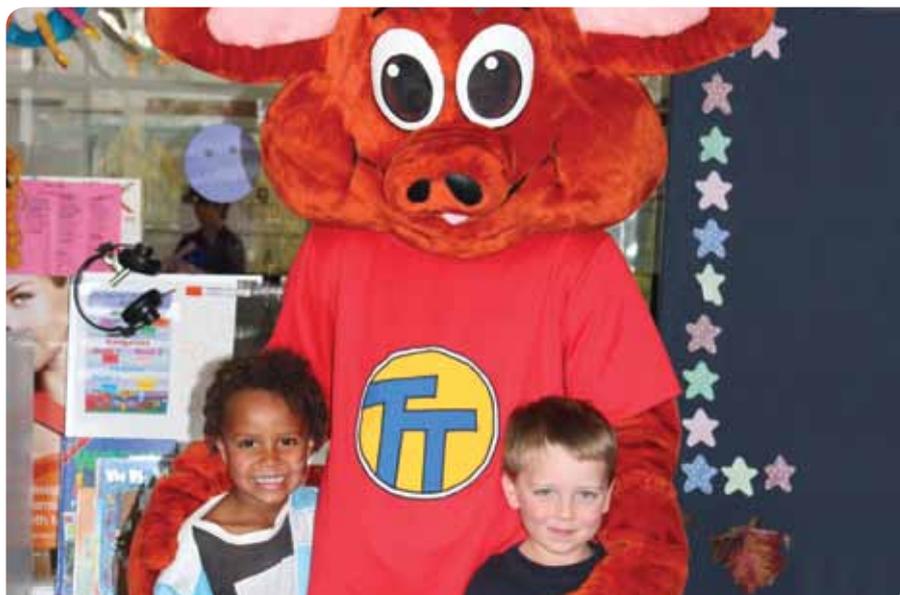


# ALL ROADS LEAD TO SAFETY AT BENDIGO KINDERGARTEN



**At Golden Square Kindergarten, the bicycle track is rubberised but every rider of a three-wheeler must wear a helmet. Inside, the play car might be a cardboard box, but it has keys and a makeshift seatbelt and someone pushing from behind who can explain why seatbelts keep us safe.**

Road safety is such an integral part of the learning at the Bendigo kindergarten that it has been recognised by VicRoads in the recent Traffic Safety Education Awards night, hosted by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Emma Clarkson, Senior Project Manager – Road Safety Education at VicRoads, said the kindergarten won the VicRoads Starting Out Safely Award because its program is comprehensive, links clearly with the Early Years Learning Framework and has been reinforced by the use of Starting Out Safely road safety education resources.

She particularly likes that parents have been involved because “research shows that children learn primarily by experience and their learning is enhanced by adult involvement.”

Carol O’Bree, Director of Golden Square Kindergarten, says involving parents has always been a big part of the kindergarten’s philosophy and is particularly important when it comes to road safety.

“One of the first things we do is talk together about holding hands. We paint a child’s hand and a parent’s hand and put them next to one another and we talk about how you hold a grown up’s hand. We’re not just passing on the message to the kids, we’re passing it on to the parents.”

On average, each year seven children aged 0 to 5 years old are killed and 77 are seriously injured on Victorian roads (VicRoads Road Crash Information System, 2007–2011 data).

Preschoolers are at an age where their peripheral vision is still developing and they are learning to judge speed and distance. That’s why road safety education is so important for young children and their parents and carers.

We discuss other road safety concepts with the children such as the importance of wearing bike helmets to protect their heads and using the safety door in the car, the rear kerbside door, away from traffic.

As educators, it was satisfying to see how much the children had learned when they were able to teach ThingleToodle important road safety messages during his visit as part of the Starting Out Safely program delivered by Early Learning Association Australia.

## WANT TO WIN ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION RESOURCES TO THE VALUE OF \$500?

Early childhood educators working with children from birth to six years can apply for the 2013 Starting Out Safely Award.

The focus of this year’s Starting Out Safely Award is:

*The National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education – bringing the Practices to life.*

Applying for this Award is easy!

Prepare a one page submission which relates to the theme. Your submission may highlight how your service embeds the National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education. You can focus on one Practice or several.

To learn more about the National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education, please visit [www.vicroads.vic.gov.au](http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au) and search for ‘early childhood national practices.’

Make sure your submission includes all your contact details. Email your submission to [emma.clarkson@roads.vic.gov.au](mailto:emma.clarkson@roads.vic.gov.au) by Friday 3 May 2013.

The winner will receive road safety education resources (nominated by the centre) to the value of \$500 (excluding GST).

The 2013 RSE Awards will be presented on Friday 24 May 2013 during the Victorian Traffic Safety Education Conference and dinner. If a rural applicant is successful, travel and accommodation costs will be covered by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.