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Education

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A family first

Britain's first National Family Week will be held from May 25-31. This important new initiative will celebrate and promote the social and personal benefits of family life, which are crucial for the future of our society. Improvements in education, health, crime rates and the economy are all closely connected with good family relationships.

During the week, numerous fun activities and events for families will take place in hundreds of venues across the nation, some with celebrity involvement. Not-for-profit organisations will use the week to showcase their own family-friendly work and services, and to encourage debate on the key issues. Businesses such as cinemas, leisure and sports centres, shops and visitor attractions will offer relevant discounts and promotions.

RoSPA's chief executive Tom Mullarkey said "RoSPA is proud to be supporting National Family Week. We believe that strong families can help to manage and reduce risk in the home, by children, their parents and carers working together to understand hazards and finding simple practical ways to avoid injuries. Family fun is all about talking and spending time together. Let's use that time to think about how our families can be safer in the future."

Wall planners, 'Family Fun' booklets and goodie bags will be distributed through the Mail on Sunday, IPC Media's women's weekly magazines and all the major national shopping centres during the week before the event.

For more information and to get involved, visit www.nationalfamilyweek.co.uk

Shocked students

The Plymouth Casualty Reduction Partnership has been working together to put on a road safety event called "Learn to Live". The partnership consists of representatives from the local authority and county council, police, fire and rescue service, ambulance trust, highways authority, primary care trust, the local driving schools association and IAM.

Around 3,000 students from local sixth forms attended the two sessions in February and saw for themselves the impact that irresponsible driving can have, not only on themselves, but on their family members, emergency services and the community.

The presentation consisted of a film showing a typical scenario of young people going out in a car to enjoy their evening. However, their evening turns to tragedy

when their car overturns and they are left with serious injuries and fatalities.

The film is paused throughout to allow real life stories to be told by a representative from each of the emergency services, an A & E consultant, a parent who lost her daughter, and someone who has to live with the consequences of his own irresponsible driving.

Rob Carlson of Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service, said "It's not only the drivers who have to pay attention, passengers can be a serious distraction and they too have a responsibility to behave responsibly while travelling. We also want to encourage young people to refuse to travel with someone driving irresponsibly. More young females die as front seat passengers than as drivers. Many young men drive too fast with too much testosterone and that type of behaviour needs to be reported as they are a danger to themselves and our community."

Students gave their full attention to all the speakers, but were particularly affected by the courageous mother of a 13 year old girl killed in a car driven by a 17 year old boy who drove at speeds of up to 80mph as he played 'chicken' with lorries. Her powerful and harrowing story, bravely told from the heart, had an enormous impact on the audience and many were reduced to tears, and some fainted.

She said she hoped that her story would leave a lasting mark on the students, and that if one person out of the 3,000 changed their ways because of it, then she would be happy.

Members of the Association of Professional Driving Instructors (South West) were involved with the organisation and running of the event, with some 25 members enthusiastically turning up on the day to help with the exhibition and marshalling.

CSEC launched at Safeside

The Child Safety Education Coalition has been launched by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents in partnership with the National Children's Bureau to promote the provision of high-quality practical safety education in England.

The first meeting was held at Safeside in Birmingham when around 50 representatives of organisations that seek to reduce the number and severity of unintended injuries among children and young people were invited to join CSEC. The coalition is being funded through a £1.6million grant from the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

The coalition aims to increase opportunities for children and young people to learn and practise skills that enable them to recognise, remove, reduce and recover

from everyday hazards and dangers and remember and build on what they have learned throughout their lives.

John Vallender, CSEC manager at RoSPA, said: "CSEC will promote practical safety education which will equip children and young people

unintended injuries to children and young people."

CSEC's role will be to raise the profile and promote the expansion of practical safety education partnerships and other innovative ways to encourage sustainable community safety activities.

A reduction in unintended injuries to children and young people

with the ability to reduce the severity of unintended injuries. But the coalition will also recognise that bumps, scrapes and disappointments are an important part of growing up."

Sophie Wood, principal officer at NCB, said: "NCB welcomes the opportunity to be working in partnership with RoSPA to develop a coalition that encourages and supports high quality activities which contribute to a reduction in

Peter Cornall, RoSPA head of leisure safety, said: "For the first time, we have the opportunity to bring together partners from across the country to address the need for children and young people to have a role in taking independent action to protect themselves and lead active lifestyles."

Email jvallender@rospa.com or visit www.csec.org.uk for more information about CSEC.

Aiming for a safer half term

Over the first half-term holiday of 2009, schools and colleges were urged to think about booking a road safety presentation aimed at preparing would-be drivers for the learning to drive process.

In 2007, 136 drivers aged 16-19 died in crashes. Another 130 were fatally injured in crashes involving vehicles in which they were passengers.

The Driving Standards Agency - the Government agency tasked with promoting and improving road standards - wanted to put their Arrive Alive road safety programme at the forefront of people's minds at half-term. Arrive Alive involves an experienced driving examiner giving a free 50-minute presentation to young people in the 16-19 age group.

Topics include learning to drive safely, information on the theory and practical driving tests and adopting the right attitudes towards the responsibilities of a driver after passing the test.

The presentation can be given at a range of locations such as youth clubs and armed forces centres, and is most popular in schools and colleges. Teachers can set up an Arrive Alive session by booking directly with DSA.

For further information on Arrive Alive or to book a session, visit; http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Motoring/RoadSafety/DG_4022427

Visit <http://www.rospa.org.uk/safetyeducation> for more good practice in safety education



Championing road safety

Kingston Council's award winning RoadSTARS are once again championing road safety with the help of a cartoon superhero - Captain Kingston.

Captain Kingston uses his extraordinary powers to work with Kingston Council to promote road safety, cycling and walking and to protect the environment. Helped by his young assistants - the RoadSTARS - he will help with everything including walking safely at night, advice on safer cycling and even how to tackle climate change!

The character was the brainchild of the Kingston Council's real RoadSTARS - a student council made up of Year 10 and 12 students from secondary schools across the borough. They actively promote travel awareness and road safety to young people and the wider public. Last year the RoadSTARS won the prestigious Prince Michael International Road Safety

Award for Education and Training.

Captain Kingston was brought to life by South London artist Steve Marchant and he now features in a series of informative and humorous cartoon strips and posters.

The campaign kicked off in Kingston Town Centre during February and March on large illuminated posters. "When you're driving leave the phone alone" shows a motorist calling the emergency services in anticipation of causing an accident while driving and using a phone. Below this humorous but serious scenario Captain Kingston points out that no call is more important than the lives you endanger if you use the phone when driving.

The campaign is endorsed by the Metropolitan Police who have made this an area of priority in Kingston and statistically you are more likely to get fined for this offence here than in the majority of

other London boroughs. In 2007/08 more than 1,500 drivers in Kingston were fined for using a hand held mobile phone.

Inspector Iain Lewis from the Kingston's town centre and safer transport team said: "This campaign is about making Kingston's roads safer for everybody who uses them - not just drivers, but passengers, cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians.

"Using a mobile phone while driving is a serious offence and a distraction which can kill. We want motorists to act responsibly and safely and that means not using their mobile phones at all while driving."

Look out for the superhero's other adventures and mishaps including bumping into the Grim Reaper and his quest to prevent a cyclist's anti-social behaviour.

Find out more about Captain Kingston and the RoadSTARS at www.kingston.gov.uk/rbkroadstars

Crime beaters

LV Streetwise is delighted to announce its continued involvement in Dorset Crimebeat with the support of the High Sheriff of Dorset, John Raymond, and in association with Dorset Police and other agencies.

Dorset Crimebeat is a local charity operated through LV Streetwise and offers grants of up to £500 to young people to encourage them to get involved with crime reduction activities and create safer communities. It encourages, empowers and enables young people to make a contribution.

Dorset Crimebeat links to the National Crimebeat organisation which has been developed by successive High Sheriffs across the country. A large number of young people have become involved in these Crimebeat projects nationally and they in turn pass on benefits of their work to their peers and the wider community. Crime reduction activities and awareness in young people is a key ingredient to creating better environments in which to live.

The Dorset Crimebeat scheme provides real and tangible opportunities for young people in the county to

solve problems which matter to them in their communities. John Raymond, said: "Through Dorset Crimebeat, we are able to encourage good citizenship and fund young people's ideas for an even safer future."

In support of Dorset Crimebeat LV Streetwise, Bournemouth's award winning interactive safety centre organises an annual schools event. Holding its sixth consecutive event at LV Streetwise recently, the event has proved a resounding success. Four schools competed for a prize of £200 to undertake a local community project.

Last year's winners, Turlin Moor Community Middle School, were joined by Elmrise Primary School, Christchurch Junior School and St Joseph's RC VA Combined School.

The proud winners of this year's challenge were the team from Christchurch Junior School. Each of the runner-up teams received a cheque for £75 to be put towards community projects in their schools.

Alison Shelton, LV Streetwise centre manager commented, "We were delighted to host this annual event to encourage not only participa-



tion from schools but genuine thought provoking activities to encourage young people to take ownership of crime reducing opportunities.

"Taking responsibility and solving problems isn't just about funding - the willingness actually to take responsibility and do something is a key factor which can have value beyond money. We are all looking forward to seeing tangible results from this

year's winning crime prevention proposition from Christchurch Junior School."

For more information on visiting LV Streetwise visit www.streetwise.org.uk or ring on 01202 591330. For more information on Dorset Crimebeat please visit www.dorsetcrimebeat.org.uk or contact Lynette Weedon, Dorset Crimebeat Project Coordinator on 01202 593333 at the safety centre.

Child safety week

Uniting people who work with children and families in order to keep children safer is the aim of the Child Accident Prevention Trust's 'Child Safety Week 2009: Safer Together' (June 22-28).

With two million children and young people a year harmed in accidents – many of which can be prevented – child accident prevention needs to be on everyone's agenda. This is why CAPT is offering free Child Safety Week resource packs to all those working with children, young people and families.

Commenting on Child Safety Week, chief executive, Katrina Phillips said: "Such a wide range of people in many different professions have responsibility for children and families. We want to make child accident prevention accessible to all of them. And we want to help them work together, to help make children safer."

"Child Safety Week is a

great platform for organising community activities and events – and working with other local agencies, so that families understand that child accident prevention is everyone's business.

"If you're not already on our mailing list, sign up today to register for your free Child Safety Week resource pack, by going to www.capt.org.uk"

The Child Safety Week ideas booklet is full of advice about how to incorporate child accident prevention into current work, sources of free information and advice, activities to help children and families learn about safety while having fun, and information about how CAPT resources can support child accident prevention work.

To get a copy of the Child Safety Week resource pack practitioners can join the Child Accident Prevention Trust's mailing list via its website www.capt.org.uk.

Alysha joins up

RoSPA is working with an organisation called Change-makers on a programme called Future Leaders. They have sent in a 'Young Advocate', called Alysha Ong who is a student at Birmingham University.

She is working on a project to find out how to attract more young drivers to RoADAR. She has developed a questionnaire aimed at 17 to 24 year olds to research this. It can be found online at www.roadar.org.uk/young_drivers.

Please encourage any



young people you know to help by answering the questionnaire.

Improving involvement

RoSPA youth liaison worker Cassius Francis made the most of a getting-to-know-you session recently by forging ahead with his long term vision of mobilising young people for safety awareness.

At a recent event to introduce the youth liaison worker role to relevant agencies, Cassius wasted no time in inviting visitors to connect with RoSPA.

He said he was “really encouraged” by the healthy turn-out at the event at RoSPA’s Birmingham base.

Cassius and risk education advisor Jenny McWhirter specifically invited workers from projects which aim to involve young people. Their strictly defined invitations yielded a wide response, with attendance by organisations as diverse as Birmingham City Council’s road safety department and the Swimming Teachers Association to Sustrans and West Midlands Fire Service.

Cassius said: “RoSPA is in a position to bring that kind of range of people together because of our broad safety brief.”

During the two-hour long “meet and eat” lunchtime session, Cassius sounded out guests to find out what support he could offer as part of his liaison role and where they felt there were gaps in current risk education provision.

Key issues identified were:

- Information about resources and signposting to relevant organisations
- Provision of functional items e.g. high viz bands
- Visits to agencies/young people to provide advice, support, training and information
- Advice on appropriate RoSPA staff to approach for support



- Help to gain funding
- Set up a library of resources to exchange information within the network
- Provide cascade training for staff and young people
- Collate and share best practice

He also seized the chance to emphasise the empowerment of young people to become voices for safety awareness.

‘I know that there are lots of issues which concern young people and often safety may not be very high on the agenda’

He said: “I’m interested in being able to train young people to speak to their peers. I don’t think many organisations have the personnel to go to different places to speak to young people, particularly in a climate of limited of resources.

“But if we can make young people themselves more aware of safety issues, so that they then go on to speak to their peers, that will be

more effective anyway.”

After positive feedback, Cassius is already looking to build up momentum.

“The overwhelming response was that people would like to meet again,” he explained.

“So, yes, this was positive but I don’t want to meet colleagues simply for the sake of a good one-off meeting. I want to see us developing the

dream of a network of young people who are campaigning and raising issues of safety.”

One colleague commented in evaluation that, “It was very helpful to meet a group of people with a wide range of different vocations who could provide insight, experience and practical advice. I look forward to future meetings.”

A follow up meeting is planned for April, 28, in response to the group’s request to meet termly. Alongside these colleagues, Cassius is also keen to hear from young people who:

- Want to campaign of issues of safety
- Raise awareness about potential risks amongst their peers
- Have been affected by accidents on the road, at leisure, in the home or in the workplace
- Are interested in careers in safety-related professions

“I know that there are lots of issues which concern young people and often safety may not be very high on the agenda, but I am interested in the stories and experience of young people who do place a high priority on safety on the road, at leisure, in the home and in the workplace.”

Please contact Cassius Francis on 0121 248 2025 or email cfrancis@rospa.com

Artistic way to draw on

It's 'walk to school week' from May 18-22 and lots of schools will be thinking about interesting and exciting ideas to promote walking. Whether your motivation is to increase activity, or reduce carbon emissions (or both!) take a few minutes to find out what the walk to school means for children in your classes.

By Jenny McWhirter

activity can provide you with an insight into some of the issues for children which occur on their way to school.

We asked two classes of children aged 9-10 in Scottish primary schools to tell us what they thought about keeping safe on their way to school. This is what we asked the teachers to do:

Most of the children drew and wrote about walking to school and keeping safe from the traffic. This included crossing only at marked crossing areas, keeping to the inside of the pavement or looking and listening before crossing.

Some wrote about being driven to school and about keeping safe by wearing seatbelts, or not distracting the driver. The children drew familiar safety measures such as zebra and pelican crossings, and familiar people such as road crossing patrols and the police. All of this was very reassuring.

The children had some clear ideas about whose responsibility it was to keep them safe

Some children clearly thought it was other people's responsibility to keep them safe, including parents and other road users such as drivers, and the emergency services.

'I think the police should keep me safe.'

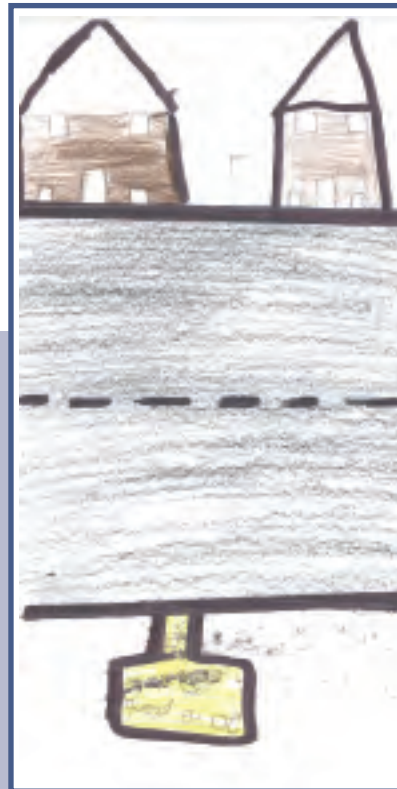
(Boy, aged 10)

'We think whoever is driving the car should slow down and keep to the speed limit and care for other children, but it is also our parents responsibility to keep us safe as well.'

(Girls, aged 10)

How to do it

- Introduce the activity by saying that you want to know how children of their age keep themselves safe on their way to school. Provide each child with a sheet of A4 paper and a pencil for drawing and writing.
- Start by asking a group or a class of children to draw him or herself, keeping safe on their way to school.
- Ask the children to work on their own, so that you get lots of different ideas. They will have an opportunity to talk about their ideas later.
- Ask them to write about what they are keeping safe from on their way to school.
- Remind the children you want them to work alone for now. Tell them that, just for now, correct spelling and punctuation are not important. If they are unable or unwilling to write for themselves, say that they can whisper to you, or a teaching assistant (if available) what they want to say about their picture.
- Now ask them to write about how they are keeping themselves safe.
- Finally, ask them to write whose job/responsibility it is to help them to stay safe, on their way to school.



safety

Others felt it was their own responsibility.

'It is my job to keep myself safe on the way to school.'
(Girl, aged 10)

Few saw it as a shared responsibility.

'I think it is the driver's job to keep you safe, also yourself.'
(Girl, aged 10)

Some children, who described walking to school alone or in a small group were concerned about dogs,

strangers, older children and teenagers. Bullying or the belief they would be bullied on the way to school affected children's behaviour.

Their strategy for keeping safe involved staying with friends, but some suggested going by a different route. In the example below the child and the threatening figure are approaching the zebra crossing at the same time as a speeding car. The child's strategy is to run and try to get ahead of the teenager, but he is clearly aware that this could put him in the path of the car.

Some children see the behaviour of adults as something they need to keep safe from.



* I am keeping myself safe from the Pub.
* I keep safe by crossing the road.
* I think my mum should keep me safe.
GIRL 10 years

One 10 year old girl wrote:

'I am keeping myself safe from people that get drunk and take drugs. I try to keep safe by walking a different way and try not to go near them. I think my Mum should keep me safe.'

As you can see from her illustration the only way to avoid this threat, whether real or imagined, is also to cross a busy road.

Another describes herself crossing the road to avoid passing the pub. Once again the strategy for keeping safe puts the child at risk from road traffic when they might otherwise not have needed to cross the road.

When we asked the teachers to comment on the draw and write activity, they found it simple and easy to do. All the children were fully engaged and the follow up discussions were described as lively. The draw and write provided opportunities for

the teachers to reinforce positive messages about crossing the road safely but also highlighted some areas of concern, which were a surprise to the teachers.

Although they were aware of the proximity of the pub, they had not seen it as a threat to the children as it was not open during the hours when the children passed to go to school. They were shocked to realise that children who did not need to cross the road to get to the school were doing so, twice, to avoid the pub and the people who hung around outside.

The draw and write revealed that there is more to keeping safe on the way to school than road safety. Whether the hazards the children have described are real or imagined they all impacted on their road crossing behaviour.

If you find you are spending more time talking about bullying or drunks than on pedestrian skills, you may still be increasing the chance that they will continue to walk to school long after walk to school week is over!



11 Girl

* I am keep myself safe from a car crash
* I try to keep safe by not letting them go too fast in a 20mph road.
* I think it is my job or responsibility to keep me safe on my way to school.

Young people are part of the solution

Jenny McWhirter has worked for RoSPA in the UK for three years as risk education adviser, which was a new post. Before that she was a member of the RoSPA National Safety Education Committee which advises RoSPA on safety education priorities and provides an opportunity for networking among safety education professionals.

In an interview with EuroSafe Alert Jenny describes her current work.

What is the major challenge we are facing with respect to young people's risk-taking behaviour?

Bringing together the professionals' knowledge and understanding with the understanding and perspective of children and young people. Children and young people can think about risk from a very different perspective to adults. One of the problems uncovered by my research is that young people do not see adults as people who are able to help them, but as people who are likely to punish or disapprove of them. So when young people face a previously unknown hazard, in a risky situation, they do not think of asking adults for help or advice.

Another challenge is the language of risk. In English, the word risk consists of two elements – outcome and probability. The outcomes of risk taking can be positive and negative, but adults – and especially health and safety professionals - focus on the negative aspects – about what can cause harm and to whom. We also use the word danger and risk interchangeably, even though danger is just one end of a long continuum of risk. This means that we can seem to exaggerate the risk of harm and offer no solu-

tion to the problem except to say 'Don't do that.'

The correct language of risk could unify all the different topics we think children and young people should learn about to be safe – roads, water, home, workplace – in every case we should be encouraging children and young people to ask the following questions: 'What are the hazards here?', 'What might happen?', 'How likely is it that someone could be hurt?', 'What are the benefits?', 'How do I feel about these risks and benefits?', 'What can I do to keep myself and others safe?', and 'Who can I ask for help and advice if I am not sure what to do next?'

As they mature and meet a new and unfamiliar hazard in a different setting or with a new group of people they will have a way to think about their situation and respond.

What makes you so passionate about this particular issue?

What makes me passionate is a belief that young people are part of the solution not just part of the problem. If we ask young people for their insights and views and genuinely respect and learn from what they have to tell us we would approach education about safety and risk from a completely different and more positive perspective.

Children have a right to be involved in decisions which affect their lives and the services which are aimed at them. This way of thinking can empower young people to make a difference to their lives in a multitude of ways.

Which three things are needed in order to reduce the injury risk for young people in countries like the UK?

- More awareness of the ex-



Why do young people want to jump off harbour walls?

tent of unintentional injury in relation to other forms of injury such as domestic violence, child abduction and abuse, drug misuse by young people. Drug and sex education get far more attention in our schools and in our newspapers than unintentional injury. I used to work for a major UK drug charity as their education adviser, so I know how easy it is for people to think drug misuse by teenagers is the biggest threat to their lives.

- More understanding by adults of how teenagers think and feel about themselves and more support and respect for our children and adolescents.
- More good news stories about young people in our national press so that young people are seen as valued citizens, not bad, mad or sad people who have nothing to contribute to society.

What lessons can be drawn from the European exchange and collaboration in the AdRisk project?

The AdRisk project, 'Community Action on Adolescents and Injury Risk', aims to initiate activities at the national level in order to prioritise youth injuries as a health

problem. Further, the project will use existing safety measures to stimulate the development of risk competence in young people. RoSPA, an AdRisk partner, has been working on establishing risk and safety education in the school curriculum.

The project is leading to a better understanding of the causes of injury for young people aged 15-24 years in different parts of Europe.

Do you have any tips on how to communicate effectively with adolescents?

Start where the young person is. By this I mean ask them open ended questions which inform you about their perspective- and then use what you have found to adapt/change what you do to help to keep them safe. Encourage young people to be involved in the design and development of measures intended to keep them safe.

They will be effective safety champions, if we respect what they tell us and support them so that they can also understand our perspective. Focus on young people as part of the solution not as part of the problem! Adopt a two ears, one mouth policy with all children and young people i.e. listen twice as much as you talk!

Early start on safety education

By Jim Bennetts

Acomb First School, a stone's throw from Hadrian's Wall, was awarded Grade 1 by Ofsted for its impressive work in helping young children to learn how to adopt safe practices.

Acomb First School caters for children aged three to nine. It was inspected by Ofsted in January and found to be a good school with many outstanding features. Its nursery was inspected at the same time and found to be outstanding. The school is very popular and has doubled in size since the previous inspection. A parent said, "staff enthuse our children and provide them with a memorable education."

The head teacher, Lee Madderson, is very keen to give children opportunities to learn how to deal sensibly with things which can be hazardous.

Ofsted says that pupils "have a strong grasp of how to look after themselves... Challenging opportunities, for example, with tools in reception and with outdoor adventures in Year 4, give pupils excellent awareness of how to weigh up risks and adopt safe practices"

The Ofsted report gives fulsome praise for the Early Years Foundation Stage, saying, "Excellent use is made of

the outside area. Children learn to use hammers, drills and scissors safely and enjoy clambering in the adventure area"

Three and four year olds in the nursery and reception class are provided with twist drills, which have enclosed gears and therefore no risk of trapping fingers. They are encouraged to get a feel for how hard you have to press to drill a hole in a wooden log. They appreciate that the harder they press, the more difficult it is to turn the drill. They know the importance of keeping the tool vertical. They are getting the feel of a tool and using it competently under the watchful eye of staff.

Having drilled a hole about two centimetres deep, they can conveniently and safely drive in a two inch nail with a hammer. Four year olds swing a hammer with remarkable precision and im-



pressive effect – removal of nails needs a strong pull with pliers. They can transfer their hammer skills to other situations too.

Their general awareness of doing things carefully extends to bonfire night. By Year 4, eight and nine year olds are enjoying a climbing wall and the excitements of fun on water.

Ofsted says: "Risk assessments are well maintained. Encouragement of pupils to be mindful of safe practices is exceptional and is carefully fostered through opportunities to tackle situations that have a potential element of risk."

The primary school curriculum is currently under review. The

approach at Acomb First School anticipates what is already established as a national aim for the secondary school curriculum: "The curriculum should enable young people to become confident individuals who take managed risks and stay safe"



Education takes the road

New research has identified ways of improving the delivery of road safety education, training and publicity in England, focusing specifically on road safety education.

The research called “Building on success: Improving the delivery of road safety education, training and publicity” found widely varying approaches to road safety education across the country, and low levels of engagement with road safety among some of those working in the education sector.

The provision of road safety education varies considerably across the country. Funding levels and the number of staff in different authorities show little correlation with the size or nature of the communities being served and are, instead, more closely linked to the attitudes of local decision-makers towards road safety.

Road safety education is currently heavily weighted towards work with children and young people, especially in schools. There is less focus on work with older adults and minority or marginalised groups.

There are notable differences in perceptions of road safety education in primary and secondary schools, with primary school staff engaging more readily with key road safety messages. Road safety appears infrequently within the non-statutory guidance of the National Curriculum, and this does not promote increased prioritisation, particularly at Key Stages 3 and 4.

Many health and education professionals recognise that road safety has an important role to play in improving the nation's health and well-being (especially that of children and young people), but they may see this as secondary to many other social issues which currently have a higher profile, including sex and relationships education, drug and alcohol awareness and healthy eating education.

Training for partners in the delivery of road safety education and, to a greater extent, publicity appears to be a

lower priority for those working locally in the road safety field. Additional resources and staff time may help to grow these areas, especially publicity.

There is a need for more dissemination of good local practice in RSETP. More independent evaluation of local road safety schemes and initiatives is also required. Help from local and central government departments is key to raising the status of RSETP.

Supporting and enabling these staff should be viewed as capacity building

The research indicates that direct education work takes up the greatest proportion of RSOs' time. A survey revealed that almost half of road safety teams' time is spent on road safety education. This compares with around 30 per cent of time spent on road safety training for partners in the delivery of road safety education and around 15 per cent of time spent on publicity-related work. The remaining time is spent on administrative tasks.

Immediate gains may be achieved in increasing the amount of training currently provided by RSOs to their partners in delivery. Fire officers in particular may benefit from a prompt response, with recent changes encouraging them to play an increasingly active role in road safety education. Supporting and en-

abling these staff should be viewed as capacity-building rather than diverting responsibility away from RSOs.

The research shows considerable variation in the groups which are considered 'priority groups' for RSETP between local authorities. The most often cited group was child pedestrians, especially those aged under 12. Newly-qualified drivers, pre-drivers and 17-25-year-olds, child cyclists and motorcyclists also ap-

peared to be high on RSETP agendas. Older drivers and minority or marginalised groups are cited less frequently as a priority.

Road safety teams are using, or endeavouring to use, a firm evidence base when determining how their resources should be targeted. Casualty data and statistics are playing a key role in local decision-making.

Among teachers, it seems that there is little awareness of many of the existing schemes and tools which are available for schools to use in promoting road safety. Consultation with educators and RSOs explored what could be done to make road safety education more accessible and user-friendly for both teachers and pupils.

Responses included greater access to ICT, drama productions, interactive IT software,

lively and interactive presentations by outside agencies, hard-hitting videos and better-quality and more up-to-date facilities. There appears to be a dearth of material aimed at older school-aged pupils.

The Department for Transport is developing a range of teaching materials aimed at this age group, as part of a comprehensive set of materials aimed at ages 4-16.

A survey of teachers revealed that primary school staff considered road safety education to be second only to healthy eating in the PSHE curriculum. In comparison, secondary school staff considered areas such as sex and relationships education, drugs and alcohol education and healthy eating all to be of greater importance than road safety education.

Perhaps the strongest message to emerge from the research is the high levels of variability in staffing and resource allocation among authorities. A general trend, however, appears to be that the number of RSOs in most local authorities has decreased in recent years; this is due to budget constraints and changing priorities, with much of the work which used to be performed by RSOs now being performed by other specialist staff within local authorities, for example, school travel planners.

to success

Overall, there was a view from RSOs that their position did not attract the same status among allied professionals as the technical work undertaken by engineers. Managers reported that this view is generally held by councillors and filters down to the managerial level.

The most frequently cited barrier to more effective road safety education was insufficient funding. When asked how additional resources might be used to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of RSE, common responses included:

- More face-to-face work in the community/higher visibility of RSOs
- The expansion of existing offerings to include work with motorbike riders and with young people in pre-driver education
- Focus on work-related safety
- Promoting national campaigns.

Allocating the sharing and dissemination of RSETP materials to an independent, designated national body

Measures to raise the status of road safety education need to be targeted at a wide audience

may help reduce the existing burden on the Department for Transport and provide a central contact for professionals seeking to access a database of current and archived material for RSETP purposes. Guidance from a central source may also assist in ensuring that the future road safety agenda is inclusive and accessible to the whole community.

Core recommendations include the following

- A redefinition of the way RSETP core funding is allocated, to reflect the size and



Older children do not get as much road safety education

nature of the communities being served and the degree of risk from road traffic.

- More dissemination of good local practice, which will help boost the visibility and reputation of the

ordinated working in the future.

- Ensuring that decision makers in central and local government continue to be made aware of the performance of road safety professionals and their potential to work flexibly in a number of domains, so that those in the field continue to feel valued.
 - Dissemination of resources, together with a database of current and archived material for RSETP purposes, all managed by an appropriate designated body.
 - Broadening of the role of RSOs to incorporate more facilitative work.
- Measures to raise the status of road safety education need to be targeted at a wide audience. They need to encompass those who are making decisions about budget and resource allocation, professionals who have a role to play in delivery and who need to ensure that they are

offering integrated approaches, as well as partners and communities responsible for enforcing messages received through formal education. Capacity building is something RSOs must recognise as a part of their brief.

Rewarding road safety professionals for their effectiveness and enthusiasm is key. There is already much good work in operation, and further independent evaluation and dissemination of this good practice will offer intrinsic reward to the staff who are fulfilling current road safety roles

The full report, by MVA Consultancy, is published by the Department for Transport (ISBN 978 1 906581 50 3, price £16.00). To order further free copies of these Findings or the full report as a priced publication, contact: DfT Publications, tel: 0300 123 1102, e-mail: dftinf@capita.co.uk, or download a copy free of charge from www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roadsafety/research/rsrr



The Look After Your Head campaign is running again as part of Brain Injury Awareness Week from May 11-17.

The Brain Injury Rehabilitation Trust offers a free educational resource pack which contains a 20minute Powerpoint presentation that teachers/group leaders can use to do a short session to raise awareness of causes and effects of brain injury, and what teenagers can do to look after their head.

Focus will be on range of issues including road safety, cycling/helmets, seatbelts in the back, misuse of alcohol, drugs, and generally safe and healthy lifestyle.

See www.birt.co.uk for more information.

Awards for nine

Nine young people received an award in February on Merseyside after successfully completing a pioneering road safety driving course aimed at giving 16 years and older the opportunity to learn more about road safety and responsibility and also to gain experience of vehicle control off the public highway in a safe and controlled environment.

With more than 233 road collisions across Liverpool in 2007 involving 16-24 year olds, the course has been aimed at reducing this figure in years to come. The scheme has been developed by Knowsley based Directions Driver Training, in a joint venture with Liverpool Youth Service. The group of 16 – 21 year olds undertook a combination of theory workshops and in-car training sessions over several weeks.

Tina Preston, head of training at Directions Driver Training who has been working on the project for a year said, "By helping young people to understand where, why and how they are at risk, and giving them some practical skills to cope on today's busy roads, they are less likely to become involved in a road collision. We are encouraging them to take re-

sponsibility for their attitudes and resultant behaviour, and giving them a viable alternative."

Local businesses have also backed this innovative approach to tackling what is a growing problem, by helping to get the scheme off the ground. Jaguar at Halewood allowed Directions Driver Training to develop the student's car control skills on their private land and Morrisons kindly provided use of their new training room at their Speke supermarket.

Neil McCarthy, store manager commented, "We are pleased to be able to offer our support and improve the opportunities for young people in Liverpool. It's great to see their enthusiasm for learning new skills and responsibilities."

A further course is already underway giving young people in Speke something interesting and extremely useful to put their energies into.

Carole Darnell, senior youth worker at Parklands, Speke, commented, "We can see that the course will engage 16year olds and older in something which interests them. This training scheme gives them important skills as well as building their confidence."

School scoops top art award

Year 6 pupil Laura Goodbun and Oliver Rash from Year 5 of Town Close House Preparatory School in Norwich are celebrating after scooping top honours in an art competition run by ISG Jackson Special Projects to highlight site safety. The contractor is currently building a £2.3 million new sports hall at the school and the winning poster designs will help ISG Jackson Special Projects reinforce its message about

the dangers posed by construction sites.

The judging panel, comprising senior members of the site and the health and safety team, couldn't reach a unanimous verdict on the winning entry, so both Laura and Oliver secured the top prize for their poster designs. In addition to receiving framed copies of their posters, the budding artists also received gift vouchers and both will be able to see

their winning posters displayed across the new sports hall site.

Andrew Townsend, ISG Jackson's senior HSQ&E manager commented: "The standard of competition entries was high and it was a difficult task to select just one winner. The children took on board the important messages about the real dangers encountered on construction sites and produced some excellent poster designs.

"The poster competition forms an important part of our health and safety education programme with younger children, alongside formal talks in assembly and site visits, as the creative process really helps to drive this important message home. Construction sites are never safe places to play and we recognise that as a contractor we have a key responsibility to educate children to these risks."

European Child Home Safety Conference

Child safety:

The Next Steps?

This collaboration between RoSPA and the European Child Safety Alliance of EuroSafe will be the first European conference devoted solely to child home safety.

The event will bring together the strong history of RoSPA's National Home Safety Congress and the Alliance's European child home safety campaign. Participation from across Europe is anticipated and a variety of speakers from the UK and Europe will provide an insight into the latest developments and thinking on this vital issue.

Call for papers

The conference organisers are now calling for abstracts on

- Practical and effective solutions to child home safety problems - discussion regarding evaluation of solutions would be particularly appreciated
- The importance and use of injury data specific to children
- Issues and ideas for adapting evidenced good practices for local use
- Barriers to progress - why is home safety so neglected?
- Training - who needs it, how can it be done?
- Tackling inequities in child home safety

2nd and 3rd November, Holiday Inn, Stratford-upon-Avon.

Abstracts should include the following information: name of presenter, contact details including job title of presenter, title of abstract, background, aim, actions undertaken and conclusions or recommendations. Abstracts should consist of no more than 500 words.

Please submit abstracts by 30th May to:
Janice Cave, RoSPA, Edgbaston Park,
353 Bristol Road, Birmingham, B5 7ST
Email: jcave@rospa.com

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