



ROAD SAFETY COLLABORATION DOCUMENT

The content in this collaboration document was worked on at the Timaru Road Safety Leadership Day - June 20th, 2022. The students that attended were from the South Canterbury District.



A massive thank you to the students that came along and worked hard getting their ideas, barriers, and solutions down, and presentations done!

Thank you to the Timaru District Council for sponsoring students to attend, organising the location, and our catering for the day. Thanks also the representatives that attended from Fire & Emergency NZ, New Zealand Police and WAVE. Your experience and knowledge was greatly appreciated by all.



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The road safety issue that the students that attended the Rolleston event focused on was; **Peer pressure & being a good passenger**. They spent time in small groups pulling this issue apart, and discussing a range of potential reasons, causes, barriers and solutions for this road safety issue. Below is some background information on this road safety issue, and following on from that you will see the collation of their work.

Peer pressure is something that most people experience throughout their life and dealing with it can be really tough. All of a sudden, you have to deal with the conflict of your friends wanting you to do something - you don't want to let them down. But, what if the thing they are asking you to do is something you don't actually want to do?

When it comes to road safety, peer pressure and road safety can go hand in hand. How many times have you or someone you know been asked to drive someone when on their restricted licence? Or drive them home after 10pm? Or just do something on the roads that you don't feel comfortable with?

Peer pressure when it comes to road safety is something that we need to keep talking about. Often, all we see is the situation at the end that results in an accident, a fine or something worse. So many people look at those situations from an outside perspective and think "how could they do that" or "I would never have done that!" but the reality is that it's not that simple!

There is often a lot of chat about saying no to taking passengers when you are on your restricted and this is really important to keep talking about. But, what if you do have passengers in your car and they are pressuring you to do things you don't want to do? Just because you have said yes to the ride doesn't necessarily mean that the pressures have disappeared.

If you are new to driving you will be hyper aware of how much information is coming at you constantly. You have to keep the car on the road, keep it in the correct lane, use your indicators, check your mirrors, monitor your speed, watch for pedestrians and cyclists, monitor the behaviour of other drivers...sounds pretty stressful doesn't it!? Now let's throw a group of friends in the car with you into the mix. Even without realising, this group of friends could become a complete distraction to the driver by chatting, changing the music, leaning over the passenger seat to talk to the people in the back etc.

If a mate has asked you for a ride last minute, it's probably already thrown you off. If you don't know where they live or the location they want to be dropped it could be stressful to try and drive and understand their directions at the same time.

Being a good passenger is an important part of road safety and keeping everyone safe. Passengers may also not realise that they are pressuring people into doing something that makes them uncomfortable. It could be asking your friend who is driving to 'put their foot down' because you are running late or asking them to change the song because you hate Justin Bieber. Taking time to set expectations before the driver and passenger get into the car are incredibly important for a safe journey.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=orX7ELeBiBw&ab_channel=ReachOut.comAustralia

<https://www.youthline.co.nz/peer-pressure.html>

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/timaru-herald/life/8800145/Practise-how-to-deal-with-peer-pressure1>

<https://www.sadd.org.nz/our-6-principles/no-distractions>

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/motoring/news/104964425/new-study-reveals-driving-is-anything-but-relaxing>

<https://www.aa.co.nz/cars/motoring-blog/dangers-of-distracted-driving/>

https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10289/13860/CharltonStarkey2020_CoDriving.pdf?isAllowed=y&sequence=2. (Read pg1 for an interesting Introduction, talking about the impacts of driving with passengers)

Q#1 Why do you think this issue of peer pressure exists in your region?

"You tend to want to look cool for your friends when you're a teenager, you tend to be more reckless."

GENERAL THOUGHTS

- Young drivers trying to look cool in front of their friends
- Young people being reckless
- Young people being impressionable
- Teenagers wanting to have more freedom
- Wanting to rebel against what you have been told
- People who want to do the right thing are often in the minority
- Showing off in front of peers
- Time pressure and trying to beat curfew
- Large amounts of teenagers taking passengers on their restricted
- Thrill seeking
- Friends asking for rides
- Lack of public transport
- Going somewhere together (practicality)
- No money
- Avoiding others making fun of you
- Listening to your peers in order to not stand out/fit in

The pressure is real

Social pressures are very real for teenagers and feeling like you fit in is incredibly important. That pressure tends to make you do things that you know you probably shouldn't do.

It's hard to say no

Teenagers naturally want to stick together. They want to go to the mall together, to sports and other activities. No one wants to be the one to separate the group.

KEY THEMES THAT CAME UP ABOUT WHY THIS IS AN ISSUE:



PEER PRESSURE

Not wanting to stand out too much, wanting to be seen as cool, and to fit in. It's hard to stand up to your mates and let them know you are feeling distracted (or not to take them in the first place).

PUBLIC TRANSPORT OFTEN ISN'T AVAILABLE

Young people want freedom and to stick together so when there are limited options rules tend to get broken.

THERE ARE LOTS OF DEMANDS

Often, young people are expected to be in many different places after school for extra curricular activities. When someone doesn't have good support systems they may rely on their friends for transport.

ENCOURAGING RISK TAKING

Even when young people are transporting their friends legally there can often be pressure from those passengers for the driver to act in a reckless fashion.

PASSENGERS ARE DISTRACTING

There is often little respect for the driver trying to be safe when rides are offered.

Q#2

What barriers have you seen that stop the community from making progress with this issue?
What barriers could continue to hinder your community making positive progress in this area?

GENERAL THOUGHTS

- Lack of public transport
- Lack of knowledge from parents
- Access to getting your license
- No knowledge regarding the repercussions
- Access to entertainment
- Lack of interest from other teenagers and people of the community
- Different attitudes towards driving
- People thinking its not that big of an issue compared to other issues
- People not taking it seriously
- Maturity levels
- Lack of education
- Lack of exposure chat
- It never came up until something serious happened
- Rebellion
- Parental influence
- Its the norm
- Smaller communities = less people on the roads
- Knowing where the speed cameras are
- The types of roads we have
- Busy roads during holiday season

KEY BARRIERS THAT STOP THE COMMUNITY MAKING PROGRESS ON PEER PRESSURE AND BEING A GOOD PASSENGER:

"IT WON'T HAPPEN TO ME"

As a general rule people think they can handle the risk, and that it is not an issue. People think it won't happen to them, especially if they have never witnessed/been involved in a crash. Young people tend to take an "out of sight, out of mind" approach with this issue.

YOUNG PEOPLE WANT TO HELP THEIR FRIENDS

Young people want to impress their friends, fit in and not seem uptight or strict. They want to be seen as the one who helps out the group by taking one for the team and giving people a lift. There are often limited options in smaller communities to get everyone to where they want to be and so car-pooling can be a good option. However, there seems to be a disconnect where once people are in the car there is no respect for the driver trying to concentrate. Passengers don't tend to recognise the dangers of driving and assume that the driver has got it covered. It is not in the norm for passengers to suggest turning the music down, lowering their voice or even not asking the driver lots of questions while they are trying to concentrate.

IT'S NOT REINFORCED AT HOME

Often, parents and caregivers lower the amount of support once a young person has obtained their license. However, there are still many lessons to be learned and many things to know how to cope with such as a car full of people and having the confidence to say no or to ask people to be respectful.

"It's never talked about until something bad happens."

Q#3

Do any of you have personal experiences related to this road safety issue that you feel comfortable sharing? Have you seen it happening or have experienced it?

"Many people know someone that has been involved in a preventable accident, or have been a part of one "

"I've seen so many stories in the news about people our age having accidents"

"We've all seen countless amounts of incidents"

Q#4

Do you think this issue impacts other communities around New Zealand (not just young people)? What other broader societal factors might contribute to this issue?

IMPACTS ON OTHERS?

- Yes, this issue definitely affects other communities
- Different communities are effected in different ways depending on the environment

BROADER SOCIETAL FACTORS?

- Accidents can become normalised in people's minds, especially if they happen all the time
- Crashes have a big impact on our smaller communities
- The social pressure/attitude that being safe is "uncool"

Q#5 What impacts (or consequences) does or can this issue have on young people or the wider community?

GENERAL THOUGHTS

- Decreased confidence in driving ability
- Increased occurrences of crashes
- People fall into the wrong crowds
- Gaining bad habits and forming a bad repetitive cycle
- People becoming desensitized to the consequences of peer pressure and no longer seeing it as a problem
- Emotional impacts - Timaru is a small place
- Role models - young ones look up to us and will end up repeating our silly mistakes
- Mental - loss of confidence due to witnessing accidents
- Lives lost effects the whole community
- Getting used to it as you grow up
- Disturbing the public
- Endangerment of pedestrians and other road users

"People being distracted on the roads can lead to them injuring themselves and others in the community"

Accidents in small communities affect us all. We all know each other and we all feel the impacts.

The more you give in to peer pressure the harder it is to say no.



Q#6

What could community partners such as Police, Councils/Road Safety Coordinators, FENZ etc, be doing to help combat this issue?

GENERAL THOUGHTS

- Raise more awareness of the consequences
- Be on the lookout at specific locations such as parties and other social gatherings
- More talks are needed
- More exposure
- Stricter rules and enforcement
- Consistency with enforcing the rules
- More advocacy
- Help us to get it taken more seriously, especially within schools
- We respect hearing from people in uniform, it makes us take it seriously
- More awareness - more signs
- Play to our emotions



Slides from student's presentation:

What does peer pressure actually mean?

The actual definition when you do something because you want to feel accepted and valued by your friends.

To expand on this in our context...

~ Fine line between peer pressure and encouragement

~ Relatable/link to driving

Q1 - Why do you think this specific road safety issue exists in your region and what are some of the potential reasons behind it?

SPEEDING
DRIVING WITH PASSENGERS

↑ Restriction = ↑ Want food freedom

↑ Pressure = More want to prove something

Small community = get round fast = escalate to other things

Culture ~ laid back ~ easy ozy

YOUR choice YOUR decision... at the end of the day

Q#7

What could SADD groups in this region do to help combat this issue?
(collaboratively or individually)

GENERAL THOUGHTS

- More regular talks and chats
- Be relatable - actually talk about current, big, well known issues
- Make your message have an impact
- Continue promoting in ways that engage teenagers and others around the community
- Approaching other schools and talking to those students/getting them involved
- Do more school activities
- Spread awareness and knowledge of dangerous driving by talking about it with your peers

The more we feel restricted, the more freedom we want. How can we give young people this freedom as well as keep them safe?

How can we help our peers to break out of dangerous social norms?

We often claim that everything will be fine because we "know the road." How do we challenge this?

