

passengers than the boys and much less likely to be killed as drivers. As regards the type of road, in 2013 most youngster fatal road accidents occurred on rural roads. Finally, the 15–17 year olds are more likely to be killed in road accidents during spring and summer, as well as during weekends, than the whole population.

**Conclusions** The results of the analysis allow for an overall assessment of the youngsters safety level in the European road network in relation to the younger or older road users, providing thus useful support to decision makers working for the improvement of safety in the European road network.

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#### **AUTOMOBILE MANUFACTURERS, ADVERTISING AND TRAFFIC SAFETY: CASE STUDY FROM INDIA**

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**Background** The first crash tests of five brands of the most popular small cars from India were released by Global NCAP in early 2014 showing that very unsafe cars are being marketed in India. This prompted an in-depth look into the advertisements behind the vehicles sold in India and their role in promotion of safety features

**Methods** We surveyed the print advertisements and TV commercials for safety content, and the pricing policy for offering safety technology, of six major automobile manufacturers of India. The observations were coded on a numerical scale and graded based on the safety features advertised, along with the selling price at which these features are available.

**Results** For TV advertisements scores ranged from 0.83 to –1.3 (on a scale of +1 to –8). Similarly for print advertisements scores ranged from 1.5 to 0 (on a scale of +4 to –3). Mainly because features like airbags and ABS were not offered in the base model of vehicles under UD \$ 12000. These safety features were available in higher end models of the same vehicle usually bundled with high end trims which had a price difference of US \$ 1500–2000 from the base model. As a positive sign though most TV commercials showed adult passengers wearing seat belts and children were usually shown in the backseat.

**Conclusions** Our study show that at present the Indian manufacturers are not promoting safety issues or their safety technology in any significant manner in their print advertisements or TV commercials. When safety features are offered as options they force the consumer to spend more than US \$ 1500 extra. Reliable industry sources inform us that these features should not cost more than US \$ 250 or less. The Global NCAP results inform us in a graphic manner that very unsafe cars are being marketed in India in the knowledge of the manufacturers and government officials. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the Indian Government to announce strict crashworthiness standards for cars sold in India.

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#### **CHILD PEDESTRIANS' PERCEIVED RISK OF THE CROSSING PLACE**

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**Background** To decide whether to cross the road, one is first required to judge whether the crossing place is safe. Young

children have impoverished crossing skills manifested in lower awareness toward potential hazards, situation awareness and overall readiness for crossing. The aim of this study was to identify the environmental features that make children think a place is safe or dangerous for crossing.

**Methods** 24 children in three age categories (ages 7–8, 9–10, 11–13) and 12 adults viewed 41 still images of real-world roadside scenes on a wide screen, and were asked to rate each scene for safety of crossing as fast as possible using a slide bar (0–100). Safety evaluation and the time to decision were recorded. Each scenario was classified by the elements of the environment: the urban area it was located in (e.g., commercial, residential), crossing location, proximity to road features (e.g., junction), road type, number of lanes, and distractors in the environment.

**Results** Children in all age categories estimated crossing safety mainly by obvious conspicuous features, like presence of a crosswalk, which anchored their decision. They were indifferent to certain relevant factors (e.g., number of lanes). In contrary, adults seemed to base their decision more on higher order reasoning (e.g. the duration of exposure to danger derived from the number of lanes). In general, children felt less secure when coming to cross the road, and it took them longer to reach a decision on the crossing location's safety level. When the decision was made, answers were more diverse than for adults.

**Conclusions** Children and adults use different strategies to estimate the safety level of a certain place for crossing. It seems that adults relay more upon sophisticated decision making processes that improves with age and experience. In contrary, children, even as old as 13 years-old, often rely on the fact that a place is designed for crossing as a guaranty for their safety.

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#### **SAFE FOLLOWING DISTANCE? –DRIVER PERCEPTIONS TO HELP REDUCE REAR END ROAD CRASHES IN AUSTRALIA**

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**Background** To reduce road trauma we must better understand the factors contributing to crashes. In Queensland, Australia, rear end crashes are the 3rd leading crash type, with mild to serious injuries a likely outcome and whiplash a common injury occurrence. Road design, traffic congestion, and weather/road conditions have been implicated in rear end crashes. Human factors also play a key role, with the act of 'following too closely' being a major issue. Queensland legislation requires motorists to maintain a safe following distance between their vehicle and the one in front, although no specific information about this distance is prescribed by law for cars.

**Methods** To better understand perceptions of safe following distance, 495 licensed Queensland drivers (42% male; mean age 46.2 yrs; range 16–81 yrs) completed an online questionnaire.

**Results** Overall, there was wide variation in descriptions of safe following distance including time between vehicles (2 seconds = 21%; 3 seconds = 11%), distance between vehicles (metres = 11%; car lengths = 32%); and combinations of time and distance (1%). No one reported having received an infringement for not keeping a safe following distance, although 29% reported being involved in a crash where their vehicle hit the one