



Starting Out Safely

Starting Out Safely Road Safety Educator Resource

Learning about being safe starts early

Early childhood road safety education equips children to become safe and active participants in their communities, now and into the future. Early childhood road safety education is about educators working with children and their families to develop skills, behaviours and attitudes that assist children to be safer on our roads as passengers, pedestrians and users of bicycles/wheeled toys. To be effective, road safety education must be evidence-based, and match the child's stage of development and level of independence as a road user.

Road trauma is one of the leading causes of death among young Australians. In 2011, there were 61 deaths nationwide among children aged 0–14 years due to road transport incidents (incidents occurring on a public highway or street involving a moving vehicle such as a motor vehicle, bicycle or tram). Of these, 75% were passengers and a further 20% were pedestrians. Younger children aged 0–4 were 2.2 times more likely to be killed in a road transport accident than those aged 10–14¹.

Therefore, it is important that educators act strongly to help children learn about their own safety and the safety of others on the roads.

1 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). (2012). *A picture of Australia's children 2012* (Cat No. PHE 167). Canberra, Australia: Author.



The National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education

The National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education have been developed by early childhood education and road safety experts throughout Australia and New Zealand, to support evidence-based road safety education in early childhood settings. The eight practices are based on research and are strongly aligned with the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

The **Starting Out Safely Road Safety Educator Resource** brings to life the National Practices. The Educator Resource can assist early childhood educators to use the practices outlined in the EYLF to

implement effective and meaningful road safety education in their curriculum. The resource offers advice about how to explore road safety education through the use of effective pedagogical practices. It includes stories of practice, links to the EYLF and the National Quality Standard (NQS), and suggestions for taking action.

Who is the Educator Resource designed for?

The Educator Resource is designed for early childhood educators (including tertiary students) working with young children and their families in early childhood settings.

How can the Educator Resource be used?

The Educator Resource consists of eight sections, reflecting the National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education. The resource can be read in any order and used individually to address specific safety issues or concerns raised by children, families or educators. It can also be read as a whole to address road safety education across the program.

When using this resource, educators are strongly encouraged to consider the local environment, children and families' experiences, their understanding of road safety and any road safety issues specific to their neighbourhood or community.

The reflection questions can be used in conjunction with this resource, and may be a helpful way to stimulate discussion at a staff meeting about how road safety education might look at your service.

The eight resource components are listed in the table on the right and available for download at: www.roadsafetyeducation.vic.gov.au.

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National Practice: Holistic approaches

Recognise that children's learning is integrated and interconnected when making curriculum decisions about road safety education.

National Practice: Responsiveness to children

Deliver road safety education which is responsive to individual children and extends children's strengths, knowledge and interests.

National Practice: Learning through play

Through play-based learning seek opportunities to address road safety in a way that expands children's thinking and encourages problem solving.

National Practice: Intentional teaching

Engage in intentional teaching which extends and expands children's learning about road safety.

National Practice: Learning environments

Provide opportunities in the learning environment, including the local community, for safe and meaningful interaction with children, parents and carers about road safety.

National Practice: Cultural competence

Implement road safety education that is culturally relevant for the diversity of children, their families and the community.

National Practice: Continuity of learning and transitions

Use the opportunity of transitions, in active partnership with children, families and the local community, for road safety education.

National Practice: Assessment for learning

Together with children and families, reflect on each child's learning and application of road safety to plan for future learning.

Reflection questions

You might consider the following questions as you read the Educator Resource to help you recognise implications for your practice.

- What is your understanding of road safety education? How have you come to this understanding?
- How do you currently implement road safety education in the program? As a regular part of the program? A week here and there? When an issue arises? How have you come to do things this way?
- What are the road safety questions, concerns or issues in your community? What do you know about these?
- What are the experiences, understandings and interest in road safety of the families in your service? Why might this be the case? Are your concerns the same as the families' concerns?
- Are there any cultural factors that might affect the way road safety education is understood by children and their families in your setting? If so, what are these factors?
- What road safety education practices might be useful to utilise in your setting?
- How and when do you communicate with families regarding road safety education?