

CELEBRATING ROAD SAFETY

AN INNOVATIVE ROAD SAFETY EDUCATIONAL SESSION HAS VICTORIAN PRESCHOOLERS ON TRACK TO BECOMING SAFER ROAD USERS, WRITES JANINE SIM-JONES.

Preschoolers are helping blow out the candles at birthday parties around Victoria and learning important road safety messages in the process.

Children at funded four-year-old kindergarten programs around the state are receiving ThingleToodle education sessions as part of the Starting Out Safely program delivered by Kindergarten Parents Victoria on behalf of VicRoads.

The ThingleToodle education sessions, led by presenter Professor Eric (a) Speriment, feature educational songs and activities to support children's learning about road safety.

The sessions culminate in the children teaching ThingleToodle important road safety messages before singing *Happy Birthday* and helping him blow out the candle on his fourth birthday cake.

Kindergarten Parents Victoria chief executive officer Emma King says the Starting Out Safely program encourages

children, educators, parents and carers to work together to guide children's learning in being and becoming safe and independent road users.

"The program also aims to encourage parents and carers to act as role models in road safety and to supervise children effectively in and near traffic," she says.

VicRoads has engaged KPV, in collaboration with the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare and *fka* Children's Services, to deliver the Starting Out Safely program across Victoria.

Starting Out Safely includes:

- early childhood road safety education advocacy
- ThingleToodle education sessions and activities
- professional development for early childhood educators
- child restraint education, including culturally and linguistically diverse communities.



Starting Out Safely

Since commencing delivery of the Starting Out Safely program last year, Kindergarten Parents Victoria has redeveloped the education sessions featuring ThingleToodle to reflect the new National Quality Framework for Early Childhood.

The ThingleToodle education session is designed to complement a service's road safety education program.

Sue McAllan, co-ordinator of Box Hill Early Learning Childcare Centre and Kindergarten, says the children learned a lot from the visit.

"The next day the children were saying, 'you must hold hands' and 'you cross the road with your mum and dad'.

"Also the children were continually role playing crossing the road safely and we in fact have now made a zebra crossing for them."

Bianca Manariti, a kindergarten teacher at YMCA Truganina Community Hub, says she received 'amazing feedback' from her service's ThingleToodle session.

"The children were engaged and entertained," she says. "The pre-visit information was fantastic and it prepared the group of children well. They were extremely excited and thrilled to have the visit."

To schedule a ThingleToodle education session at your funded kindergarten program contact KPV's road safety education team at rse@kpv.org.au

ThingleToodle's road safety education messages

Hold hands with an adult near roads

Use a child restraint or booster seat

Use the safety door (rear passenger kerbside door)

Stop, look, listen and think

Always wear a helmet when using a wheeled toy





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