

A letter to Early Childhood Education students from the *Kids and Traffic* team

The *Kids and Traffic* team is delighted at your interest in learning more about keeping young children safe in and around traffic. Some of you may also have chosen an assignment on road safety education.

To further your interest in road safety education or to help you refine the issues you want to cover in an assignment, you may find it helpful to:

- Explore our [Kids and Traffic](#) website to see the many ways in which our Program supports early childhood services throughout NSW. Also explore the RMS website [myRTA/myResources](#) for more resources that educators can use with young children and share with their families.
 - Base your road safety education resources or ideas on our *Kids and Traffic* Key Road Safety Messages that adults can share with young children. In this way, you can ensure that the responsibility for young children's safety rests solely with the adults in their lives. Check out our *Kids and Traffic* info sheet, 'Child development and road safety – **Why** young children are at risk around traffic' to find out why young children always need an adult's help in and around traffic. You can then share this with families.
 - Explore the website of the [Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority](#), ACECQA, and subscribe to their [free e-newsletters](#) to find out more and
- stay up to date about your responsibilities for keeping young children safe.
- Refer to essential early childhood documents to find out where road safety education fits in to their principles. These documents should be in your university or TAFE library but you can also access them online. For example,
 - [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia](#)
 - [Educators' Guide to the EYLF](#)
 - [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
 - [Guide to the National Quality Standard](#)[Note: the NQS is Schedule 1 of the Regulations].
 - Visit one or more local children's services, including those on your university or TAFE campuses. Children's services can be long day care centres, preschools, family day care schemes, occasional care centres or mobile services. Talk with educators about the way they keep young children safe at arrivals, departures and on excursions; how they work in partnership with families to keep young children safe; how they are responsive to the social and cultural backgrounds of families; and how they use our *Kids and Traffic* learning and teaching strategies, including *Kids and Traffic* resources, with their children and families.

- Reflect on the developmental changes in young children in their early years and the implications of these for families and caregivers. Young children are keen to be on the move, they love to explore their world and they want to be where the action is! Thus, the importance of **close and active supervision of young children** and the need for adults to be responsible for the safety of their young children cannot be overstated.
- Consider the road safety issues for children and families in your local area. How easy/difficult is it for families to get around your community as pedestrians? Consider footpaths, nature strips, stroller/wheelchair ramps, road crossings, driveways, car parks and any other places where vehicles may go. What challenges do families with young children face as they come and go from local services such as children's services, preschools, schools, parks, etc.? Consider various modes of transport such as walking or travelling by car or other vehicles, or by public transport.
- Consider the ways communities can support families in helping to keep their young children safe both on and off road, including play areas, parks, driveways, shopping centres and car parks.
- Talk with families and other adults about how to protect young children from driveway injury. Driveway safety is the responsibility of adults. Separating play areas from vehicle access can reduce

the risk and vehicle technology can help drivers detect objects – including children – near their vehicle but nothing can replace close adult supervision:

**Hold their hands or hold them close
to keep them safe!**

- Talk with families about the risks their children face as pedestrians, passengers and at play and ask them about the strategies they use to keep their children safe at home and when out and about.
- Talk with your lecturers about inviting a *Kids and Traffic* consultant to present road safety education workshops to their students. Our workshops are relevant to play, curriculum, management, health and guided practicum/work placement.

We hope these suggestions assist you in understanding the risks facing young children in the road traffic environment and further your aim of producing a thoughtful and comprehensive assignment. We wish you well in your studies and, once you graduate, we look forward to seeing you at one of the *Kids and Traffic* professional development workshops offered to early childhood educators, management, staff and families.

On behalf of the *Kids and Traffic* team,

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