

Effective Ways of Engaging Parents/Caregivers in their Children's Road Safety Education



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Introduction

- Parents worry about how to teach their children road safety (Alexander, Bartley, & Davern, 2017; Pfeffer & Tabibi, 2016).
- Nearly **half** of all primary school children (6-11 years-old) had not received road safety education in 2019 (RoSPA, 2019).
- Parents feel they are **best suited** to teach their children road safety (Muir et al., 2017; Pfeffer & Tabibi, 2016) .
- Few initiatives are directed at parents, despite evidence which shows parents are **significant role models** of road safety behaviour - CAPT.
- Road safety initiatives targeting parents have a positive impact on road safety knowledge and behaviour (O'Toole & Christie, 2018).
- The role of parents in children's pedestrian safety education has been neglected, even though children are most vulnerable as pedestrians (O'Toole & Christie, 2018).

Study

- **Aim:** to identify effective methods of engaging with parents, especially parents from deprived and ethnic minority backgrounds.
- Online survey of road safety initiatives across the UK:
 - 50 respondents representing 41 different local authorities.
 - 10 initiatives were followed-up with via a phone, resulting in the selection of 3 initiatives.



Study

- ***Initiative One:***

- Children with SEN – primary and secondary school.
- Four mornings (2 hours each).
- Independent Travel - children and parents practice crossing the road, travelling on the bus, stranger danger and dog safety.

- ***Initiative Two:***

- Children in reception (4-5 years-old).
- Carried out at school and lasts 50 minutes.
- A parent talk on road safety and car seats, a short road safety walk and a child talk at the end.

- ***Initiative Three:***

- Parent-child play sessions (birth – 2 years-old).
- Child activities themed around road safety.
- Attended by fire service, bike store owners, and crossing patrol officers.

Study

- 35 parents/caregivers were interviewed (35% response rate):
 - 7 from I1
 - 25 from I2
 - 6 from I3
- 9 practitioners were interviewed:
 - 2 from I1
 - 3 from I2
 - 4 from I3
- Thematic analysis of interviews were carried out.

Recommendations

- Work *collaboratively* to recruit parents.
- *Clear* course objectives may encourage greater participation.
- Build a *relationship* with parents.
- *Siblings* should be encouraged to attend road safety education.
- Ensure that road safety education is *accessible*.
- Road safety education could be *embedded* in parent's regular activities.

Recommendations

- Involve the *wider family* in road safety education.
- Deliver road safety education in *collaboration* with a range of partners.
- *Engage* children to *engage* parents.
- Incorporate activities that parents can *embed* into their routines with children.
- Practitioners delivering road safety education need to be *flexible* and *adaptive* in their approach.
- Providing *resources* encourages continued parent engagement in road safety education.