

Acknowledgements

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ICONS

The following icons have been included to assist teachers to manoeuvre through this resource.

Teacher preparation



Collect teaching aids, ask students to bring in materials and/or photocopy resource, parent and at-home activity sheets

Components of the resource



Safer Roads music and stories CD



Road sign pack



Road network tablemat



Discussion photo pack

Introduction

Introduction

BACKGROUND TO SAFER ROADS

Safer Roads forms part of the Northern Territory Road Safety Strategy 2004 – 2010. In November 2006 the Northern Territory Government approved 21 road safety recommendations from the NT Road Safety Taskforce report: *Safer Road Use – A Territory Imperative*. This report recommended developing a road safety education curriculum as part of the Transition to Year 10 Northern Territory Curriculum Framework (NTCF).

Safer Roads is an important part of the Safe System approach to educate children and young people to behave responsibly on the road.

The *Safer Roads* resource is based on the Western Australian, School Drug Education and Road Aware (SDERA) *Challenges and Choices* program. The *Safer Roads* early childhood resource for Transition to Year 3 students was trialled by teachers in nine schools situated in Nhulunbuy, Darwin, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs during 2009. Trial teachers participated in professional development workshops in keeping with best practice and current research principles.

Trial teachers, principals, parents and the wider school community provided valuable feedback and recommendations through surveys, comments and testimonials.

Road Safety education is more likely to be effective when schools, communities and parents work together to provide a comprehensive, whole-school approach addressing issues with the school community (*World Health Organisation, 1986*).

Safer Roads provides support, resources and professional development to teachers and agencies seeking to embed road safety education in their school and communities.

Safer Roads provides students with opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to help them make informed and safer decisions in traffic and traffic environments.

Safer Roads: School Road Safety Education, Early Childhood Teacher Resource is evidence-based and provides an outcome-focused curriculum with links to the Northern Territory Curriculum Framework, Strong Beginnings and the National Early Years Learning Framework.

AIM OF SAFER ROADS

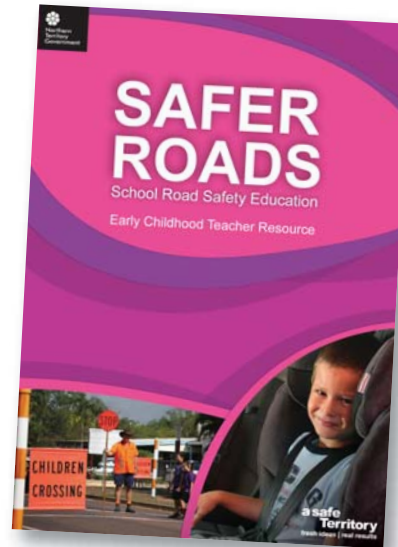
The *Safer Roads* resource aims to promote healthy safer lifestyles in young children by:

- ▶ developing an understanding of the importance of health and safety issues and practices
- ▶ developing skills necessary to make decisions that may affect their health and safety
- ▶ fostering positive health and safety attitudes and behaviours that can inform and enhance the quality of their own and other people's lives
- ▶ involving and supporting parents and community agencies in health and physical education to reinforce consistent health and safety messages.

SAFER ROADS RESOURCE COMPONENTS

TEACHER RESOURCE

An early childhood resource that assists teachers to plan and implement road safety education programs and activities.



DISCUSSION PHOTO PACK



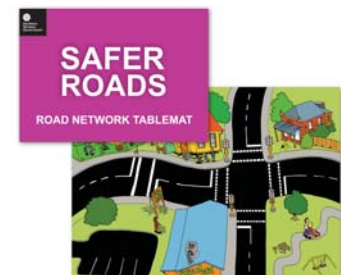
Photos showing safer road user behaviours are included in the discussion photo pack.

ROAD SIGN PACK



Common road signs that can be used to simulate the traffic environment.

ROAD NETWORK TABLEMAT



The tablemat can be used to simulate road safety situations.

ROAD SAFETY STORY BOOKS



CDs



A CD contains the Resource Sheets and At-Home Activity Sheets included in the teacher resource.

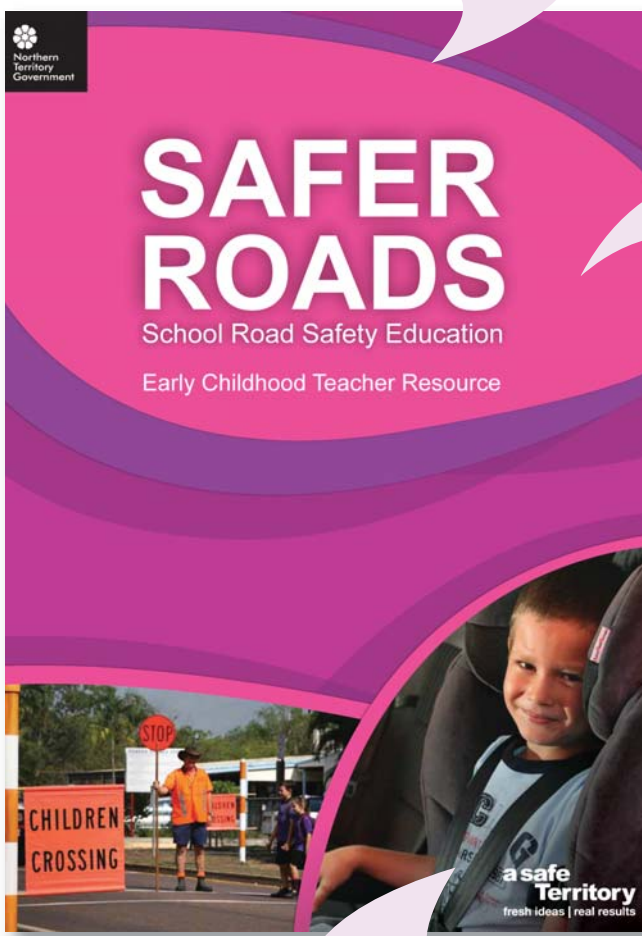
The CD has songs, traffic sounds, rap tracks and readings of the story books.

DESIGN OF THE TEACHER RESOURCE

The resource has been divided into the following sections:

1. INTRODUCTION

Describes the background to the *Safer Roads* resource, the aim, resource components of *Safer Roads* and a rationale for effective school road safety education.



2. ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION

Describes learning outcomes in a road safety context and the crucial content to be taught.

The content is divided into four focus areas:

- Passenger safety
- Pedestrian safety
- Playing safely
- Sensing traffic.

Each focus area contains several units with a range of suggested learning experiences.

Provides an example of an outcomes-focused planning approach which teachers can use to plan, implement and assess a road safety education program for their students.

It also describes the links between the *Safer Roads* resource and the Northern Territory Curriculum Framework (NTCF), Strong Beginnings and the National Early Years Learning Framework.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

Identifies some of a wide range of teaching and learning practices and strategies used by early childhood teachers to support children's learning and development.

The strategies are linked to the learning experiences described in the *Road safety education* focus areas of this resource.

Teachers are encouraged to use their professional judgment to review the suggested learning strategies and decide on the most appropriate for their students' needs.

ROAD SAFETY AND YOUNG CHILDREN

While the majority of young children are not involved in road crashes, road safety remains a significant issue for our young children.

Children are at risk in the road environment due to a number of factors including the following:

- Young children focus on one task at a time and ignore other things around them.
- Children's hearing is not as well developed as adults, so they may have problems working out the direction of traffic sounds.
- Children's peripheral vision is underdeveloped and therefore they are unlikely to see an approaching car.
- Children can't judge speed and distance of cars properly. They can't judge a safe gap in the traffic and this makes it very dangerous for them to cross a road without adult help.
- Children do not have the experience to appreciate what danger surrounds them near traffic.
- Children (up to 32 kg) are at greater risk when restrained in a standard seatbelt and in the front passenger seat.

Between 1999 and 2008, 44 children aged 0-16 years of age were killed and 476 were admitted to hospital as a result of a traffic crash in the Northern Territory (*George Institute 2009*).

The majority of these casualties occurred when children were passengers in motor vehicles, followed by situations in which children were pedestrians, drivers and cyclists.

The proportion of male and female child casualties was similar over the ten year period. However, male casualties were more common than female casualties in the metropolitan areas as cyclists and pedestrians, and as passengers in the rural area.

THE ISSUES

The issues for children aged 4 to 8 years as passengers, pedestrians or cyclists (including skateboards, scooters, roller blades and other wheeled devices) are:

| PEDESTRIANS | PASSENGERS | PLAYING (including cycling and skating) | SENSING TRAFFIC |
|---|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • walking with adult supervision and holding hands • choosing safer places to cross and walk • checking driveways, crossovers and other hazards in the road environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wearing an approved child car restraint or booster seat in the rear seat of a vehicle • entering and exiting from the rear door closest to the kerb | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • choosing safer places to play away from driveways and road edges • wearing a correct fitting helmet and other protective equipment and clothing • riding with an adult in safer places away from the road | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using the systematic search strategy • understanding the meaning of road signs • understanding the hazards of road conditions |

WHAT IS A WHOLE-SCHOOL APPROACH TO ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION?

A whole-school approach is dependent on schools, parents and communities working together to plan and implement road safety strategies within the school community.

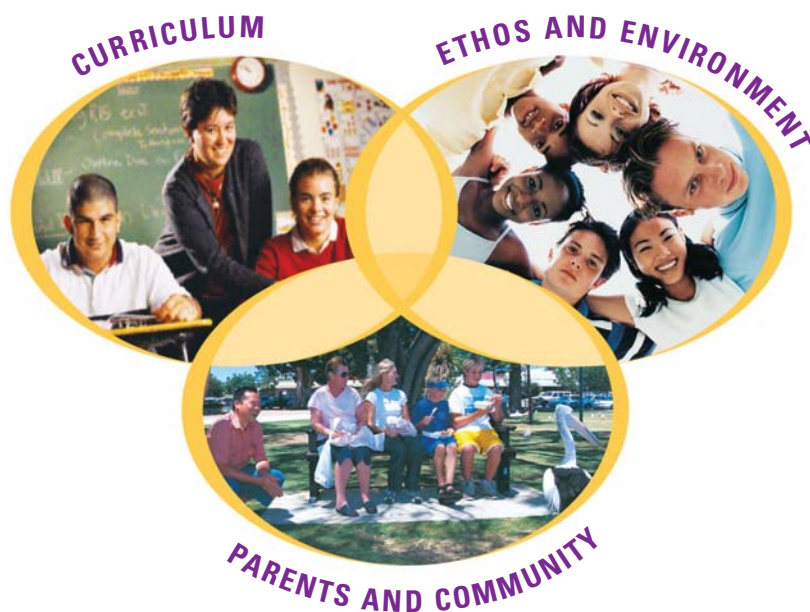
This approach will be more effective if schools consider the three areas of the *Health Promoting Schools Framework* and the set of evidence-based *Principles for School Road Safety Education* described in this resource.

HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS FRAMEWORK

The *Health Promoting Schools Framework* developed by the World Health Organisation (1986) encourages a whole-school approach to addressing health issues, including road safety education. This framework consists of three areas:

- Curriculum
- Ethos and Environment
- Parents and Community.

Health promoting school communities can make positive contributions to health and learning outcomes through the interrelationship of these three areas.



Health Promoting Schools Framework
(World Health Organisation, 1986)

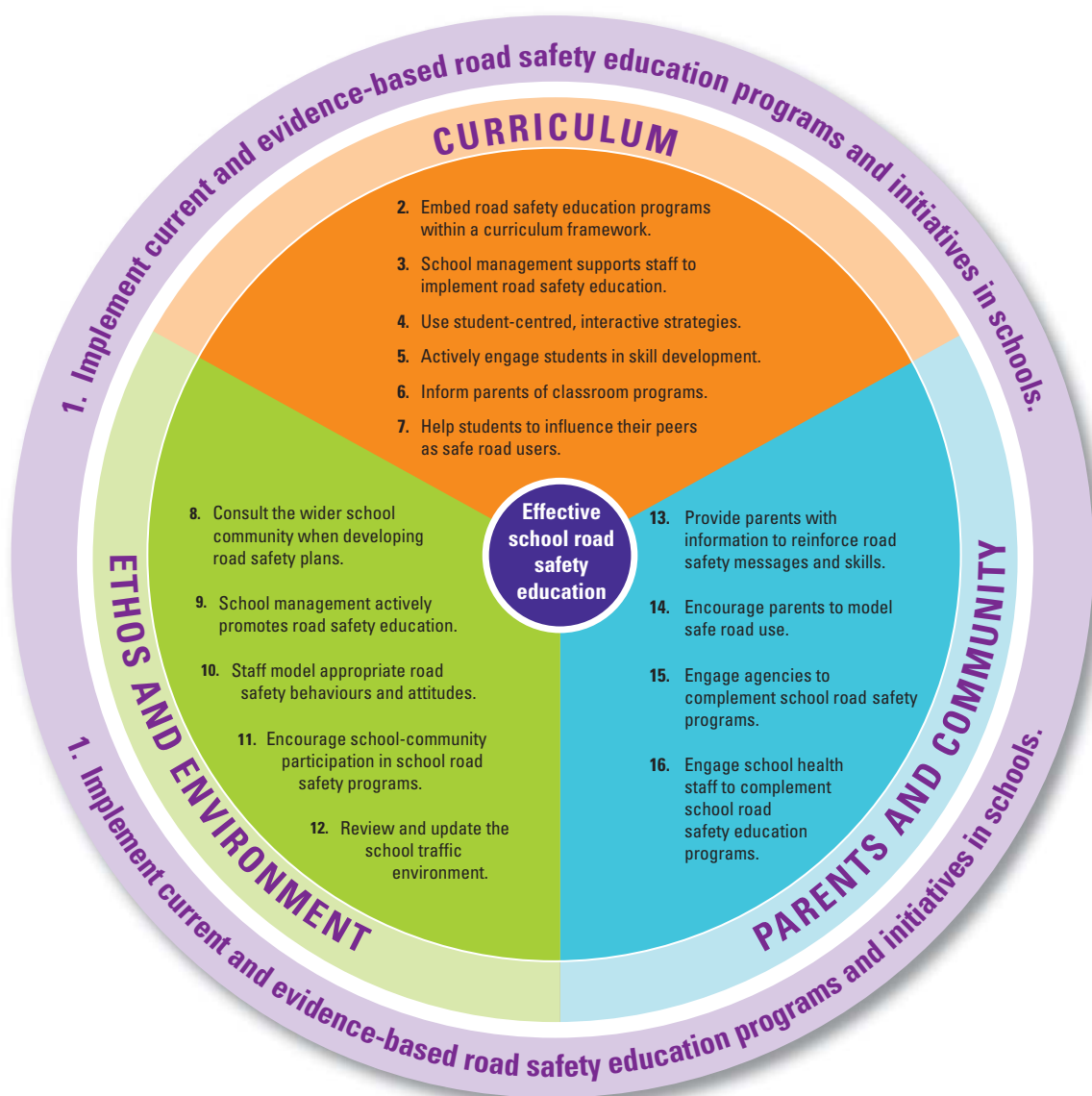
WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES FOR SCHOOL ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION?

The 16 *Principles for School Road Safety Education* (SDERA 2007) have been devised by experts and based on research to ensure content and delivery methods of road safety education are consistent with what is currently understood to be best practice in the field.

The Principles provide a framework of core concepts and values to guide the planning, implementation and review of road safety education programs, policies and practice in school communities.

The *Effective School Road Safety Model* demonstrates how the Principles fit within the three areas of the *Health Promoting Schools Framework*.

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION MODEL



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Note: Only the key aspects of each Principle are shown in the *Effective School Road Safety Education Model*.

PRINCIPLES FOR SCHOOL ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLE

Principle 1:

Implement evidence-based road safety education programs and initiatives in schools and include local research and current legislation where available.

Road safety education programs and initiatives based on research are more likely to be effective. Including local research and current legislation will help ensure that road safety education programs and initiatives are appropriate and relevant to the context of the school community.

CURRICULUM

Principle 2:

Embed road safety education programs within a curriculum framework thereby providing timely, developmentally appropriate and ongoing road safety education for all year levels.

When embedded in the curriculum, students' and teachers' awareness and knowledge of the importance of road safety education will be enhanced. Children and young people progress through developmental phases of learning. The ability to safely interact with the traffic environment relies on the learning and reinforcement of age appropriate content and skills throughout these phases.

Principle 3:

School management supports staff to effectively implement road safety education by ensuring access to available resources and professional learning opportunities.

Professional development and support is a fundamental principle in road safety education. Enhancing staff member's skills in facilitating road safety education will ensure current and accurate information and resources are delivered to students.

Principle 4:

Use student-centred, interactive strategies to develop students' utility knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivation and behaviours regarding road safety.

Programs that encourage student-centred activities such as those which promote play, social interaction, self-awareness, personal reflection and exploration of the world are most effective as they actively engage students, satisfy their natural curiosity in learning and encourage peer interaction during the learning process. Students from vulnerable groups such as lower socio-economic groups, culturally and linguistically diverse groups and rural and remote communities, who are at greater risk of traffic injury, benefit most from student-centred programs and interactive strategies.

Principle 5:

Actively engage students in developing skills that focus on identifying and responding safely to risk situations.

Learning is dependent on active engagement with a task. Emphasis should therefore be placed on learning new skills and applying these to the appropriate context. Skill development that focuses on identifying and responding safely to risk situations is central to road safety education. A combination of classroom activities and real traffic training will reinforce learning and develop skills.

Principle 6:

Provide information to parents/carers that will encourage them to reinforce and practise road safety skills developed in the classroom, in the real road environment.

Classroom curriculum can be effective in changing road safety knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviours of children and young people. However, safer road user behaviour is more likely when parents are encouraged to model and provide on-road practice that support classroom programs, messages and strategies.

Principle 7:

Encourage students to support and influence their peers positively as a way of improving road safety behaviour.

Peers are often the most influential role models in young peoples' social learning. Encouraging students to engage in safe road use behaviour, in peer situations, can be effective in improving this behaviour. When used in conjunction with other strategies peer discussion can greatly enhance learning gains.

ETHOS AND ENVIRONMENT

Principle 8:

Consult the wider school community when developing road safety guidelines and then disseminate this information to families and monitor implementation.

School road safety education is more effective when the three areas of the Health Promoting Schools Framework and the Principles are considered when planning, implementing and reviewing school road safety guidelines. To ensure guidelines are well implemented, schools are encouraged to involve the wider school community. Inviting feedback on draft versions can encourage ownership and increase acceptance. Providing parents and school staff with the school's road safety guidelines encourages them to model the desired behaviours and attitudes as specified.

Principle 9:

School management actively promotes road safety education by supporting staff to plan and implement road safety education within the curriculum and other school programs and initiatives.

Schools often face many barriers when implementing a new program. To increase program success it is important for school management to provide leadership and support to the school community in their efforts. By taking a proactive approach, school management can openly demonstrate their commitment to the program and promote road safety education.

Principle 10:

School management actively encourages staff to model appropriate road safety behaviour and attitudes consistent with the school's road safety guidelines.

Individuals learn by observing others perform a particular behaviour. Modelling is an important factor in effective injury prevention programs. Positive relationships between students and staff have been found to improve students' connectedness to school as well as reduce problem behaviours and improve attendance and academic achievement. Staff are therefore important role models for students and may exert considerable influence on the behaviours of young people.

Principle 11:

Encourage and promote school-community participation in school road safety programs.

When the whole-school community is involved in addressing road safety through school-based, environmental and community interventions there is potential for long-term behaviour change and reduction in road injuries for children and young people.

Principle 12:

Review and update where necessary, in partnership with external authorities, the school traffic environment to encourage and support parents to practise road safety skills.

Improvements in the school traffic environment such as road design, speed limits and the separation of pedestrians and vehicles around schools can greatly reduce pedestrian and cyclist injuries. This will enhance the safety of road users before and after school, and provide opportunities for parents to model appropriate road user behaviour with these facilities.

PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

Principle 13:

Provide parents with information that will assist them to reinforce appropriate road safety messages and skills (including school guidelines) at home.

Parents are best placed to model road safety for their children because they care and are motivated to ensure their child's safety. They are also aware and responsive to their children's habits in traffic and have many opportunities to teach their children about staying safe. Road safety information that is practical, offers ideas and encourages interaction between parents and their children is preferred. Families are more likely to be engaged in road safety education when information is relevant for their child and combines printed materials with interactive activities.

Principle 14:

Provide parents and carers with practical, opportunistic and planned, on-road training for modelling of appropriate behaviours to their children.

Practical road-side training is an effective way of improving children's road safety knowledge and skills. Perceptual-motor skills are best developed at the road-side or in the car. Teaching and modelling safe road user behaviours are important indicators of children's road safety behaviours. Parents are best placed to practise and model these behaviours with their children.

Principle 15:

Establish and maintain links and involve community agencies and local government in the delivery of road safety messages that complement and support existing school road safety programs.

Road safety educators and stakeholders are recommended to collaborate and combine their expertise when developing new road safety initiatives in schools as this will contribute to improved health and safety outcomes.

Principle 16:

Engage, train and resource school health service staff to complement and support road safety education programs and other initiatives in schools.

Road safety requires a comprehensive, combined approach. Engaging school-based health staff and relevant community groups to support road safety education curriculum supports this approach. Presentations and services offered by these groups can complement and reinforce classroom programs when included as part of a road safety education program.

By using the *Principles for School Road Safety Education* as a guide, schools can:

- be assured they are choosing the most appropriate and effective road safety strategies as part of a whole-school approach
- identify areas of strength and those that may require further planning.

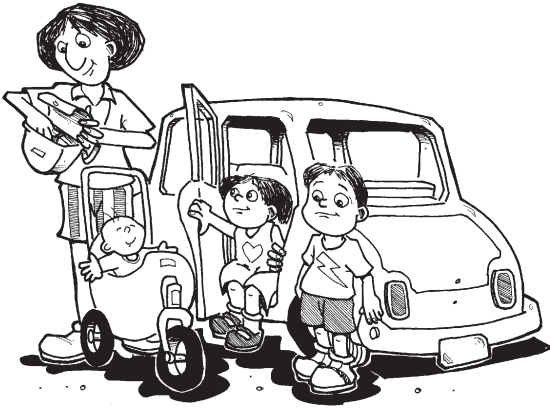
INVOLVING PARENTS

Parents have a vital role to play in the education of their children. It is important that parents themselves understand the issues relevant to their child so they can:

- ensure their child's health and safety
- develop positive health and safety attitudes, behaviours and knowledge
- extend the teaching from the classroom by reinforcing health and safety behaviours in real life situations.

The *At Home Activity Sheets* will provide parents and carers with information pertaining to health and safety issues.

The accompanying at home activities are aimed at encouraging parents to support their child's health and safety program and promote practising skills in the real world.



Some other ideas to involve parents in a road safety program include:

- promoting ongoing awareness of road safety issues in the school through newsletters, meetings, school notice board and social activities
- involving parents in excursions in the traffic environment which will alert parents to children's limitations and assist with supervision
- asking parents for their help in identifying hazards in and around the school
- ensuring parents know the safest places to park at the school.

INVOLVING THE SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

To encourage the whole school to be involved in road safety activities and to reinforce classroom programs, the following ideas may be used to promote parent and community involvement.

- Establish or link into the school health committee to encourage parents and other community members to take active roles in reducing traffic hazards and keeping children safe in the local community.
- Invite the local newspaper to take a photograph of road safety activities happening in the school.
- Establish links with local road safety agencies such as Road Safety Branch and your school-based Constable.
- Set up a permanent simulated traffic environment that can be used to teach safety skills to all age groups, particularly in relation to pedestrian, cyclist and play situations.
- Provide secure bicycle racks and helmet storage facilities.
- Incorporate road safety into the school's policy.
- Ask staff and parents to model safer road user behaviours at all times.
- Include road safety tips and information in the school newsletter and assembly.

- Invite a community road safety representative to participate in a school assembly or parent evening.
- Integrate road safety into all levels of schooling.

TERMINOLOGY

► Safety

The concept of 'safety' is somewhat ambiguous in relation to the concept of road safety. While the usual meaning of 'safe' is 'free from harm', in the context of road safety, safety belts, safety helmets and safety procedures, it is more variable, and includes meanings such as 'avoiding harm', 'making harm less likely', or 'lessening the degree of harm'.

For pedestrians, 'danger' is due mainly to the possibility of injury or death resulting from collision with a vehicle.

For passengers, the danger is due not only to the possibility of collision with another vehicle, but also to other forms of impact if there is a loss of control of the vehicle.

For cyclists, the danger is also due to the possibility of collision and impact from loss of control of the bicycle.

If children do not have valid concepts for all of these and other relevant terms, their problem solving and their behaviour in traffic are often likely to be inappropriate, and they are unlikely to fully understand what safety measures mean (*Pettit, F. 1996*).

► What terminology should I use with children?

It is recommended that the word 'safer' be used, as there are few traffic situations that could be regarded as completely safe and free from possible harm.

The word 'crash' should be used instead of accident. An accident could be due to a chance happening but more often in the case of a road 'accident', it is an incident that is not intentionally caused but where there has not been enough care exercised by one or more of the people involved.

► Restraints

This resource will use the term 'restraint' which refers to:

- rearward facing child restraints
- forward facing car seats
- booster seats
- safety harnesses
- seatbelts.

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