

Notes to the Editor:

The 'Back to School' campaign and other Road Safety Authority Educational Initiatives

Teachers are encouraged to register online for the RSA 'Back to School' Pack for Primary Schools, which contains:

- A high visibility vest for every child starting school in partnership with ESB Networks
- 'Going to School' leaflets for junior infants entering education. This is a parent's guide to getting children to school safely;
- A 'Safe Cross Code' promotional pack including a CD of the song and a poster with the words of the 'Safe Cross Code' song and dance to be taught in the classroom;
- The 'Educational News' newsletter;
- ESB Networks safety pack which is a fun, exciting and educational way for pupils from Infants to 6th Class to discover the benefits of electricity, while learning to be safe around it

The RSA also has a number of other road safety resources for teachers and students which aims to promote and encourage road safety among children aged five and under.

At primary level, 'Safe Cross Code', 'Street Smart', 'Be Safe', 'Let's Go', 'Seatbelt Sheriff' and 'Hi Glo Silver', teaches young road users how to use the roads safely.

At secondary level, there is the Junior Cycle resource entitled 'Streetwise' as well as 'Your Road to Safety' for Transition Year. The 'Let's Go' CD, which is a road safety resource for principals and teachers, will be delivered to every secondary school over the coming weeks.

The RSA's Nationwide Road Safety Education Service is available to visit schools to give a comprehensive road safety presentation to students which can be tailored to suit all class sizes, groups and ages. We tackle a range of topics on road safety including road safety at school, pedestrian and cycle safety, urban and rural transport issues, learning to drive and killer behaviours. This service is free of charge.

The RSA Shuttle, Rollover Simulator and 'Street Smart' will begin visiting schools nationwide at the start of the academic year. Since 2013, 36,943 schools have availed of these educational resources. `

'Back to School' advice

The RSA also has the following 'back to school' advice for parents, guardians and children:

Travelling by Car

- All children should be restrained when travelling in a car;
- Select a restraint that is based on your child's weight and height and is suitable for the type of car;
- Remember its safer if children travel in the rear of a car;
- Never leave children alone in a car.

Walking to School

- Small children should not cross roads alone. They cannot decide how far away a car is or how fast it is going;
- Walk the route to school with them in advance;

- Children walking on country roads should wear reflective armbands and bright clothing;
- If there is no footpath, walk on the right-hand side of the road facing oncoming traffic keeping as close as possible to the side of the road;
- Show your child how to cross the road by example. Choose safe places to cross and take time to explain why i.e. footbridges, zebra or pelican crossings, lollipop lady/man or junior school warden patrol.

Travelling by Bus

- Teach children to take special care getting on or off a bus or mini-bus;
- While waiting for a bus, children should stand well in off the road;
- Before crossing the road they should wait until the bus has moved off and they can see clearly in both directions;
- If seatbelts are fitted, they must be worn.

Cycle Safety

- Make sure they are highly visible by wearing a reflective belt and bright clothes and wear a bicycle safety helmet on all journeys;
- Check that the bicycle's brakes, lights, reflector and bell are in good working order.