

overestimate children's skills in identifying safe and dangerous traffic situations.

Methods We selected 289 pupils from three primary schools in Styria covering urban and rural traffic areas. These children were subdivided into four age groups spanning one year each. The test series consisted of 4 different samples (a traffic mat, a simulation, photos and live action video) with 10 recognition tasks for each (5 safe, 5 unsafe traffic situations) and varying points of view (e. g. from an outside observer, a bird's eye view and from a child's point of view). Over two days, each test was carried out by briefed students and with standardised face-to-face interviews of approx. 20 minutes.

Results Only 75% of the questions were answered correctly, correlating with a clearly defined age trend: the younger the children, the more likely they were to base their assessment of the degree of danger on one single factor: the presence or absence of a vehicle on the road. The percentage of correct answers was higher in older children but all age groups had the most difficulty interpreting the sample from their own points of view. It was easier for children to identify the dangers from an outsider's perspective. In addition, the best performance was shown when using live-action videos.

Conclusions The younger the children, the more difficult it is for them to identify dangerous situations on the road. From the age of 10 onward they are able to interpret most traffic situations correctly, but fail 20% of the time. Hence parents should be informed of the benefit to accompanying their children in the first few weeks of each primary school year and advised not to overestimate their child's traffic-assessing skills.

For traffic safety education purposes it is essential to develop materials consisting of live-action videos and showing the same scenery from different points of view. That way, children will be able to look beyond an obstacle, to think ahead and increase their overall traffic safety.

544 CONTINUOUS APPROACH TO ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION

Natalia Agre. Non-Governmental Organisation "Road Safety Russia", Russia

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Background Road safety culture takes years to form; that is why it is necessary to start road safety education from the very first years of life. More importantly, it is only possible to reach its full potential with the provision of a continuous educational system enforced by the combination of infrastructural, legislative and law enforcement measures.

Objective To provide continuous road safety education with the help of outreach and educational activities.

To develop programs accompanying road users from their early years to adulthood: trainings for parents in perinatal centres; interactive programs for kindergarteners and primary school students; educational classes for middle and high school students; highlighting the importance of road safety for driving school students; reminding adults of their responsibility towards the safety of children.

To bring road safety to the top of the priority list concerning knowledge and skills of vital importance taught to children from an early age.

Results Road Safety Russia campaigns combining interventions effective for various target audiences (children, adults, parents, drivers, passengers) has resulted in a steady decrease in road accident rates in Russia. A significant contribution was made to the fact of drivers and passengers buckling up, drivers sticking to the speed limits, children and their parents being more enthusiastic when it comes to road safety initiatives, constantly improving statistics on child restraint systems use.

Conclusions Continuous approach to education is crucial in the context of providing knowledge on road safety: a child that has always been seated in a child car seat, always used helmets when riding a bike, always crossed the road with their mother via a crosswalk will not risk their life and disregard road safety in their adulthood.

545 STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY ACTION TO REDUCE MOTORCYCLE ACCIDENTS IN DEZFUL, IRAN

¹Nastaran Keshavarz Moahmmadi, ²Maryam Mazaheri, ¹Shaid Behesti University of Medical Sciences, Iran; ²Dezful University of Medical Sciences, Iran

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Background Iran is among countries with highest road traffic injuries and mortality. Road traffic mortality is the second cause of death of Iranian population. The share of motorcycles in road injuries and mortalities varies in different cities, but it is highest (60 percent) in a southern city of Iran, Dezful.

Methods An action research project which is partly reported here was designed to strengthen community action to reduce road traffic accidents. Through many advocacy measures, a team including more than 25 public and private stakeholders was formed. By holding several meetings and also conducting complementary individual interviews and comprehensive content analysis, current situation, local determinants of the problem and most highly effective change strategies were determined. A 6 months educational campaign was developed. A valid developed questionnaire was used to measure individual determinates of unsafe motorcycle driving. Pretest and post test was conducted to evaluate the effect of campaign on the rate of motorcycle related accidents and level of change in individual determinants of unsafe driving.

Results Early analysis of formative research showed that absence of safety culture, hot and humid climate of the city and also narrow structure of the streets were among most important determinants of unsafe behaviour. Process evaluation showed that for the first time, such collaboration and intersectoral action has been formed at city level with effective participation of the community. The result of outcome evaluation, the rate of change in road traffic accidents and individual determinants would be reported in this presentation after final data analysis.

Conclusions Effectiveness and sustainability of success of any road safety intervention depends on deep and comprehensive understanding of local determinates of the problem, local solutions and assets and also the quality of community participation in the program.