

Media Release

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STUDENTS HEAD TO SAFETY TOWN FOR LIFE-SAVING LESSONS

Transport for New South Wales has today launched an interactive website to help primary school students of all years learn vital road safety skills.

The new Safety Town features fun and engaging activities which deliver important messages about how to make safer decisions as a pedestrian, passenger or while riding a bike, scooter or skateboard.

“We understand the role education plays in developing the skills and attitudes children need to travel safely,” Centre for Road Safety Executive Director, Bernard Carlon said.

“With these new classroom activities, every primary school student in NSW can learn life-long road safety skills in an interesting and enjoyable way.”

Between 2011 and 2015, 37 children aged 5 to 12 were killed and a further 3149 injured on NSW roads. This includes 732 pedestrians, 2148 passengers and 239 cyclists.

“These are not just numbers. They are children’s lives which have ended prematurely or been changed forever. The ripple effect on a school community is devastating,” Mr Carlon said.

One activity on Safety Town was created with David and Michelle McLaughlin, who founded the Little Blue Dinosaur Foundation after the death of their four-year-old son. Tom was tragically hit by a car and killed while on holiday on the NSW Central Coast in January 2014.

Out and About with Sophie and Tom – Safe Holiday Adventures focuses on different road environments children and their families could encounter when they go on holiday. The activity was narrated by popular children’s performer, Justine Clarke.

“After we lost our precious Tom, we wanted to honour him by educating families and children about safety on and around roads. We are so pleased this initiative has been incorporated as a major part of the Safety Town resource,” said Mrs McLaughlin.

“We have to make road safety a daily topic of conversation, especially on holidays when children are in an excited state and are not familiar with their surroundings.”

“One of the most important messages is that we as parents and carers need to hold hands with children until they are 10, because they have limited cognitive abilities

around distance and speed and they are very unpredictable.”

Safety Town was first launched in 2014, with a focus on students in Years 5 and 6. The new website will now be available to all 500,000 students from Kindergarten to Year 6 in more than 2300 primary schools.

It is the first curriculum-based road safety education website in Australia and is the result of a 30-year partnership between the Centre for Road Safety, Department of Education, Catholic Education Commission NSW, Association of Independent Schools NSW and the Kids and Traffic Early Childhood Road Safety Education Program.

Safety Town is one of the initiatives helping Transport for NSW work towards a goal of zero deaths on our state's roads.

To view the new site, visit www.safetytown.com.au