



ROAD SAFETY INFORMATION SHEET
CHILDREN'S SAFETY



Information Sheet 4
2012



Child Road Accidents

The National Road Safety Council (NRSC) has prepared this Road Safety Information Sheet with respect to children's safety. It is based on the most recently available accident data contained in its accident database (2006 and 2007), along with scientific fact and research from overseas that is applicable to PNG. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues related to child road accidents to the Government, the public and professionals working in areas that affect road safety and to identify possible ways to reduce the number of young people being killed and/or injured in PNG.

Between 2006 and 2007, 20% of road deaths involved children aged 15 years or younger. This is twice as high as elsewhere in the developed world.

Children get injured and/or killed in road accidents as both pedestrians and passengers in a motor vehicle. Education has a key part to play in improving child road safety.

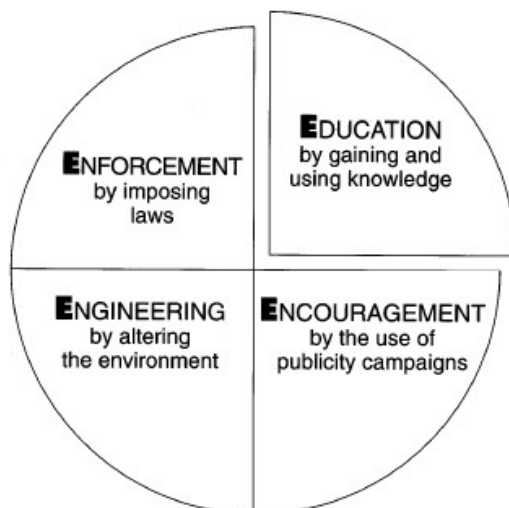
There are a number of reasons for children being more vulnerable than adults to road accidents, particularly as pedestrians:

- Children lack the skills and experience of safe road use.
- Children's observation and listening powers are not fully developed.
- Small bodies make them less likely to be seen by drivers.
- Children are more likely to have poor judgement when estimating speed and distance.
- Children have poor knowledge of traffic behavior.
- Children are often impulsive and unpredictable.
- Children often lack appropriate supervision.

2006 and 2007 Child Road Accident Data at a Glance

- 692 children aged 15 years or younger were killed or injured in a road crash during 2006 and 2007.
- 20% of road deaths involved children up to the age of 15 years.
- Approximately half of all children killed or injured in a road accident were pedestrians. This increases to 69% for road deaths alone. The remainder are typically passengers in a vehicle (rather than drivers given their age.)
- 36% of pedestrians killed in a road accident are aged 15 years or younger. Pedestrians under the age of 11 years are particularly at risk.
- 15% of children aged 15 years or younger that are injured in a road accident die. This compares with 10% for all casualties regardless of age.
- 42% of children aged 15 years or younger killed or injured in a road accident are female. This compares with 29% for all casualties regardless of age.

Figure 1.1 How Can Accidents be Prevented?



(Source: TRL. Overseas Road Note 17. Road Safety Education in Developing Countries - Guidelines for Good Practice in Primary Schools. 1997.)



Road Safety Education

As shown in Figure 1.1 overleaf, road safety can be improved through the 4E's: engineering, enforcement, encouragement and education.

Education is particularly important for children given that many of their attitudes and beliefs are developed in the early years of their life from their parents and carers. It is vital therefore that road safety be taught in schools as part of the curriculum.

In particular, children need to be taught how to walk along the road safely, how to use protected crossing points as well as how to cross when no facilities are provided, how to choose safe routes, such as to school, and have awareness of the road environment..



PRE-SCHOOL

Children at this age are too young to be responsible for their own safety. As such, they need to:

- Hold hands with older children or adults when near the road.
- Recognise that roads are dangerous places.
- Know that traffic may come from unexpected places.
- Know that they need to stop, look and listen before walking across the road.
- Walk only on footpaths or the edge of the road.
- Know the safest places to cross the road near home.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Children at this level are typically given more responsibility for their own safety. As such, they need to know:

- That accidents can lead to injury and death.
- How to get to and from school safely.
- The direction of traffic by sight and sound.
- About the dangers of not being seen or being able to see other traffic.
- How and where to play safely.
- That children should ideally be accompanied near busy roads.
- Where to stop, look and listen before crossing and to use the shortest distance when walking directly across the road.

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Children at this age are often expected to deal with traffic risks themselves. As such, they should know:

- To set a good example to other children, and subsequently identify and recommend safe places to play to other children.
- The need to be seen near and in traffic and judge hazards of stationary vehicles.
- Understand traffic lights, road signs and markings and signals given by drivers and the Police.
- Understand the concept of differing vehicle speeds by observation, and subsequently be able to judge speeds and distances

(Source: TRL. Overseas Road Note 17. Road Safety Education in Developing Countries - Guidelines for Good Practice in Primary Schools.)



Our vision:

To make PNG roads the safest in the Western Pacific

Be our partner ...

The NRSC is a statutory authority set up by the NRSC Act 1997 to coordinate, promote and report on road safety. This Information Sheet forms part of a series of background road safety documents aimed at improving road user awareness in PNG.

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