

The power of partnership: lessons from Road Safety Week

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Brake, the road safety charity

Abstract

Partnering with other organisations can help to develop effective, successful road safety initiatives. This presentation will explore how initiatives such as Road Safety Week can be used to engage communities and organisations at a grassroots level, whilst also raising awareness of key messages on a larger, national scale. It will discuss how partnerships between statutory agencies and NGOs can benefit such initiatives, and how giving ownership of activities to communities can empower them to start campaigns that run beyond the week and engender tangible change to road safety in their area. Case studies will be presented from New Zealand and the UK, along with key points for organizing a successful week and developing effective partnerships in your organisation, region or country.

Presentation components

Background

This section of the presentation will provide a brief background on Brake, the road safety charity and the work the organisation does to prevent road deaths and injuries and support families who have been bereaved in road crashes.

Road Safety Week background

The aim of Road Safety Week is to raise awareness of the part we all play in making our roads safer, through a national media campaign, and by supporting communities, schools and organisations to run road safety activities at a grassroots level, by providing resources and activity ideas. Road Safety Week is an umbrella project, designed to attract involvement from a wide range of stakeholders to stimulate the promotion of road safety awareness year-round.

Brake developed Road Safety Week UK in 1997, and Road Safety Week New Zealand in 2012. Brake also developed the roadsafetyweek.org website, to provide other individuals and organisations with ideas and resources for developing their own Road Safety Week, whether at local or national level.

Partnership working

Though Brake coordinates Road Safety Week, the organisation works in partnership with a number of other agencies and organisations to promote the week, encourage people to sign up and take part, and deliver a media campaign. This section of the presentation will look at the benefits and challenges of such partnerships and how effective relationships can help to build a successful initiative.

Grassroots activists

A key element of Road Safety Week is engaging communities at a grassroots level, and giving them ownership of their activities. This enables them to focus their attention on the issues that matter to them, to raise awareness and campaign for change, whether those issues are within their own organisation or the wider community. It also encourages communities to extend their activities and campaigns beyond Road Safety Week and work to achieve meaningful change in their area, whether that is campaigning for a lower speed limit, encouraging more families to walk and cycle to school, or addressing road risk with at-work drivers.

This section of the presentation will explore how Brake and others engage individuals and organisations, and how that has encouraged grassroots activism, using information from Brake surveys and feedback evaluations, and case studies from further afield.

Case studies

Case studies will be presented throughout, primarily from New Zealand activities, with additional examples from the UK. These include how Brake works with national government agencies, the emergency services and other NGOs in NZ for a coordinated national Road Safety Week media campaign, and how Brake partners with local agencies in Auckland to engage schools and companies in Road Safety Week and to deliver grassroots road safety activities.

Setting up an initiative such as Road Safety Week

The presentation will conclude by providing information and links to resources to assist with coordinating a Road Safety Week or similar activity.