



For immediate release.

The Little Blue Dinosaur Foundation (LBD) expands its “Holiday Time: Slow Down, Kids Around” program to Bemm River, Victoria

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Child pedestrian and roadside safety advocates Michelle and David McLaughlin and their foundation, the Little Blue Dinosaur, are expanding the reach of their ‘Holiday Time’ signage program following a successful first year and support from local government.

The LBD is a foundation dedicated to the prevention of roadside child pedestrian accidents through community education and awareness, dedicated to the memory of Michelle and David’s son, Tom. Tom was the victim of roadside accident while on holidays with his family on the Central Coast of NSW in January 2014.

The “Holiday Time: Slow Down, Kids Around” campaign was developed in partnership with Gosford City Council, aiming to raise critical awareness of the importance of road safety for children in unfamiliar environments, particularly in holiday regions where infrastructure can be lacking.

“Children are in a highly excitable state on holidays and with the population spike in these areas during holiday periods, particularly over summer, the risk of accidents is increased. It is an unusually dangerous time for children on roads,” said Tom’s parents Michelle and David McLaughlin.

“We are so pleased that this year we are expanding to Victoria with Bemm River in the East Gippsland Council joining the LBD to make coastal holidays safer for our children,” said Mrs McLaughlin.

With the support of local council and the Bemm River Action Group (BRAG), signs will be erected in key tourist areas where the school holiday periods result in increased pedestrian foot traffic as well as an amplified number of vehicles in the local area.

“Last summer the program received an immense amount of support from both the Central Coast community and local politicians, with endorsements from Lucy Wicks, Deborah O’Neil and Lawrie McKinna as well as the NSW Police Traffic & Highway Patrol Command, Transport for NSW (TfNSW) and Hunter RMS,” said Michelle McLaughlin.

“Our expansion into Victoria is exciting for the foundation and children all around the state. Beginning with the beautiful Bemm River community in the East Gippsland region, the Little Blue Dinosaur is looking to expand across the Bass Coast by Easter 2016.”

“We are grateful to the Bemm River community for hosting our Victorian pilot program and applaud their efforts to be pro-active about children’s road safety”, Michelle McLaughlin explained.

“The signage program expansion is one part of the solution, but it is critical to talk to your children and remind them to be even more vigilant with their road safety when on holiday. Due to their cognitive limitations, always hold their hand when they are on or near roadways until at least age 10,” David McLaughlin added.

The foundation has recently included 3 more NSW councils to pilot its campaign, with the Little Blue Dinosaur Foundation hoping to extend the ‘Holiday Time- Slow Down Kids Around’ campaign to more Victorian council’s in 2016 and nationally in the future.

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