



KAROLINSKA INSTITUTET  
Department of Public Health Sciences  
Division of Social Medicine



WHO COLLABORATING  
CENTRE  
ON  
COMMUNITY SAFETY PROMOTION

## SAFE COMMUNITY WEEKLY NEWS

NO. 34

October 2003

\*\*\*\*\* LETTER FROM THE EDITOR\*\*\*\*\*

Welcome to the thirty-fourth issue of Safe Community Weekly News, the electronic Safe Community Weekly News is edited by the Norwegian Safety Promotion Centre—a WHO CC Affiliated Safe Community Support Centre on behalf of Safe Communities Network.

### WHAT IS NEW AT SAFE COMMUNITIES?

In this issue:

**SAFETY WEEK:** Elderly Safety Week, Fredrikstad, Norway.

**PROGRAM:** Traffic Safety Training in pre-school level, Iceland.

**WEBSITE:** Toowoomba Safe Community, Australia.

\*\*\*\*\*



### Elderly Safety Week 2003, Fredrikstad, Norway

2<sup>nd</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> October 2003

From 2<sup>nd</sup> – to 10<sup>th</sup> October more than 20 safety promotion activities took place in Fredrikstad. The main Public health actors in Fredrikstad took part in arranging “Elderly safety week”. The aim of the Safety Week was to focus more on specific activities related to the individuals ability to can carry out prevention of injuries and fire accidents activities in their own homes.

The physical activities for elderly have many positive health effects in addition to reducing fall accidents among elderly. Teaching how to walk with sticks, demonstration of safety devices, showing fire prevention videos, and senior dance were some of the activities in the Elderly Safety Week.



The Safety week were organised by the Fredrikstad municipality and voluntary Centre with some economical support from a Public Health Program in Østfold County in Norway.

For more information contact: Line Ø. Angeloff, . Email: [loan@fredrikstad.kommune.no](mailto:loan@fredrikstad.kommune.no)  
Fredrikstad Kommune, Plan- og Miljøseksjonen, Pb. 1405, 1602 Fredrikstad

# Children and the Road Traffic Authority, Iceland

## Traffic safety training at the Pre-School level The Traffic Safety School “Young Pedestrians”

The Traffic Safety School is the joint project of the Road Traffic Authority and all the local authorities in Iceland. All children aged from 3 to 7 automatically become pupils of the traffic school in the year when they reach three years of age, and from then on they will receive the school's education material four to six times a year by post free of charge until they are seven years old. Currently, the school's educational matter consists mostly of storybooks and audio books. In addition, the children are sent a colouring book, playing cards and a birthday greeting card. The parents receive special parental letters which provide information on child development and traffic safety training. Therefore, all the children recognize the heroes of the stories: Anna Lisa and Ari, Nina and Hjalti, not forgetting Slim Joe, and learn the traffic rules along with them.

### Traffic Safety School for 5-6 year olds

Each summer, the Road Traffic Authority, the Police, and the local authorities, offer courses in traffic safety for 5-6 year olds all over the country. There is good co-operation between the Pre-Schools and the Traffic Safety School, and playschool staff often accompany the children when their parents are busy at work. Each course takes two days, one hour at a time, and is free of charge for the parents. The courses are held on the premises of primary schools at 35-40 locations in the country. Each year about 6,000 children attend the Traffic Safety School, and also about 2,500 grown-ups (parents and/or playschool staff) accompanying the children.

The Traffic Safety School promotes the most important traffic safety rules. A puppet theatre is put on show, and short movie clips are shown, along with traffic photos from overheads. All the material is selected with the aim of preparing the children for taking part in street traffic and of making them aware of the dangers they may be facing in traffic. The educational material is, amongst other things, connected to the material, which the children are sent from the correspondence school “Young Pedestrians”. Parents are offered the opportunity to learn about children's unique position in traffic and to receive an educational pamphlet brought home by the child.

### The aim

The aim is to promote increased safety of children and to encourage the appropriate reactions to traffic.

The children are especially made aware of traffic rules and the importance of their using of safety equipment in traffic. By using material and teaching methods adapted to the children's developmental stage, the emphasis is on rules on safety equipment for children in automobiles, rules for pedestrians, bicycle riding and helmets, and various other matters which can increase children's skills and safety in traffic. At the same time, these lessons are supportive of any instructions the children may be given at home, and parents are given the opportunity to learn about children's special status in traffic.

### Traffic safety instruction in Pre-Schools

Pre-School is the first stage in children's education. The aim of traffic safety instruction in Pre-Schools is to make the children aware of street traffic and teach them traffic rules as soon as they are mature enough.

During play, in daily activities and on walking trips, emphasis is put on the importance of traffic culture in human relations. Efforts are made to increase children's understanding of the factors, which concern their safety in traffic, and they are encouraged to use safety equipment, which is intended for their use. The Road Traffic Authority distributes special traffic projects for playschool children and Pre-School staff is given the opportunity to receive various types of educational materials for children.

### Traffic safety instruction in primary schools

Traffic safety instruction is carried out in primary schools as part of studies covered by life skills. The Ministry of Education's school policy prescribes at least one lesson per week in life skills for pupils in the fourth to tenth grades. In addition, it is planned to integrate the contents of life skills into the general curriculum of the primary schools' first to third grades. The World Health Organization (WHO) has defined life skills as the ability to show positive behaviour and adaptability. The aim of traffic safety instruction is to make the pupils aware of what safe behaviour involves. This aim is consistent with the final goal of traffic safety instruction in primary schools.

### The final goal of traffic safety instruction in primary schools is that the pupils:

- ❖ are able to react correctly to all types of traffic and to heed traffic rules,
- ❖ show responsible behaviour in traffic,
- ❖ know how to avoid dangers in traffic and their close environment, and
- ❖ understand the necessity of good traffic culture and are enthusiastic about improving it.

**Interim goals of traffic instruction for 1st to 4th grades (6-9-year-olds) is that the pupils:**

- ❖ unconditionally adopt the use of safety equipment in traffic,
- ❖ know the traffic rules for pedestrians,
- ❖ have received instruction in how to use public transport,
- ❖ have trained in the use of a bicycle as a plaything on playgrounds and footpaths,
- ❖ have learned the most important traffic rules.

**Interim goals of traffic instruction for 5th to 7th grades (10-12-year-olds) is that the pupils:**

- ❖ have learned the most important traffic rules and recognize the most common traffic signs,
- ❖ adopt safe behaviour as bicycling pedestrians in traffic and when using skates, e.g. Rollerblades,
- ❖ have an idea of the fuel costs of vehicles and the different types of travelling,
- ❖ understand the value of using environmentally-friendly vehicles,
- ❖ always use safety equipment in traffic.

**Interim goals of traffic instruction for 8th to 10th grades (13-15-year-olds) is that the pupils:**

- ❖ are to be responsible for their own safety in traffic and have an understanding of the safety of others in traffic,
- ❖ have adapted to, and heed, traffic rules and recognize most signs giving orders, prohibition signs and instruction signs,
- ❖ are aware of dangers and the effect of speed in traffic,
- ❖ can determine their own life style in traffic,
- ❖ know the dangers that accompany all vehicles,
- ❖ have knowledge of the operational cost of a private car,
- ❖ have adapted a positive attitude toward traffic and traffic safety.

The Road Traffic Authority has overseen the preparation of educational material for primary schools in co-operation with the National Center for Educational Materials. The Road Traffic Authority, the Life-Saving Association Landsbjörg and the Occupational Safety and Health Authority hold spring courses for young people to make them aware of dangers that may accompany agricultural work, as many young people seek summer jobs at farms and assist the farmers in lighter farmwork. However, children are prohibited from driving tractors until they have reached 16 years of age.

**Surveys of the use of safety equipment in automobiles**

During the past four years, the Árvekni society, the Live-Saving Association Landsbjörg and the Icelandic Traffic Council have checked children's use of safety equipment in automobiles. In year 2000, safety equipment for children was checked in 31 local authority areas. This survey covered 1,840 children in 63 playschools. There has been a considerable increase in children's use of safety equipment, from 72% in 1996 to 90% in 2000. Purposeful instruction and the co-operation of numerous bodies has resulted in 9 out of every 10 Pre-School children using some kind of safety equipment in automobiles. There has been co-operation between Pre-School teachers, health-care nurses, and societies active in the prevention of accidents and the police.

**Main results of the check-up of children's use of safety equipment in 2003**

- 94% of children use some kind of safety equipment (green + yellow).
- 6% of children were unfastened in automobiles (red).
- 12% of Pre-School children used safety belts only (yellow).

**The use of safety equipment in automobiles is established by law in Iceland**

Art. 71 of the Traffic Code states: "Anyone who is seated in an automobiles that is equipped with a safety belt shall use the belt while the automobile is moving. Instead of a safety belt, or along with a safety belt, a child under 6 years of age shall use a child's safety seat, a safety pillow or another special type of safety and protective equipment intended for children. If no such equipment is to be found in an automobile, the child shall use a safety belt if possible." The same provision also states: "The driver of an automobile shall ensure that a passenger under 15 years of age uses the safety and protective equipment specified in pars. 1-4.

## Website: Toowoomba Safe Community launches new website



Cr Jim Parke, Chairman,  
Toowoomba Safe Community Task Force



Richard Nicols, Office of Fair Trading and Liquor Licencing;  
Dianne Thorley, Mayor of Toowoomba; Cr Jim Parke,  
Chairman, Toowoomba Safe Community Task Force.

The Toowoomba Safe Community Taskforce launched its new website and took its program to city residents in a meeting at the Wesley Hall.

The Safe Community Network is an initiative of the World Health Organisation (WHO) designed to increase the sense of safety and well-being among residents in communities around the world.

Speaking to a crowd of more than, Chairman of the Safe Toowoomba Task Force, Councillor Jim Parke, said the new website gave a valuable insight into the diverse community safety initiatives offered by different organisations in Toowoomba.

“Toowoomba, like many other communities, faces more and more difficult challenges in addressing community health and safety issues. “These challenges demand new ways of thinking and responding to combat increasingly complex problems,” Cr Parke said.

Across Australia, injury accounts for seven percent of deaths, 13 percent of hospitalisations and 24 percent of disability and the four most common types of injury are falls in older people, drowning, falls and poisoning in children.

In Toowoomba, the number of fall injuries is of great concern with 14 percent of the population over 65 suffering a fall at some stage, while the number of men aged 15-24 involved in car accidents is also an issue.

The Task Force is hoping to reduce the incidence of accident and injury within the community by increasing community awareness of the program and what it offers.

“Toowoomba has embraced the WHO’s ‘whole of community’ approach by forming the Task Force and developing a program to increase safety in Toowoomba, Cr Parke said.

The Task Force is made up organisations from government, industry and the community and works on a common approach to community education and capacity building structures. The Safe Toowoomba website forms an integral part of these strategies.

“The Safe Community taskforce has a commitment to community health and safety promotion and injury prevention, and I think that individuals from all walks of life will find this website, [www.safetoowoomba.com](http://www.safetoowoomba.com) , a useful resource that5 will help us achieve this,” Cr Parke said.

For further information about this release please contact: Councillor Jim Parke, Chairman, Toowoomba Safe Community Task Force, Ph 4688 6883 or mobile 0419 333 333

**Please send your activities, programs and reports via post/ e-mail to the editor: Yousif Rahim [rahim@norsafety.no](mailto:rahim@norsafety.no)**

\*\*\*\*\*  
Yousif Rahim  
Coordinator  
Norwegian Safety Promotion Centre  
Phone: +47 770 27 138 / +47 971 44 182  
Fax: +47 770 27 101  
E-mail: [rahim@norsafety.no](mailto:rahim@norsafety.no)  
<http://www.norsafety.no>  
<http://www.safecommunity.net/>  
\*\*\*\*\*