



LITTLE BLUE DINOSAUR
The Tom McLaughlin Memorial
Road Safety Foundation



MEDIA RELEASE

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Your children need your hand - Holiday road safety

The Police Association of NSW (PANSW) has partnered with the Little Blue Dinosaur Road Safety Foundation to remind the community to keep an extra eye out for children around roads these school holidays.

The Little Blue Dinosaur launched an online campaign this morning to remind all road users to exercise caution, as there will be large numbers of school children using our roadways over the next two weeks.

Sydney mother Michelle McLaughlin started the Little Blue Dinosaur Foundation after her four-year-old son Tom died in a pedestrian motor vehicle accident while on a family holiday on the Central Coast two years ago.

The campaign is targeting motorists to slow down and be aware of unpredictable children near roadways, whilst also reminding parents to hold hands with their children until they are at least 10 years old.

“Children are in a highly excitable state during the holidays and the population can spike dramatically in the state’s holiday regions, increasing the risks of an accident. It is an unusually dangerous time for children on roads,” said Tom’s mother, Michelle McLaughlin.

“Children under 12 have limited visual and cognitive abilities around roadways and are unable to accurately use sound as a measurement from moving objects, such as vehicles. Their lack of height is also a limitation in judging the constantly changing traffic environment.”

“As children are out of their regular routine and partaking in recreational activities, we must ensure there is a road safety discussion every time the family is using roads, driveways and car parks. A quiet street does not necessarily mean a safe street, so we must explain to our children that road play is never ok.”

“I want to stress to the community, parents and carers that we must hold our children’s hands when on or near a roadway until the age of ten, and closely supervise kids up to 12 years or older because they can’t yet identify safe places to cross the road or properly judge speed and distances.”

Police Association President, Scott Weber, said, “We can’t highlight enough the importance of parents and carers holding a child’s hand when on or near roads. Drivers also have a role to play in being extra vigilant and slowing down. The community as a whole must support safe driving.

“As police officers we see the carnage and the tragic waste of life often under horrific crash and road-side circumstances, seeing children is the worst - There is nothing more distressing for an officer or first responder.”

Media contact: Aaron Jones 0411 351 660