

Individual initiatives

In spite of most global road safety activities being launched by international organisations, there remain niche opportunities for individuals or national groups to take useful initiatives at the global level. An example of this is ASIRT – the Association for Safe International Road Travel [17]. ASIRT is a non-profit organisation that was established in 1995 in response to the death of a young American in Turkey. The US Ambassador suggested the creation of a road safety organisation that would promote road travel safety through education and advocacy. It would protect both American citizens abroad and residents of countries around the world. ASIRT publishes road travel reports for over 150 countries to enable travellers to make informed travel choices.

Conclusion

Road safety is now well and truly on the global map! It will be very interesting to see what this means for the future of road safety, particularly for the poorer countries where budgets are very tight and money spent on roads means less for other health and education issues. Hopefully, more of the richer nations will come forward with specific aid programs to address the road safety problems of such nations.

Meanwhile, we have much work to do to make our own road systems safe. We can also share with the rest of the world what we have learned through hard experience and skilful research, and, in fact, have been doing so for some time. A number of our ACRS members, both corporate and individual, have been participants in overseas consultancies and as speakers at overseas conferences and seminars. It would seem that, internationally, Australian expertise in road safety is held in high esteem and that in contributing to the global road safety scene, we are already 'boxing above our weight'. That will only continue to be the case if our federal and state/territory governments and

industry together provide adequate funding for the research and implementation of road safety initiatives in pursuit of further reductions in the road toll.

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Principles of best practice for road safety education

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Introduction

Between 2007 and 2009, School Drug Education and Road Aware (SDERA) and the Child Health Promotion Research Centre at Edith Cowan University (CHPRC, ECU) worked together to develop best practice principles for road safety education. One of the benefits and critical success factors of developing a best practice model for road safety education has been the ongoing involvement of key stakeholders at both a state and national level. This national and state collaboration and increased commitment is unparalleled in the area of road safety education.

SDERA in conjunction with Edith Cowan University has widely disseminated the results of this project. It has been a unique initiative involving Western Australian, Australian and New Zealand stakeholders. In 2010, SDERA and ECU were jointly awarded an Injury Control Council of Western Australia Excellence in Community Safety Award in the research category for the research and development work on the *Principles for school road safety education* (SDERA, 2009). The principles that were developed ensure that content and delivery methods of road safety education are consistent with what is currently understood to be best practice in the field.

Best practice road safety education and a Safe System approach

Educating children and young people to be responsible, compliant road users and to become advocates for this behaviour is a critical part of the Safe System approach, which underpins all road safety strategies in Australia including the National Road Safety Strategy. Fostering shared responsibility, building relationships, partnering with the community and ensuring best practice are also pivotal to a Safe System. These are all cornerstones of the best practice project undertaken in 2007 by SDERA in association with the Child Health Promotion Research Centre at Edith Cowan University in WA.

Providing schools and communities with a best practice model for road safety education strengthens and contributes to a Safe System approach by:

- encouraging collaboration and a shared responsibility
- increasing the efficacy of road safety efforts in schools and communities
- educating young people to be compliant road users
- educating young people to be advocates for safer road use
- involving parents and the community in road safety efforts for children and young people.

Rationale

Children and young people use the transport system as pedestrians, passengers, cyclists, drivers and increasingly as moped riders. As a vulnerable and high-risk group, and as frequent users of road and transport systems, children and young people remain a key target group for many jurisdictions and their road safety strategies.

Australian statistics reveal that children and young people up to the age of 18 years are highly represented in transport-related fatalities and hospitalisations. Their injuries and fatalities occur mostly when they are passengers and drivers, with non-use of restraints remaining a significant contributing factor. Males are over-represented in nearly all age groups and road user types,

with pedestrian crashes being another critical issue for children and young people.

The impact of road trauma is devastating for individuals, families and communities. Schools and communities often have limited time and resources to address road safety education. Road safety efforts in school communities are a vital part of the Safe System approach and need to be addressed using best practice methods to ensure meaningful, worthwhile student learning with efficient use of time and resources.

Each year schools and communities contribute to the government's aim of eliminating road crash death and serious injury by:

- increasing parents' exposure to accurate and relevant information about the benefits of children and young people being safer road users and making safer choices
- providing a school environment in which students and staff are encouraged to commit to and engage in safer road safety behaviour
- providing teaching and learning opportunities that engage students in road safety education.

Overview

In 2005 the idea to develop best practice principles was raised by SDERA and supported at a national level by the National Road Safety Education Forum (a nationally representative group of road safety managers) and the then National Road Safety Strategy Panel (the appointed national road safety executive group). It was agreed at a national level that developing evidence-based principles for successful practice in road safety education would benefit all road safety education stakeholders and educators across the country.

With formal support and collaboration from these national reference groups and significant funding from the Insurance Commission of WA, the research to develop *Principles of best practice in road safety education* was commissioned by SDERA in 2006 and completed by the Child Health Promotion Research

INCLUSION CRITERIA

SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE:

The principle has been articulated and the nature of its contribution to effective road safety education specified in *at least three* reputable professional or scientific publications.

OR

THEORETICAL EVIDENCE:

The theoretical or conceptual basis of the principle has been described and justified comprehensively in *at least one* reputable professional or scientific publication.

AND

PRACTICAL EVIDENCE:

The principle has been identified in the scientific literature as an integral part of *at least two* road safety programs that have demonstrably improved positive road safety attitudes and/or behaviours.

OR

REAL-WORLD EVIDENCE:

The principle has been *implemented with fidelity* in a real-world setting so that the practicality of the principle has also been assessed.

Figure 1. Inclusion criteria for developing the principles for school road safety education

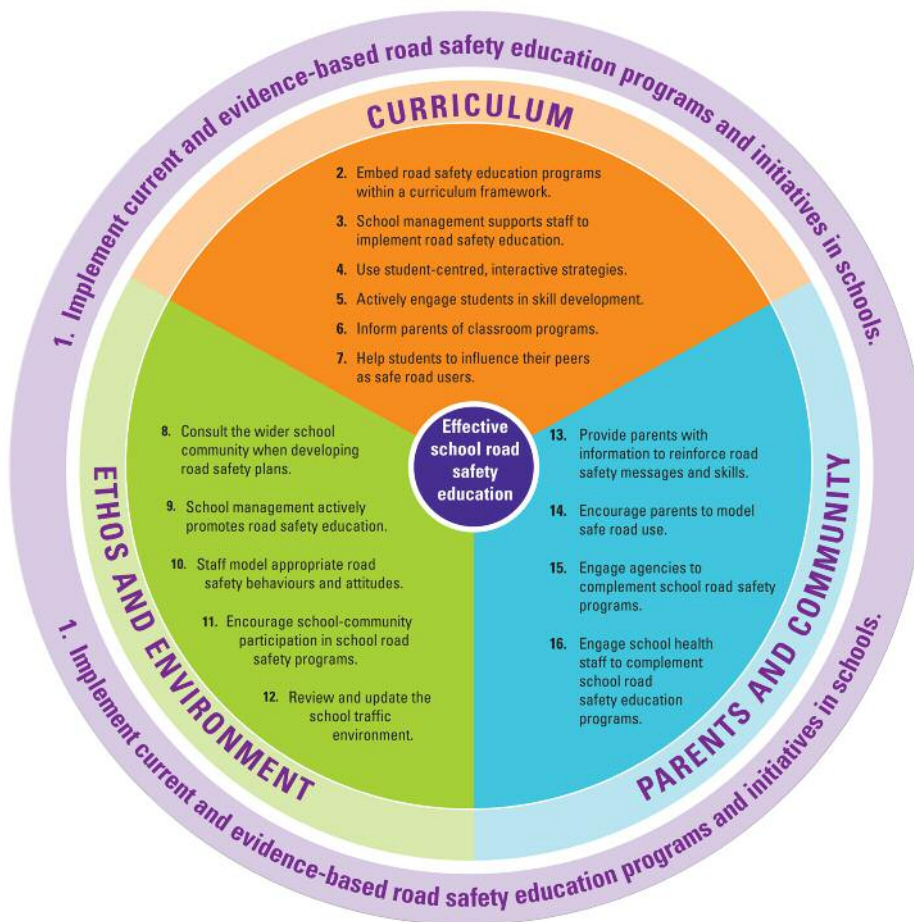


Figure 2. The Effective School Road Safety Education Model. School Drug Education and Road Aware, 2009

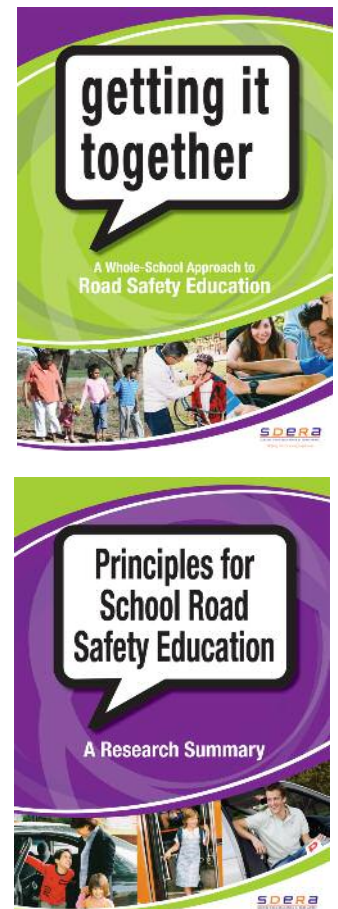


Figure 3. Covers of documents recently published by SDERA

Centre at Edith Cowan University in November 2007. VicRoads, along with the Traffic Accident Commission of Victoria (TAC) and the South Australian Government, also contributed financially to this initiative.

The National Road Safety Education Forum (NRSEF) was an important group during all phases of the project. Between 2007 and 2010, the NRSEF was consulted, included in the research and involved in the ongoing dissemination.

The underlying reason for developing principles of best practice for school road safety education included providing clear guidelines for:

- developing resources and training programs
- providing consistency in content and delivery methods with what is currently understood to be best practice in the field
- increasing consistency between road safety education programs across Australia
- helping educators to select the most effective road safety education programs
- increasing national collaborative efforts for initiatives, such as national curriculum, sharing of resources and knowledge.

As a result of the research conducted by the Child Health

Promotion Research Centre at ECU, 16 principles of best practice were formulated for use by schools and communities.

A robust and empirical method was employed by ECU, which included:

- An extensive review of empirical, descriptive and theoretical literature by establishing key search areas, relevant databases, article summaries and a matrix, to search:
 - road safety and road injury for children and youth
 - mediators and outcomes for child and youth road-related injuries
 - origins of road safety education and policies in Australia
 - identified current empirically tested road safety intervention strategies, including barriers
 - identified best practice principles developed in other health areas
- Recruitment of an expert consultation panel consisting of experts/authors, national road safety stakeholders and teachers/educators
- Establishing inclusion criteria for principles and several iterations with a two-round Delphi consultation process
- A validation process with stakeholders, schools and teachers

involving school case studies and a national workshop consultation process.

To reach the final list of 16 principles, a draft list of principles was developed after close scrutiny of the literature and against the criteria. This included each principle being robust enough to meet one of the four benchmarks or ‘inclusion criteria’, as given in Figure 1.

In 2007 and 2008 ECU, in collaboration with SDERA, presented the research findings at two national road safety conferences. During 2008 and 2009, SDERA presented the best practice initiative at three Western Australian forums. In 2009, the *Principles* were launched at a national meeting of the NRSEF in Adelaide, and SDERA posted a summary document of the *Principles* on the SDERA website in order to provide free access to all road safety stakeholders across Australia.

In 2009, based on ECU’s research, SDERA devised the Effective School Road Safety Education Model (see Figure 2), published two documents and distributed the following widely:

- *Principles for school road safety education: A research summary*
- *Getting it together: A whole school approach to road safety education*
- *Principles for school road safety education.*

The covers of the first two documents are shown in Figure 3, and the *Principles* are at Appendix 1. The three documents and model can be used by schools, program developers, educators and agencies to improve road safety education initiatives and efforts in school communities.

In 2010, SDERA and ECU presented the research and *Principles* at the Victorian Traffic Safety Education conference, and SDERA published a report profiling a 2009-10 grants process involving 12 schools that used the *Principles* to develop road safety guidelines and best practice initiatives. SDERA has distributed a copy of *Principles for school road safety education: A research summary* and *Getting it together: A whole-school approach to road safety education* to all national road safety stakeholders represented on the National Road Safety Education forum.

For schools working at a practical level, the *Getting it together* resource simply and clearly demonstrates how staff can:

- address road safety in a whole-school approach (i.e., Health Promoting School Framework, <http://www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au/default.asp?documentid=851>)
- plan, implement and review road safety education programs, policies and practices
- increase the value and importance of road safety efforts in the school community
- provide meaningful and developmentally appropriate road safety education programs.

For program developers, educators and agencies the documents describe ways to enrich and complement school programs, and to work collaboratively in a school community. In essence the *Principles* provide a best practice framework of core concepts and values to guide the planning, implementation and review of

road safety education programs, policies and practice in school communities. A best practice approach is a fundamental way for schools and educators to contribute to a Safe System by helping them focus on:

- best practice
- a shared responsibility between teachers, parents, community and students
- a collaborative approach to road safety that includes parent and community involvement, sound teaching and learning programs, and an enrichment of the school ethos and environment
- a high level of road user compliance and responsibility
- positive student attitudes towards being an advocate for their own road user behaviour and that of their peers.

In broader terms, SDERA’s objectives in developing these documents were:

- to increase the likelihood of schools using a best practice framework for road safety education
- for schools to develop their own road safety guidelines, factoring in all three areas of the Health Promoting School Framework (or whole-school approach)
- ongoing collaboration with agencies, educators and program developers to enrich and complement school programs
- ongoing collaboration with states and territories agreeing to adopt the *Principles* as the foundation or reference for road safety education in their state or territory
- to monitor the links with key stakeholders at a local, state and national level in order to keep road safety as a key agenda item, build relationships, use resources and investigate opportunities.

Key achievements

In 2009 NRSEF endorsed the *Principles for school road safety education* as a best practice framework, based on empirical evidence outlined in the 2008 research report developed by ECU. As a result of the research and SDERA’s consultation and dissemination process, the following jurisdictions refer to the *Principles* as the foundation for their road safety education programs:

- **Victoria** – via the organisations represented on the Traffic Safety Education Reference Group, primarily VicRoads, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Transport Accident Commission
- **Queensland** – Queensland Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure
- **Western Australia** – School Drug Education and Road Aware and RoadWise (part of the WA Local Government Association)
- **South Australia** – South Australian Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure, and the South Australian Royal Automobile Association
- **Northern Territory** – Department for Lands and Planning

- ACT – Department of Education
- New Zealand – Department of Land Transport.

In 2010, SDERA and ECU were jointly awarded an Injury Control Council of Western Australia Excellence in Community Safety Award in the research category for the research and development work on the *Principles*. They were also jointly nominated as finalists for the Insurance Commission of Western Australia Road Safety 2010 Awards for the *Principles for school road safety education*.

Monitoring and stakeholder consultation

The collaborative effort of all stakeholders has enabled extensive reach to virtually all jurisdictions in Australia adopting the *Principles*. The project has consequently proved to be a cost-effective model in terms of reach and value for money.

One of the significant initiatives in this project in terms of increasing uptake and reach of the *Principles* was the development of SDERA's three documents based on ECU's research. During the consultation and validation processes of the ECU research, 35 schools from all Australian states and territories provided case studies and samples of exemplary road safety activities being implemented in order to illustrate the practicality of the *Principles*.

The National Road Safety Education Forum (NRSEF) was included throughout the research, development, dissemination and implementation phases of the *Principles*. Twenty-nine members agreed to take part in the consultation phase of the research.

The National Road Safety Executive Group (NRSEG) was updated regularly by SDERA and the NRSEF about the development of the *Principles* and as such, has been supportive of this initiative. Following the establishment of the National Road Safety Council (NRSC) in 2010, SDERA briefed the NRSC secretariat and WA representative on this initiative

In Western Australia during 2009 and 2010, approximately 25 schools attended SDERA professional development workshops based on the *Principles*, and many of these schools developed road safety guidelines and reviewed their programs based on best practice.

In 2010, SDERA published a report profiling 12 schools that received a grant from SDERA in 2009 to develop road safety guidelines and implement best practice road safety education based on the planning tools from *Getting it together*. One example is a school in the Pilbara initiating a 'walk to school' day as the central theme to involve parents, the community, lessons about road safety and an audit of the school's traffic management processes.

In Victoria, schools are being encouraged to base their road safety programs on a whole-school approach and on the *Principles*. Some examples of this include a holistic bus travel program for a school located in the Snowy Mountains area, and

using student-centred teaching and learning integrating road safety and music.

The *Principles* are reflected in the next Traffic Safety Education: Directions and Action Plan Victoria 2011-2013 (due for release March 2011). Work will be undertaken as part of this plan to develop principles using the SDERA framework for early childhood road safety education appropriate for early childhood settings. This will be in line with the early childhood reforms endorsed by COAG.

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Appendix 1. Principles for school road safety education - Checklist

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLE

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

CURRICULUM

2. Embed road safety education programs within a curriculum framework thereby providing timely, developmentally appropriate and ongoing road safety education for all year levels.
3. School management supports teachers to effectively implement road safety education by ensuring access to available resources and professional learning opportunities.
4. Use student-centred, interactive strategies to develop students' utility knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivation and behaviours regarding road safety.
5. Actively engage students in developing skills that focus on identifying and responding safely to risk situations.

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

ETHOS AND ENVIRONMENT

8. Consult the wider school community when developing road safety guidelines and policies and then disseminate this information to families and monitor implementation.
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.
10. School management actively encourages staff to model appropriate road safety behaviour and attitudes consistent with the school's road safety guidelines.
11. Encourage and promote school-community participation in school road safety programs.

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

PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

13. Provide parents and carers with information that will assist them to reinforce appropriate road safety messages and skills (including school guidelines and policies) at home.
14. Provide parents and carers with practical, opportunistic and planned, on-road training for modelling of appropriate behaviours to their children.
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.
16. Engage, train and resource school health service staff to complement and support road safety education programs and other initiatives in schools.

keys2drive: An evolution or revolution in the way Australian learner drivers are taught?

by B Haythorpe, Australian Automobile Association National Project Manager, keys2drive, and C Pepper, Senior Communications Consultant, RAA

Introduction

keys2drive is a joint initiative of the AAA (Australian Automobile Association) and the Australian Government. It is perhaps the most extensive and far reaching novice driver training and road safety education initiative in Australia's history. The program has been developed by the AAA and its members (NRMA, RACV, RACQ, RAC(WA), RAA(SA), RACT and AANT) with strong support from the driver training industry and funding from the Australian Government.

keys2drive consists of three major components:

- a free lesson delivered by a keys2drive-accredited professional driving instructor to learner drivers, accompanied by their supervising driver
- a sophisticated website for learner and novice drivers, supervising drivers and professional driving instructors, rich with information and ongoing learning experiences
- a voluntary accreditation scheme for professional driving instructors who wish to participate, involving initial training, professional development and commitment to the keys2drive code of conduct.

With an aim of 'six months on P-plates with zero harm', the program is designed to contribute to a reduction in the number and severity of crashes involving young drivers. Central to this aim is a change in how novice drivers are taught by both the

professional driver training industry and by their supervising driver.

keys2drive has introduced a coaching method called 'Find your own way'. This method encourages the learning-to-drive process to be student focussed and encourages learner drivers to take an active role in their learning.

This paper highlights the results of an independent review of the program completed in November 2010 by Ken Ogden and Associates Pty Ltd, as well as audit results and research conducted by the AAA in 2010 involving learner drivers, their supervisors and the driver training industry.

Background

In 2009, 1507 people were killed on Australian roads – on average, over four deaths every day. Young people aged 17 to 25 years accounted for 361 fatalities, or nearly one-quarter of these deaths, despite representing less than 15% of the population [1].

Research from around the world shows that one of the best things that can be done for novice drivers is to help them gain more real-world, on-road supervised driving experience before they go solo [2]. In May 2008, the Federal government committed \$17 million over five years for the AAA to develop keys2drive and deliver free lessons to learners accompanied by their supervising driver. The program was trialled in Tasmania in mid-2009, introduced to the mainland in Victoria in November 2010 and has been progressively rolled out around the country since.