# Supporting school issues through a whole-school approach

Travelling safely

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| Police district | School name | School demographics | Submitted by |
| Auckland City | Glenbrae School | Primary  Urban, multicultural  Decile band 1–3 | Const. J. Taylor  School Community Officer |

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| Summary | Increasing students’ personal safety when travelling in cars. |
| Issue | The school was concerned for the safety of students under 7 years of age who were being transported in cars without the appropriate car seat restraints. |
| Identification and prioritisation | The issue was identified by the school when the principal and office staff observed some families transporting their children on a daily basis without car seat restraints, older students not wearing their seat belts, and preschool children walking near moving cars.  In Term 1 of 2015, SCOs conducted two surveys outside the school, stopping vehicles to assess whether students were properly restrained.   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Time of survey  (2015) | No. of cars stopped | Students under 7 using appropriate car restraints | Students under 7 without appropriate car restraints | | February  March | 16  6 | 4  3 | 6  4 | | Average |  | 7/17 =41% | 10/17 = 59% |   It was noted that the cars in which students were not correctly restrained were generally late to school.  Many of the drivers were not aware of the law, and thought that children did not have to use a car child restraint after the age of 5. |
| Short-term goal | * By the end of Term 1, fewer students under the age of 7 will be travelling to and from school without car seat restraints. |
| Long-term goal | * By the end of Term 3, there will be no students under the age of 7 years travelling to and from school without appropriate car seat restraints. |
| Prevention activities | Activities that occurred within a whole-school approach included:  School ethos and environment   * The principal and the SCO considered support for families who may not be able to finance the correct restraints. * Teachers were supported by the SCO with car safety information during the [Road Safe](http://www.police.govt.nz/advice/personal-and-community-advice/school-portal/resources/travelling-safely/road-safety) lessons in Term 1. A number of students under the age of 7 identified that they did not have an appropriate car restraint. The teacher discussed this with the parents at a later time. * The SCO arranged with a lead teacher for the older students (years 7 and 8) to create artwork to emphasis the importance of safety in vehicles, including child restraints and seat belts. * The junior students made a short video clip on how to keep themselves safe on the road and how to stay safe.   Community connections   * The drivers who were stopped during the surveys were asked about their knowledge of the child restraint law, and also provided with a brochure on child restraints published by the New Zealand Transport Agency. * The principal and the SCO worked jointly on this intervention. * At one of the monthly parent meetings the SCO spoke on the results of the surveys and explained the law on child restraints. The SCO also showed several examples of more affordable car restraints and provided the NZTA brochure. * Information was provided in the school newsletter to target more parents.   Curriculum teaching and learning   * Years 1–3 students participated in [Road Safe](http://www.police.govt.nz/advice/personal-and-community-advice/school-portal/resources/travelling-safely/road-safety) lessons with their teachers and the SCO. This included education on the law about child restraints and what students can do when travelling in a car to be responsible for themselves. * Years 7–8 students created artwork to emphasise the importance of safety in vehicles, including the use of child restraints and seat belts. * Years 4–6 students received a talk from the SCO on travelling safely. They discussed the need to ensure their younger siblings were properly restrained in appropriate car seats while travelling, and to remind their parents of the law. |
| Impact | **Short-term goal**   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Time of survey  (2015) | No. of cars stopped | Students under 7 using appropriate car restraints | Students under 7 without appropriate car restraints | | End of Term 1 | 4 | 2 | 4 | | Total |  | 33% | 67% |   It was noted that one family in particular was constantly breaching the law, with two children not being lawfully restrained in the car.  The short-term goal was not achieved.  **Long-term goal**   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Time of survey  (2015) | No. of cars stopped | Students under 7 using appropriate car restraints | Students under 7 without appropriate car restraints | | May  June  September  November | 5  5  5  5 | 6  4  2  1 | 3  3  3  2 | | Total |  | 13/24 = 54% | 11/24 = 46% |   While the percentage of students using in appropriate car restraints increased (from 41% to 54%), it was still a long way from 100%.  The family who had been previously noted regularly breaching the law were observed on the last three surveys to have their two children properly restrained. |
| Next steps | Teachers continue being supported with the car safety lessons. The school can change its policy on car seats in cars transporting the students. |
| Obstacles | There were challenges in explaining the law to families for whom English is a second language.  Communicating with all parents/caregivers was an obstacle, as not all parents attend parent meetings, read the newsletters, or attend three-way conferences with the teacher and their children.  One parent thought that they were being picked on outside the school, and that the SCO should not be speaking with them in front of their children. |
| Improvements | The school will develop creative ways to ensure that all parents/caregivers and drivers are educated about the law on children under the age of 7 using a car restraint.  A number of organisations will be approached to sponsors car restraints for the school.  A community day on car safety will be held to engage the whole school community, including activities such as "Clicky Ricky", Plunket education and the Road Policing Team. |
| Conclusion | The school was pleased to partner with Police in this intervention to create an awareness of safety for their students when travelling in vehicles. |