Jean Hunt from Sefton Council gave details of a range of projects which linked road safety with environmental/sustainable transport and health agendas. Some of the schemes aimed to increase cycling, both among children and adults, and included cycle training and maintenance sessions. Others promoted walking and included pedestrian safety training.

Nick Lloyd and Irene Williamson, of Staffordshire County Council, presented the Y-DIE initiative (Young Driver Information Programme).

Figures show that 16-25-year-olds accounted for 33 per cent of Staffordshire's total road casualties in 2006, and five key areas of concern were identified: speed; drink

Some schemes aimed to increase cycling, both among children and adults, and included cycle training and maintenance

and drug-driving; non-seat-belt wearing; peer pressure; and inexperience versus over-confidence.

The council embarked on an education, training and

publicity campaign. Schemes included: a crash investigation project, in which students used information from real incidents to play the role of crash investigation officers; a Pass Plus scheme; a website featuring interactive games; a bus banner campaign, particularly aimed at parents; and a theatre in education project.

An alcohol and drug-driving resource was recently developed, featuring video footage of two young people speaking frankly about how driving convictions and losing their licences had impacted on their lives.

Blackburn with Darwen's Mosque Marshalling Scheme features community volunteers acting as chaperones to help children on their way to and from mosques after school.

The chaperones help children across roads, although the children, who have been issued with high-visibility jackets, still remain involved in decisions about when to cross. Road safety talks have also been given in mosques to both children and adults.

"It is a self-sustaining community initiative, for the community and by the community," said Graham Campbell, of Blackburn with Darwen Road Safety Team.

The work of Blurton Dads Group was presented by Jim Tunney, of Stoke-on-Trent City Council, and Dave Barnish, the group's chairman.

Local dads and male carers have been involved in promoting cycling and the provision of cycle training among local children.

The group, which also organises community events, including barbecues, trips and sports activities, has proved so successful that other organisations now come to it for advice on starting up their own initiatives.

Sharing training experiences

Sara Basterfield, senior benchmarking officer at the CTC Charitable Trust, outlined the North West Cycle Training Benchmarking Pilot Project.

The project, which ran from June 2006 - July 2007, involved local authorities and independent cycle training providers in sharing experiences of cycle training provision.

It aimed to enable training providers to evaluate the

management, content and delivery of their courses against the benchmark of the National Standard (Bikeability), and to enable informed decisions to be made about future projects.

Participants reported that they had a better understanding of the National Standard at the end of the project and that they had seen examples of good practice which would help them in their future plans.



Irene Williamson, road safety officer at Staffordshire County Council, spoke about young drivers



Britax Excelsior Ltd's Fiona McCartney, senior product trainer, and Mark Bennett, technical support manager. Britax was sponsoring RoSPA's Road Safety Congress for the 10th year running

New ways to engage public

New and innovative ways of engaging with the public are needed if deaths and injuries on Scotland's roads are to continue to fall.

That was the message with which Stewart Stevenson MSP, the Scottish Government's Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change, opened RoSPA's 73rd Road Safety Congress.

Addressing 300 delegates at Glasgow's Crowne Plaza hotel, Mr Stevenson outlined recent achievements.

He said: "We have made considerable progress over a number of years. By 2006, the number of people killed or seriously injured had fallen 39 per cent compared to the average for 1994-98, just short of the 40 per cent target we are aiming for in 2010."

But he stated a commitment to reducing road casualties further, mentioning young drivers, rural roads and drink driving as continuing concerns.

He said: "A new approach is needed which looks beyond the traditional to the new and innovative."

The Minister described the theme of the conference - Securing Wider Engagement in Road Safety - as highly relevant to Scotland, particularly in light of the recent establishment of a Road Safety Panel and the consultation about a new 10-year road safety strategy.

"The aim is to draw the wider community into the development of the strategy," he said. "It is a running theme to say to people that they should get involved. In particular, we wish to engage with young people."

With research showing that attitudes to driving are formed long before someone is old enough to get behind the wheel, he said there was a need to reach school pupils at every stage of their education and to do more work with parents.

How furniture affects pupils

The Furniture Industry Research Association is to launch a certification scheme to help specifiers choose better furniture products - and to make pupils more willing to learn and less prone to back pain.

Recent research has shown the average height and weight of 10-16 year olds has increased since the 1970s, when the last major study was conducted. However, much of the furniture used in schools takes the 'one size fits all' approach, and does not take into account different sizes and height differences, and neither does it afford flexibility.

These elements are essential not just from a learning point of view - discomfort causes fidgeting and disruption, which are not conducive to education - but also from

The British Council for School Environments endorses the call to action, Safe seats of learning, on which the scheme is based. BCSE Director, Ty Goddard, said "The British Council for School Environments recognises the right of young people to learn in an environment which is safe, healthy and achieves the highest quality possible. We must all be committed to improving the quality, attractiveness and health of the learning and communal spaces in our schools. Environmental factors have significant effects on pupil and teacher well-being. Poor quality lighting, ventilation, acoustics and furniture all have a negative effect on student achievement and health.

"What we value in our homes; we should value in

Recent research has shown the average height and weight of 10-16 year olds has increased since the 1970s

the perspective of children's health. Recurrent back pain in school age children is increasing, with one UK study finding 36 per cent of 11-14 year olds experiencing the condition.

Levent Caglar, Senior Ergonomist at FIRA, said "Children typically spend 15,000 hours sitting down in classrooms during their education, but a lot of existing school furniture is not fit for purpose. It is often the last thing considered by specifiers for new buildings or refurbishments, and this can result in the choice of cheap options which hinder learning and damage the health of pupils"

our schools. What we wouldn't accept in our workplaces, should not be part of our schools. Good school furniture can and does make a difference.

"We must ensure that money spent on furniture is fit for purpose. The UK has suppliers willing to innovate and we must continue to invest in and design fit for purpose and flexible furniture. Poor ergonomic design of classroom chairs can affect concentration, handwriting and general well-being. We welcome the work of FIRA and this landmark document, Safe seats of learning."

Staying Safe responses

The Government's response to the Staying Safe consultation emphasises the need for more safety education and play safety.

There was strong support for Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) as a way of teaching children and young people about risk. Some respondents also called for PSHE to be made a compulsory part of the curriculum.

Several consultation respondents pointed out the value of other forms of safety education, citing Crucial Crew or LASER centres, where children go and experience risk in a safe environment.

Responses suggested that the provision and quality of such safety education varies greatly throughout the country. Some areas have well-developed and evaluated schemes, while others do not have any. It was felt that great benefit could be derived from sharing material and good practice to help children and young people in more areas have access to high quality safety education.

Many young people spoke about the need for the deliv-

ers of safety education to have credibility, and several respondents felt that youth workers, or people with direct experience of relevant problems, rather than teachers, should go into schools to deliver safety education;

Responses suggested that the provision and quality of such safety education varies greatly throughout the country

Several respondents felt that risk education should not just be focused on children and that parents and carers also need to learn these skills in order to teach their own children.

To promote better understanding and management of risks it is intended to:

- Set up a new child safety education coalition to deliver and evaluate child safety education across the country and ensure that more children, including disabled children, have access to activities such as Crucial Crew or LASER centres
- Launch a major new communications campaign on children's safety, including information for parents and

carers about risks to their children's safety, targeted communications to families living in high risk areas and public communications to encourage people to take responsibility for children's safety

- Publish the results of the review proposed in the Staying Safe consultation document, looking at which safety education resources for PSHE are of the most use, to help teachers identify the best resources for their lessons
- Explore ways in which safety education can be reflected in the National PSHE Continuing Professional Development Programme and the ways in which this can be made available to a range of practitioners including those in FE. Among the ideas on promoting play the Government intends to:
 - Work with the Play Safety Forum, a group of national

agencies involved in play safety, to help play providers understand the importance of balancing the benefits of offering children opportunities to take risks in their play with ensuring the levels of risk are reasonable

- Spend £225 million on play initiatives which include offering every local authority capital funding which would allow up to 3,500 playgrounds nationally to be rebuilt or renewed and made accessible to children with disabilities
- Publish a play strategy by Summer 2008. Create 30 adventure playgrounds for 8-13 year olds in disadvantaged areas, as announced in the Children's Plan
- Launch new guidance on taking pupils outside the classroom as part of the 'Out and About' package, which will also include revised Health and Safety of Pupils on Education Visits guidance.
- Work with the Health and Safety Executive and other partners to reinforce the message to schools that risk assessment must be proportionate – in order to minimise risk without denying children the opportunity to experience the benefits of learning outside the classroom.

Responses to the proposals made in Staying Safe were generally positive. However, some respondents had reservations and felt that the proposals in Staying Safe did not recognise the true seriousness of accidental harm and did not go far enough.

The full Staying Safe Action plan is available at <http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/CSF-00151-2008.pdf>



Streetwise has royal visitor

The Princess Royal has visited Dorset's award winning LV Streetwise Safety Centre in Bournemouth. This was the centre's first royal visit. There she observed Dorchester-based Damers First School learning about keeping safe and preventing accidents on their safety tour and met staff, supporters and volunteers. LV Streetwise is an indoor life-sized safety education village comprising traditionally built bricks and mortar scenes from everyday life.

Arriving at a local recreation ground by helicopter, she travelled to the safety centre with the Lord Lieutenant of Dorset, Mrs Valerie Pitt-Rivers. She spent almost an hour and a half watching the safety tour, meeting many of the charity's supporters and volunteers and finally unveiling a commemorative stone plaque to mark the occasion.

The Princess Royal was met at the safety centre by a civic reception party including: The High Sheriff of Dorset, Adrian Scott; Pam Donnellan, chief executive of Bournemouth Borough Council; Sir John Butterfill MP Bournemouth West – all of whom are also trustees of the charity – along with the Mayor of Bournemouth, Cllr Ann Filer, Dorset Police Deputy Chief Constable Chris Lee and Alison Curtis, LV Streetwise centre manager.

Alison Curtis, who has been the centre manager since it opened in 1998, then escorted The Princess Royal into the safety centre where she observed children learning how to cross the road safely, make a 'practice' 999 call and take part in the railway safety scenario aboard the full-size Virgin Express train.



The Princess Royal commemorates her visit to Streetwise in Bournemouth

The Princess Royal was also introduced to various groups in the village itself including: PC Andy Saunders

MD Bournemouth and West Hampshire Water; Andy Heaton, financial director of The Gold Driving Academy;

tenth year of operation of an amazing project we all feel so passionately about."

Dennis Holt, chairman of LV said: "Protecting our children and their families is at the heart of our business and our brand, and the centre provides an invaluable service for children to learn about everyday dangers in a controlled environment. We are delighted that The Princess Royal has had time to visit this leading centre of its type, and see for herself how it helps Dorset's children learn how to stay safe."

For further information about LV Streetwise or volunteering at the centre, please contact Alison Curtis, LV Streetwise centre manager, on 07801 970883 or alison@streetwise.org.uk or visit the website at www.streetwise.org.uk

She saw children learning how to cross the road safely, make a 'practice' 999 call and take part in the railway safety

who was the project manager seconded from Dorset Police in 1997 to build the centre; Mike Emsley, chair of trustees since 2000; Darran Gunter, Chief Fire Officer Dorset Fire & Rescue and Streetwise trustee; Dennis Holt, chairman of LV, a founder sponsor and now the main commercial sponsor of the centre; Joanna Dawson, director of Car Crash Line Group; Neal Butterworth, editor Daily Echo; Paul Gale, area director Morgan Ashurst; Tony Cooke,

and oldest volunteer 80-year-old Denis Phillips and youngest volunteer 15-year-old Adam Fitzwalter.

More than 100 supporters including 50 volunteers from the safety centre were present at the special visit. Alison Curtis, said: "It is a real honour for everyone involved with LV Streetwise - trustees, supporters and all our wonderful volunteers alike - to receive the first royal visit in the centre's history, particularly in what is coming up to the

Electricity launch celebrated

To celebrate the launch of its electrical safety educational website for children, www.switchedonkids.org.uk, the Electrical Safety Council has produced an electrical safety educational pack.

The pack has been distributed to every primary level school and education authority throughout the UK. Additional copies of the pack are available to schools, free of charge, by emailing schools@esc.org.uk.

The pack includes a teaching aid in the form of an electricity themed board game, as well as literature on improving electrical safety which ties in with the curriculum.

The website, aimed at 5-11 year olds, has been set up with two main aims: to support teachers delivering key stages of the science curriculum associated with electricity, specifically electrical safety, and to engage the interest and attention of the children to make learning about the subject fun as well as educational.



Council fined for gas

Gateshead Council has been fined £10,000 after an incident where carbon monoxide leaked into a classroom.

The council pleaded guilty to a charge under the Health and Safety at Work Act. Pupils and staff were evacuated from Crookhill Primary School in Ryton when an inadequately maintained boiler began emitting the gas.

An investigation by the HSE showed the council had failed to operate an effective gas safety management system. Gateshead magistrates also ordered the authority to pay £6,830 costs.

New DVD aims at bikers

Greater Manchester's Casualty Reduction Partnership (Drivesafe) and Lancashire's RideSafe BackSafe team have joined forces with the Highways Agency to produce a road safety DVD for young motorcycle and scooter riders.

The free DVD takes a story

of young love and romance and compares the pitfalls and mistakes made on a first date with those made by young and inexperienced bikers. Through subtle and sometimes subliminal messages, 'First Date' explains the rules of dating and biking in a way that neither patronises nor shocks the viewer.

Karen Delaney at Drivesafe, a member of the RideSafe BackSafe team, explains: "We are trying to reduce the number of casualties and collisions involving motorcyclists in general, through a variety of educational and promotional mediums. Due mostly to over exuberance and a lack of experience, many 16 to 24 year olds are adding to the statistics and this is one campaign through which we hope to engage them."

"We launched the DVD and

started distributing free copies on February 14,(it had to be Valentines Day!) at the Trafford Centre in Manchester. The RideSafe BackSafe team were there with bikes and scooters on display and a celebrity appearance by our ambassador who is also the fastest lady to race on the Isle of Man TT circuit, Maria Costello."

As an integral part of this road safety initiative, the campaign has also gained the support of colleges and universities across Greater Manchester and Lancashire, many of whom have displayed posters, promoting the launch.

The free DVD also includes extracts from the Highways Agency's own "Great Roads, Great Rides" DVD and will be available through the website at www.ridesafebacksafe.co.uk





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