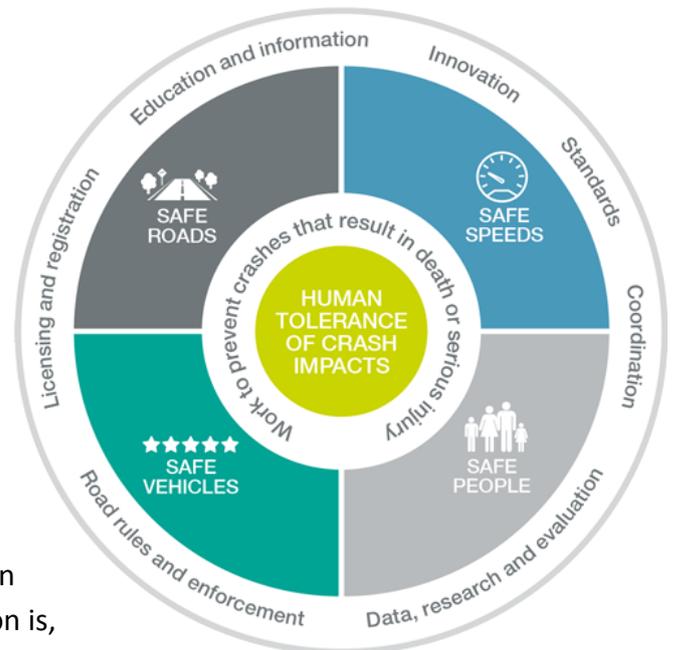


The role of road safety education in the Safe System

The Safe System approach to road safety acknowledges that the key components of the road system – road users, roads and roadsides, vehicles and travel speeds – all play a part in helping to prevent deaths and serious injuries.

The approach takes a holistic view of the road system and recognises the interaction between the key components of the system in contributing to casualties. It is underpinned by the principle that in a crash the human body will be impacted by forces that can result in death or serious injury. The road system, therefore, should be designed to accommodate for this human fragility along with human error. Road users also have a crucial role to play by ensuring their behaviour complies with legislation and road safety guidelines. Road safety education is, therefore, a crucial element of the Safe System.



Safe Systems model - National Road Safety Strategy
<http://roadsafety.gov.au/nrss/safe-system.aspx>

The *NSW Road Safety Strategy 2012-2021*¹ is underpinned by the Safe System approach and the goal of 'Working Towards Vision Zero'. The Strategy identifies children as at-risk road users and highlights road safety education as being a key to reducing casualties. The NSW School and Early Childhood Road Safety Education Programs provide families, teachers and schools with information, support, advice and resources to address the road safety issues commonly experienced by children in these age groups and their families. The Programs recognise that schools and early childhood services must work in partnership with families to ensure children and the adults in their lives behave safely in and around vehicles and roads.

The Programs have provided educational resources and professional development to teachers and early childhood educators throughout NSW for over thirty years. The Programs are a partnership between Transport for NSW and the Association of Independent Schools, the Catholic Education Commission, the Department of Education, and *Kids and Traffic*, the Early Childhood Road Safety Education Program at Macquarie University.



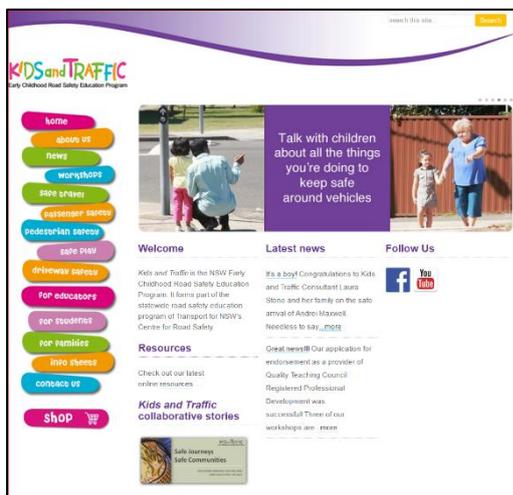
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Many of the teaching and learning experiences included in the Programs' suite of resources and professional development workshops support students' developing understandings of how the human body is impacted by involvement in a crash – a key underpinning principle of a Safe System approach. Students are not only engaged with learning **what** they need to do along with the adults in their lives to keep safe but also **why** they should adopt specific road safety behaviours and **how** these behaviours can prevent death or serious injury. These learning experiences acknowledge children as active participants in their road safety education and afford children considerable agency as they identify and analyse road safety issues and advocate for change.

The websites of the School and Early Childhood Road Safety Education Programs, *Kids and Traffic* and *Safety Town*, provide early childhood services and primary schools, teachers, educators, children and their families with interactive online tools to actively engage in road safety education.



The Programs encourage a collaborative approach to road safety education in which children, educators, families and communities all play a crucial role. This bioecological view² acknowledges children's place in the context of their families and broader communities and recognises that the interactions between these elements in children's lives can impact greatly on their safety. This collaborative approach to road safety education is, in fact, a system in itself which supports the Safe System approach and the goal of working 'Towards Zero'.

¹NSW Transport for NSW. (2012). *NSW Road Safety Strategy 2012-2021*.

http://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/downloads/road_safety_strategy.pdf

²Bronfenbrenner, U. & Morris, P. A. (1998). The ecology of developmental process. In W. Damon & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of Child Psychology, Vol. 1: Theoretical Models of Human Development* (5th edition, pp. 992-1028). New York: Wiley.



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