

**YOUNG DRIVER INITIATIVES**  
FAIRFIELD AND CAMPBELLTOWN

**Final Report**

PREPARED BY DR SARAH REDSHAW

PROJECT FUNDED BY  
UWS REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME 2004

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Young Driver Initiatives  
Fairfield and Campbelltown

Final Report

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In evaluating the Fairfield Traffic Awareness program and the Campbelltown U-Turn the Wheel program there were clearly some positive aspects to the programs. It is evident that contact with police and other relevant professionals such as local Road Safety Officers, driving instructors and representatives from interest groups such as the Motorcycle Council can be of benefit to young people when they are about to get their driving licenses and are beginning to travel in cars with friends. Contact with professionals was highly regarded by the young people on the whole.

The one factor that came out consistently in these evaluations is that the young people involved in the programs were keen to have opportunities for discussion but these programs afforded them little discussion time. Discussion, it needs to be made clear, is more than an opportunity to ask a question. It requires engagement with the participants and affords them an opportunity to think through the issues they are confronting in the program. Discussion can be more valuable in producing learning outcomes than delivery of information which is often given priority over thinking through dialogue.

While they were also concerned with community relationships, the programs evaluated were highly content focused, that is, they were concerned to get across information. They were subsequently less focused on the process and the learning of participants.

In the programs evaluated the emphasis was on awareness of motorised forms of transport and it is evident that awareness of pedestrians and cyclists could also be added. A close examination of the programs has shown that a great deal of care needs to be taken in delivering the right kinds of messages through such programs. Attitude is difficult to address and specialist attention is required in order to deal with attitude in useful and appropriate ways. Attitude is dealt with in other areas of public health such as sex and drug and alcohol education. Approaches used in these programs could be fruitfully taken up in road safety programs.

Evaluation tools and techniques also need further refinement and development for monitoring the intended purpose of such programs. The Harré, Foster and O'Neill (2005) Young Driver measure offers a potentially useful tool for measuring changes in the self-enhancement bias noted amongst young drivers in particular, however, to prove its effectiveness further data is needed. The measure has the potential to indicate changes in attitude of drivers as a more realistic assessment of driving abilities and tasks.

Evaluations can take into account the general and specific nature of qualitative responses, which are an important part of evaluation processes. To achieve more precise knowledge of how the relevant and central terms of road safety are being understood and interpreted qualitative research is necessary. Responses can then be gauged according to their level of precision, indicating more than a surface or general awareness of the main concepts at issue.

# AIMS SIGNIFICANCE

## BACKGROUND

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# AIMS SIGNIFICANCE BACKGROUND

There is considerable interest in the media, the general population and road safety research in developing strategies and programs which are effective in dealing with young driver attitudes and behaviour. A number of initiatives have been developed including the Ryda program at St Ives in conjunction with Rotary and the Rotary U-Turn the Wheel program which is being run around the state. Fairfield Council's Road Safety Officer Alison Mortimer has also developed a young driver initiative which is very popular with young males in the area.

There is a great deal of controversy over the effectiveness of training programs which involve driving demonstrations such as those held at the Police Driver Training facility in Goulburn and the Ryda program at St Ives. International literature has shown that young males in particular are likely to become over confident when they are given such training in car handling skills. A number of researchers have noted the short-lived nature of skill based driver awareness campaigns. (Barry Watson 1997, McDonald 1994). Further, it does not appear that inadequate vehicle handling skills is the major cause of road accidents (Christie 1995). As Watson states: "the emphasis on practical driving skills ignores the powerful influence that motivational and attitudinal factors can exert on driver behavior."

A recent review of road safety programs (Catchpole 2003) recommends that driver training in vehicle control skills should not be provided through schools, that advanced vehicle control skills should not be taught to learners and novice drivers, and that driver training in vehicle control skills should not be provided at specialist off-road facilities. The NSW RTA has taken the view that these types of programs should not be encouraged.

There is considerable need for independent and research based evaluation of existing programs and consideration of the literature dealing with attitudes in driver training and education. The programs evaluated in this project attempt to take attitude into account, though this requires careful examination to determine the effectiveness and best methods of addressing attitudes in driver training and education.

The following report presents the evaluations of the Fairfield Traffic Awareness and the Campbelltown U-Turn the Wheel programs carried out in 2004, and a forum for young drivers held in Campbelltown in conjunction with Campbelltown Council in 2005. It is hoped that this evaluation will make a contribution to the development and assessment of driver education programs taking into account the needs of young people, the ways in which they are addressed, and the opportunities for thought and interaction that are offered through education programs.

Thanks to all the young people who participated in the evaluation process and to Alison Mortimer, Fairfield Council, David Behrens, Campbelltown Council and Kim Leever, University of Western Sydney, Office of Regional Development, Rotary Campbelltown and Campbelltown Police Local Area Command.

# FAIRFIELD

## TRAFFIC AWARENESS



## PROGRAM EVALUATION

In June and October 2004 an evaluation of the Fairfield Traffic Awareness Program was carried out involving a pre and post test using the New Zealand Young Driver Questionnaire and a program evaluation filled out by participants at the end of the program. This report outlines the analysis of the evaluation data.

The program consists of four weekly sessions held in the evening between 6.00pm and 8.00pm at a local high school. Each week involves presentations by various presenters including Fairfield council, Youthsafe, the NSW Police Crash Investigation and Roadwhys, Precision Driver Training, Trent Driving School, the NSW Motorcycle Association, St Johns Ambulance and NRMA Insurance.

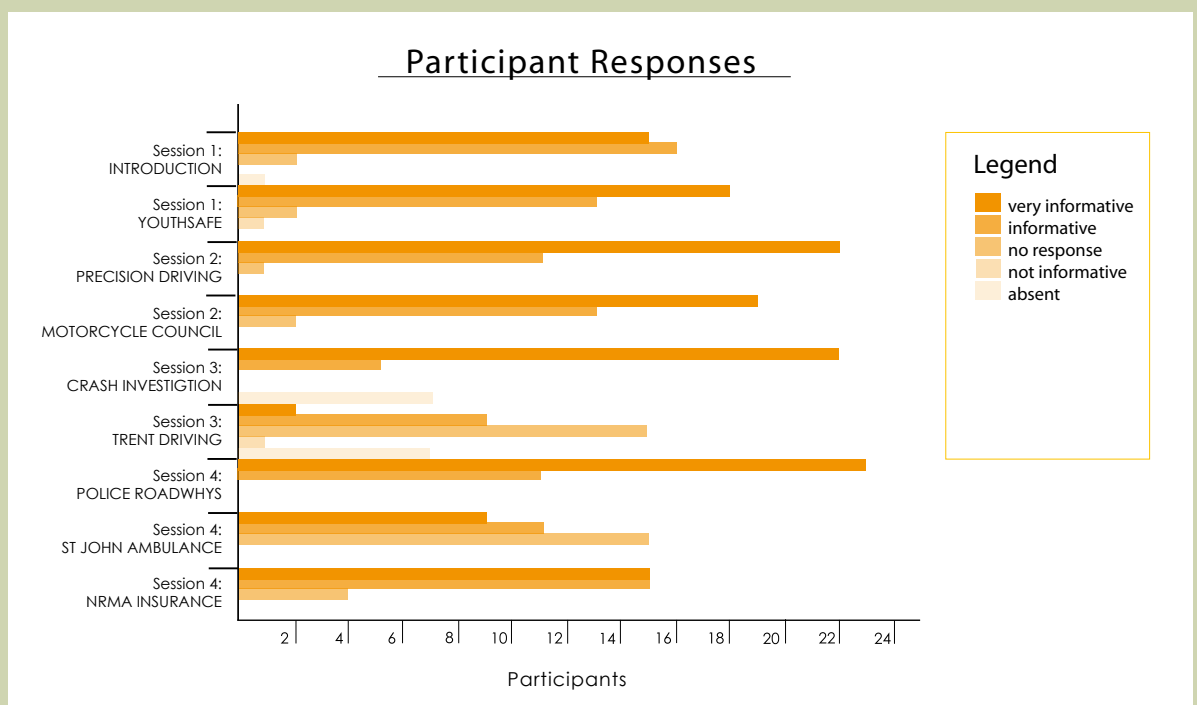
In addition to the participant evaluations the researcher attended all of the sessions in the June program and noted participant/presenter interaction and session content. Overall the program is well received with participants rating all sessions as either informative or very informative.

# PARTICIPANT EVALUATIONS

Data from thirty-four participant evaluations were entered. Eleven respondents were parents (over 25 years) and 19 were under 25 years (4 did not give their age). Ten young people had their learner’s permits, two did not have a licence as yet, 5 had red provisional licences and two had green provisional licences. Of those under 25 years, nine were 16 years, seven were 17 years, two were 18 years and one was 21 years.

Overall responses to each session were very positive. For each session participants were asked whether they thought it was “not informative”, “informative” or “very informative”. Only one respondent gave a “not informative” response to one session, the Trent Driving session. There were few absences from sessions amongst those who filled out the evaluation. One was absent from the first session and seven were absent from the third session.

The following table shows the responses to each session.



Participants were asked to rate each session according to the extent to which the session made participants think about their driving: “The session made me think about the way I drive”, and to rate the extent to which they considered they would be more safety conscious as a result of the session: “I will be more safety conscious as a driver as a result of the session”. Questions were rated on a scale of -3 to 3:

-3      -2      -1      0      1      2      3

Most of the scores were in the range of 2 with some rating sessions at 3 and some at 1. No participants gave a negative or zero score. Average scores varied from 2.1 to 2.6 and are shown in the following table.

	The session made me think about the way I drive	I will be a more safety conscious driver as a result of this session.
<b>Session 1:</b> Introduction Youthsafe	2.15	2.27
<b>Session 2:</b> Precision Driving Motorcycle Council	2.23	2.29
<b>Session 3:</b> Crash Investigation Trent Driving	2.63	2.66
<b>Session 4:</b> Police Roadwhys St John Ambulance NRMA Insurance	2.32	2.47

These scores show a very high rating though the differences in sessions can be seen from the averages with the most highly rated session being session 3 with Crash Investigation and Trent Driving. Session 4 was the next most highly rated session.

## COMMENTS

Participants were asked to comment on each of the sessions. They were asked: Did you gain something from each of the sessions? Please say what you gained or learned.

In general comments were very favourable and encouraging from a road safety perspective:

“The program in general was good and very informative and described many of the serious risks we take as drivers and how it is all a learning experience. Driving is a privilege and the program clearly displayed what can happen if you abuse that privilege.”

Many gave quite specific comments about the content of the session:

“How a little more acceleration can make all the difference with accidents and a few kms less is a lot safer.”

“Drive more carefully in the rain and leave a larger gap from the car in front. I learned how serious a crash can be, even if the car is going at a relatively slow speed.”

“I learnt more about the spacing between vehicles and why it is so important. Yes, how horrific a high speed crash can be, loss of lives, expensive. Driving school was well presented. Informative. The reflex machine was very interesting. We really don't realise how long it takes to stop.”

“L-Trent taught me about reaction times and braking. Also that a mobile phone can be lethal if unsecured and you hit/are in a crash.”

“Learning how many drinks will put an average person over the limit. Also, seeing the effects of drunk driving.”

“Yes, didn't know you had no insurance if you have been drinking. That when I drive I have to be named on the policy. Dial 12, protect eyes, mouth, hands.”

Other comments were more about general consequences:

“Seeing the consequences of taking unnecessary risks”

“The results of some of the risks we take and the consequences of our choices and who we put in danger.”

“I gained more experience and I became aware of the results of dangerous driving. I also learnt how easy it is for an accident to occur and the consequences.”

“I learnt that no matter what you do you are always at risk. To avoid risks you just have to be responsible and mature.”

“Yes, eye opener on how dangerous it is to ride a motorbike. How careful you should be on the road.”

“I know what happens when you speed, I know my limits when driving.”

A few were surprised by the idea that motorcycles are equal on the roads:

“You have to be aware of motorcycle riders because they are just like motor vehicle drivers, they are just as equal on the roads.”

A number of participants made comments regarding the impact of speed:

“The negative outcomes of speed, how much damage can be caused to the car and inhabitants from speed.”

The following comment indicates an awareness of needing to identify the possibility of crashing even when the driver is doing the right thing. Though this comment could indicate a bias in the respondent’s view of their own driving ability typical of young males (De Joy 1992), it could also indicate that there is an increased awareness of the driving environment.

“That it doesn’t have to be your fault to be involved in a serious crash, and to beware of all things around you when driving, not just what is in front of you.”

## YOUNG DRIVER QUESTIONNAIRE

A true evaluation needs to involve an objective measure of a pre and post test characteristic. The Young Driver Questionnaire from New Zealand (Harré 2005) was used to provide an objective measure. This questionnaire measures the optimism bias of young drivers. The aim is to investigate differences in pre and post test scores in optimism bias on test questions related to skill, risk, safety, experience and judgement. A reduction in the level of optimism as a result of the program would indicate a reasonably good level of success.

The only question on which there was a reduced score for participants in the Fairfield Traffic Awareness Program was related to judgement indicating that participants did not regard their judgement as drivers as better than other drivers their age. This is a positive result for the program.

One participant stated very well the implications of this change of view:

“That there is a lot to think about driving, it’s not so straightforward. Making decisions wisely is an important skill to have when driving.”

The test results need to be compared with other data from the same measure to see how participants compare overall with a larger sample. The number of participants who filled out the questionnaire is quite low for this kind of measure and so does not provide a significant result.

## OBSERVATIONS

The researcher attended the sessions in the June program and observed presenters and participant/presenter interaction. A few key points can be made as a result of these observations:

1. Bring together the main points of the sessions – perhaps the Road Safety RoOfficer could sum up the main messages at the end of each session. This would provide clarity and consistency to the program and the intended messages.
2. The most concerning session was the Precision Driving session where it was not clear what the safety messages were and there was some suggestion that speeding could be safe. It is understood that this session will no longer be part of the program.
3. Interaction – there was reasonable interaction between participants and presenters in the sessions, however the more young people are able to comment and ask and consider questions the more they are able to engage with and think through the content that is being presented to them. Discussion processes could also be used to give young people the opportunity to talk about their own questions and understandings amongst themselves with some guidance from facilitators. In the program attended by the researcher there were a number of parents attending and the parents tended to make more comments and respond to presenters than young people.
4. Some of the broader terms could be clarified such as what is meant by safety, risky driving and speeding. Clear definitions which include examples rather than a general “obey the rules” would be helpful to participants.
5. Participants responded reasonably well to the motorcycle awareness segment. This could be supplemented with pedestrian and cyclist awareness to improve the young people’s awareness of the road environment.

## CONCLUSIONS

The Fairfield Traffic Awareness program provides information relevant and important to young drivers. Building a relationship between young people and the local Road Safety Officer, Police and driving instructors is a significant aspect of the program and reinforcing safety messages in a friendly manner through such a program is important. It is evident from this program that it is very important that precise messages are delivered to young people in such a context. The aims and messages of the speakers needs to be clearly aligned with a safety message complying with the road rules. In this light the session with the speaker from Precision Driving was concerning and the involvement of the Eastern Creek Drag facility is difficult to assess through the means employed in this evaluation.

In discussions with the Road Safety Officer about the evaluation results it was apparent that the aim of the program could not be to influence attitudes but to be informative. This is considered an appropriate appraisal of expectations for the program in light of this evaluation and concerns about the negative impact on young drivers of inappropriate comments and influences and the difficulty of effectively addressing attitudes in such programs.

Participant comments which give a precise account of a road safety message are taken in this evaluation to be indicative of a positive learning result. Precise accounts show a more connected understanding than general comments that could be made on the basis of what is known about the expectations of drivers such as 'obey the road rules'. This suggests that programs such as Traffic Awareness need to aim for a precise and detailed understanding in practical terms of safety messages. This connects with research on safety campaigns which suggests campaigns need to contain a message which can be acted on and which gives a clear account of what the driver is expected to do such as 'slow down' if driving above the speed limit or the appropriate speed for the conditions.

Some of the issues raised and directions taken in this report require further research and clarification. For example, the benefit of off-road facilities in reducing risky behaviour on the roads requires assessment through some form of evaluation. The message that the intention is to reduce risky behaviour on public roads needs to be clearly and firmly emphasised for such facilities to have the desired result.

# Main Concerns

- \* Drink Driving / Drugs
- \* People Driving Bad (excess driving)
  - speeding
  - tailgating
  - Mobile Phones

\* Fatigue

**Top Concern - SPEEDING**

Cause - No stat, no control, everyone does it - Brake failure, usually coupled

# U-TURN THE WHEEL

Rotary Campbelltown Evaluation

March 2004  
& June 2004



## CAMPBELLTOWN EVALUATION

Year 11 students from schools in the Campbelltown area attended the U-Turn the Wheel program for 1 day at the local PCYC. They were rotated through a program of 4 sessions in groups of approximately 20. Students were asked a series of questions relating to each session of the day. The responses were marked on a scale from -3 to 3 where 3 was the most favourable response and -3 the least favourable. The questions were as follows:

1. I was happy with the way the session was run.
2. The information was relevant and useful for me.
3. The session made me think about the way I drive.
4. I will be a more safety conscious driver as a result of today.
5. I will be a more safety conscious passenger as a result of today.
6. Please say what you are likely to do differently as a result of today.
7. If you think the day could have been better please say how.

A total of 481 evaluations were entered for the March program and a total of 302 evaluations were entered for the June program. The results were summarised in order to best manage the data.

## MARCH 2004 PROGRAM

A summary of average scores for the March program for each question by session and school is shown in tables below. The average scores are arrived at by adding up all the responses to a question and then dividing by the number of responses.

Each question was scored with a maximum of 3. The results show that for each session the overall score was relatively high with Buying a Used car scoring the lowest average of 1.97 and U-Choose scoring highest at 2.43. Keeping Ls and Ps scored second highest at 2.37 and Other Road Users scored 2.07. Differences between the schools on overall score can also be noted with Eagle Vale showing the highest overall average score and Hurlstone the lowest.

Average scores indicate that for all students the session Keep Ls and Ps rated just below 2.5 for the first question, at 2.48. Since 3 is the highest score this is a very good response, showing that the participants were happy with the way the session was run. The session was regarded as relevant and informative with an overall score of 2.57 for question 2. Scores dropped for questions 3 and 4, showing that the session was possibly slightly less successful at making participants think about their driving or becoming a more safety conscious driver. Alternatively this could be a result of some of the participants not having a driving licence as yet. For question 5, being a more safety conscious passenger, scores were also slightly lower indicating students from some schools did not think the session would be as effective in changing how they behaved as passengers. Eagle Vale was the only school that resulted in an average score of 2.5 or above for each question.

Table 1 March scores for session Keep Ls and Ps – average scores

	Hurlstone	Broughton	Campbell-town	Eagle Vale	Inglburn	Overall
<b>Q 1:</b>	2.36	2.57	2.5	2.53	2.52	2.48
<b>Q 2:</b>	2.41	2.69	2.59	2.6	2.6	2.57
<b>Q 3:</b>	1.98	2.23	2.21	2.68	2.22	2.23
<b>Q 4:</b>	2.12	2.33	2.45	2.63	2.44	2.35
<b>Q 5:</b>	1.77	2.13	2.5	2.56	2.49	2.21
						<b>2.37</b>

For the session Buying a Used Car the overall score was the lowest of all sessions at 1.97. The score of 2.29 for the first question indicates the students were reasonably happy with the way the session was run and with the second question that it gave information that was relevant and useful the overall score was 2.45. Overall scores for the questions 3, 4 and 5 were all below 2 indicating that this session was not regarded as making students think as much about their driving, or being a more safety conscious driver or passenger, as much as the session Keep Ls and Ps. Eagle Vale was the only school in which the scores for these questions were above 2.

	Hurlstone	Broughton	Campbell-town	Eagle Vale	Inglburn	Overall
<b>Q 1:</b>	2.03	2.63	2.3	2.38	2.15	2.29
<b>Q 2:</b>	2.29	2.62	2.5	2.57	2.29	2.45
<b>Q 3:</b>	0.84	1.7	1.59	2.27	1.71	1.52
<b>Q 4:</b>	1.35	2.04	1.88	2.38	1.98	1.86
<b>Q 5:</b>	1.03	1.84	1.89	2.44	2.02	1.73
						<b>1.97</b>

The session Other Road Users had an overall score for all questions of just above 2. All questions rated slightly lower than for the Keep Ls and Ps session. Questions 3 and 5 rated lowest overall for this session indicating that the session was least successful at getting them to think more about their driving and being a more safety conscious passenger. Interestingly question 4, being a more safety conscious driver rated with the same result of 2.18 as question 2, that the information in the session was relevant and useful possibly indicating that a connection was made between taking into account other road users and safe driving.

	Hurlstone	Broughton	Campbell-town	Eagle Vale	Inglburn	Overall
<b>Q 1:</b>	1.98	1.97	2.11	2.33	2.33	2.11
<b>Q 2:</b>	2.04	1.97	2.22	2.45	2.45	2.18
<b>Q 3:</b>	1.93	1.88	1.88	2.07	2.25	1.98
<b>Q 4:</b>	2.1	1.98	2.2	2.43	2.36	2.18
<b>Q 5:</b>	1.6	1.77	1.86	2.38	2.22	1.9
						<b>2.07</b>

The session U-Turn U-Choose was the most successful of all the sessions for all questions. It showed a good score for the way the session was run, relevant and useful information as well as making students think about their driving, being a more safety conscious driver and being a more safety conscious passenger. None of the average scores for this session were below 2.2 and in some cases it scored above 2.5.

	Hurlstone	Broughton	Campbell-town	Eagle Vale	Inglburn	Overall
<b>Q 1:</b>	2.43	2.34	2.58	2.53	2.41	2.44
<b>Q 2:</b>	2.25	2.33	2.61	2.65	2.55	2.43
<b>Q 3:</b>	2.24	2.2	2.45	2.58	2.41	2.34
<b>Q 4:</b>	2.28	2.4	2.58	2.7	2.52	2.46
<b>Q 5:</b>	2.28	2.37	2.7	2.63	2.55	2.46
						<b>2.43</b>

## JUNE 2004 PROGRAM

In the June program the highest scoring session overall was Keep Ls and Ps, followed by Safe Celebrating. Other Road Users scored lowest with 2.03, with Buying a Used Car scoring 2.21. The lowest scoring school was James Meehan and the highest was Sarah Redfern.

Table 2 June scores overall for Keep Ls and Ps – average scores  
Keep Ls and Ps rated well for all questions with an overall score on each question of 2.3 to 2.4. Question 3, the session made students think about their driving rated lowest at 2.21.

	Redfern	Leumeah	St Patricks	Mount Carmel	James Meehan	Overall
<b>Q 1:</b>	2.43	2.18	2.33	2.36	2.25	2.33
<b>Q 2:</b>	2.52	2.24	2.41	2.46	2.25	2.41
<b>Q 3:</b>	2.13	2.35	2.1	2.26	2.33	2.21
<b>Q 4:</b>	2.52	2.5	2.47	2.44	2.17	2.44
<b>Q 5:</b>	2.36	2.32	2.47	2.38	2.35	2.4
	2.39	2.32	2.36	2.38	2.27	<b>2.36</b>

Safe Celebrating also scored lowest on question 3, made students think about their driving, with a score of 2.16. All other scores for each question were just above 2.3. The last question, being a more safety conscious passenger scored even higher with 2.5 indicating that this session was particularly successful at getting students to consider their safety as a passenger.

	Redfern	Leumeah	St Patricks	Mount Carmel	James Meehan	Overall
<b>Q 1:</b>	2.43	2.53	2.39	2.3	2.42	2.38
<b>Q 2:</b>	2.52	2.21	2.29	2.34	2.31	2.32
<b>Q 3:</b>	2.39	2.21	2.05	2.18	2.27	2.16
<b>Q 4:</b>	2.43	2.34	2.39	2.26	2.52	2.35
<b>Q 5:</b>	2.48	2.56	2.55	2.42	2.52	2.5
	2.45	2.37	2.33	2.3	2.41	<b>2.34</b>

The session Buying a Used Car rated reasonably well for questions 1 and 2 with scores of 2.34, happy with the way the session was run and 2.48, relevant and useful information. It scored only 2 for question 3, making the students think about their driving and 2.05 for question 5, being a more safety conscious passenger. Question 4, being a more safety conscious driver scored 2.19, a relatively low score also. Redfern High School however, rated all questions around or above 2.5.

	Redfern	Leumeah	St Patricks	Mount Carmel	James Meehan	Overall
<b>Q 1:</b>	2.74	2.03	2.51	2.31	1.78	2.34
<b>Q 2:</b>	2.65	2.3	2.69	2.44	1.91	2.48
<b>Q 3:</b>	2.43	2.09	2.12	1.92	1.35	2.0
<b>Q 4:</b>	2.52	2.06	2.33	2.14	1.7	2.19
<b>Q 5:</b>	2.52	2.03	2.14	1.99	1.57	2.05
	2.57	2.1	2.36	2.16	1.66	<b>2.21</b>

The session Other Road Users had the lowest overall score for the June program with 2.03. It scored relatively low on questions 1 and 2, 1.89 for happy with the session and 1.94 for relevant and useful information. The scores for questions 3, 4 and 5 were slightly better with 2.02 for made students think about their driving, 2.21 for being a more safety conscious driver and 2.07 for being a more safety conscious passenger.

	Redfern	Leumeah	St Patricks	Mount Carmel	James Meehan	Overall
<b>Q 1:</b>	2.43	1.88	1.53	2.03	2.22	1.89
<b>Q 2:</b>	2.43	2	1.75	1.98	1.96	1.94
<b>Q 3:</b>	2.35	1.91	1.92	2.04	2.17	2.02
<b>Q 4:</b>	2.57	2.29	2.14	2.22	2	2.21
<b>Q 5:</b>	2.43	2.12	1.85	2.17	2.04	2.07
	2.44	2.04	1.84	2.09	2.08	<b>2.03</b>

Overall the sessions that scored best were U-Turn U-Choose, which had the best scores for all sessions from both programs. Keep Ls and Ps consistently scored well in both the March and June programs. Buying a Used Car scored lowest in the March program and Other Road Users scored lowest in the June program. Both of these sessions could improve their scores.

## COMMENTS

Comments on the sessions could reveal some reasons for the differences in scores between the sessions. There were many positive comments on each session as well as comments on the weather – the week in March was very hot and in June there were complaints about the cold. Comments for question 7, how the session could have been better, which make suggestions about how it could be improved, will be considered here. These responses appeared frequently in both the March and June programs.

One common comment on Buying a Used Car was that students wanted access to the car:

“If we were able to inspect the car first rather than having the instructor pointing the mistakes/defects of the car.”

“We should get to examine the car ourselves and guess what’s wrong with it.”

Other comments included wanting more interaction:

“The person in charge of this session could ask us to brainstorm on what we think is wrong with the car before he starts telling us what’s wrong with the car. More shelters and fans.”

“Too much talking.”

“More interaction”

“More interesting, get audience involved, eg: practical work.”

“The man was so rude and judgemental. It went for too long and it got boring.”

“I was bored a lot at the first part by the time, the other second guy was good.”

For Other Road Users comments included:

“More involvement with the audience, not all factual, more funny and interesting stuff.”

“More interaction with audience – more entertaining/interesting. 2nd guy was interesting. Stories and examples were great.”

“Play games.”

“More time would have been appreciated.”

“Less talking more hands-on, and if we were allowed to beep the horn.”

“More information, pics, activities, to get involved.”

“Needs to be more interactive, more fun, not in sun.”

“More of a discussion session instead of just the movie and the overhead.”

“Maybe it could have been delivered verbally better to keep us interested.”

“It was very hard to see the overheads and video either run session inside or move the overhead and TV.”

“Should get the audience more involved and ask audience questions so we learn more.”

Comments on Keep Ls and Ps were very favourable with only occasional comments on how it could be improved:

“No, it was very informational. Friendly police.”

“More group interaction.”

“Get us to do more things.”

Comments on the session U-Turn U-Choose again were predominantly positive with a few suggestions made:

“Good. It made us think! Feelings were involved!”

Other comments which occurred more than once included:

“It was pretty good, I think that it could be improved by the roles being better defined.”

“Maybe more discussion. Not run around.”

“Give more examples of experiences because they are the only thing I will listen to.”

“More realistic things that relate to us, eg, teenagers talking about experiences.”

## CONCLUSIONS

Overall the most frequent suggestions for improvement related to interaction and requests for more discussion and hands-on activities. The interaction and activities was what was most appreciated about the session U-Turn U-Choose.

Some of the differences between March and June could be accounted for by the weather which was very hot in March and the session Buying a Used Car was conducted outside. Comments (though not a lot of comments on this issue) from students indicate that the heat was an issue for them. There were also comments on the cold weather in the June program.

Looking at the averages for each question by session, question 3 often scores lowest. This is the question; "The session made me think about the way I drive." This could suggest that the sessions were least successful at getting the participants to think about their driving even though they found the sessions informative, relevant, and generally well presented. Alternatively participants could have been less responsive to this question because they did not yet have a licence. This would require further analysis to be considered more thoroughly.

The Young Driver Questionnaire from New Zealand was used to provide an objective measure of a pre and post test characteristic. Pre-tests were carried out but to date very few post tests have been collected and there are too few to make any real comparisons. Also, earlier in the year many Year 11 students did not have a driver's licence so were not eligible to complete the questionnaire. A passenger/driver questionnaire was sought and adapted for use with the October program but to the researcher's knowledge this was not used.

## OCTOBER 2004 PROGRAM EVALUATION

The October program showed similar results in the session evaluation to the previous March and June programs with some slight differences. A scale of 1–5 was used but this does not appear to have changed the results significantly. The session Other Road Users rated lower overall than other sessions and it is difficult to find the reason for this based on the data. There is some concern expressed in this report over the last page of questions on the evaluation form which could suggest extreme over confidence in the young people attending the program relating to their driving ability. This concern is explained in the following.

Two hundred and thirty six student evaluations were entered for the October 2004 U–Turn the Wheel program held at the PCYC Minto. Students were from Ambarvale High School, Macquarie Fields High School, John Terry High School and Elizabeth Macarthur High School. There were 129 females and 85 males, and 21 did not give their gender. Ages were in the range 16 to 17 years, with 125 being 16 years and 82 being 17 years of age. Eight gave their age as 18 years and one as 28 years. Four participants did not give their age. One hundred and thirty six participants said that they had driven a car or ridden a motorcycle on public or private roads in the last eight weeks. Seventy–nine said they had not. Twenty one did not answer the question.

Participants were asked: What is the maximum number of standard drinks that an “L” or “P” plater can have within one hour of driving to stay within the legal limit? One hundred and ninety six correctly responded “0”. Six said one drink could be consumed, three said two drinks, two said three drinks and one said five drinks. Twenty–eight did not answer the question. The question demonstrated that students had some knowledge related to driving and alcohol consumption.

There appeared to be less awareness of the issues related to speed amongst participants. On the question: Going 10 km/h over the speed limit poses less risk of crashing than having a 0.05 blood alcohol level, responses were mixed but overall showed a lack of awareness of the dangers of speed. Twenty–four answered that they thought it depended on the driver, 67 said that they did not know, one said “sure, why not”, 72 correctly answered “false” and 34 answered “true”. The majority answered the question incorrectly with only 72 giving the correct response.

## COMMENTS

Students were again asked to comment on each session, giving ratings for the session on a scale of 1 to 5. Three of the sessions were very favourably responded to, consistently scoring at or near 4 on each of the five questions, while one session, Other Road Users: Motorcycles and Trucks, scored lower. The scores for this session varied between 1.85 for question 2, the information in this session was relevant and useful, and 2.14 for question 4, be a more safety conscious driver. The scores for each session by question are shown in the table below.

	I was happy with the way this session was run	Information in this session was relevant and useful for me	The session made me think about the way I drive	I will be a more safety conscious driver as a result of this session	I will be a more safety conscious passenger as a result of this session
<b>Keep Ls and Ps</b>	4.33	4.45	4.28	4.27	4.33
<b>Safe Celebrating</b>	4.48	4.46	4.24	4.36	4.48
<b>Drug and alcohol awareness</b>	4.57	4.42	4.16	4.40	4.40
<b>Other Road Users</b>	1.86	1.85	1.90	2.14	1.88
<b>Buying a Used Car</b>	4.30	4.48	3.77	4.01	3.98

The question, the session made me think about the way I drive, scored slightly lower in all sessions. This could be due to the fact that not all participants yet have a driving licence, however, it could also be due to other factors which will be elaborated further in this report. Interestingly Other Road Users scored higher on the question, I will be a more safety conscious driver as a result of this session, even though the session appeared to be regarded as less relevant and informative than the other sessions. The sessions and the question could include messages related to the driving of others known to the participants in future presentations.

The session Buying a Used Car scored slightly below four on the questions, the session made me think about the way I drive and I will be a more safety conscious passenger as a result of this session. The session could perhaps include a message about the driving of others and passenger safety to relate to this question.

Comments on the session Other Road Users do not indicate any particular problems with the session. Most participants commented on what they had learned:

“Notice the differences between motorbikes and cars.”

“To be more alert about motorcycles on the road and not to assume.”

“Be more aware of trucks turning and motorcycles changing lanes.”

“Give room to trucks and slow down and try not to overtake them, also be more cautious about motorbikes/riders.”

On the question of whether the session could be improved most said they were happy with it, a few commented that it was boring and others that the videos needed updating.

The session Buying a Used Car was favourably received overall with a few comments relating to wanting more detail about what could be wrong with a car. Comments on Keeping Ls and Ps with the Police were again favourable with a few stating that they would like more interaction. Interaction was the feature of the Safe Celebrating session that participants liked most.

While Other Road Users resulted in comments that were quite specific in relation to motorcycles and trucks, such as those noted above, comments on the Alcohol and Drug Awareness session were very general. The most common comment was “don’t drink and drive”. The session could perhaps offer more precise information.

There were six additional questions at the end of the evaluation from the NZ Young Driver Survey, added to the evaluation without the knowledge of the researcher. Unfortunately these questions, without the comparison questions from the original survey are out of context and could suggest here that the program induces over confidence in the young people in relation to their driving.

The original survey is a measure of self enhancement bias (Harré, Foster and O'Neill, 2005). Research has shown that young drivers are more likely to think they have more skill, are safer drivers and have better judgement than others their own age, particularly males, and it has been suggested that this is a contributing factor in the over representation of young drivers in crashes (De Joy, 1992: Harré et al., 1996). As a pre and post test measure the survey could show whether the self enhancement bias has been increased or decreased as a result of the program. Ideally an intervention should reduce the self enhancement bias so that young people do not think of themselves as better than other drivers their age. Interventions which increase self enhancement bias are a source of some concern to researchers and road safety professionals.

The questions included in the evaluation for U-Turn the Wheel were:

1. Do you think you will be more or less safe as a driver than other people your age after what you have learnt today?
2. Do you think you have better or worse awareness when driving than other people your age as the result of this course?
3. Do you think you will have better or worse judgement about the best action to take in a driving situation than other people your age as the result of this course?
4. As the result of this course, do you think you will be better prepared as a driver than other people of your age?
5. Do you think you will obey the road rules more or less than other people your age as the result of this course?
6. Do you think you will be better prepared in avoiding crashes than other people your age as the result of this course?

Responses were recorded on a scale of -3 to 3 and these have been converted to a scale of 1 to 7 for comparison with data from the New Zealand Study where the same questions were used.

The average responses to the questions are shown in the following table with the means from the original New Zealand study. (Harré, Foster and O’Neill 2005)

	Average scores	Means from NZ study
1. More or less safe driver	5.98	4.95
2. Better or worse awareness	5.86	
3. Better or worse judgement	5.87	5.08
4. Better prepared as a driver	5.86	
5. Obey road rules	5.82	4.65
6. Better prepared in avoiding crashes	5.77	4.84

While this is not a statistically accurate comparison as no test for self enhancement bias has been carried out on these scores, it does show that the biases indicated from the U-Turn the Wheel evaluation are extreme. The New Zealand study showed that there is a self enhancement bias amongst young drivers whereby they rate themselves as better drivers than their peers and the U-Turn the Wheel scores are even higher, possibly indicating a stronger bias (though this has not been statistical analysed).

The aim of the New Zealand study was as stated below:

In Study 1, young drivers (aged 16–29 years, n = 314) rated their driving attributes relative to their peers. They also rated their likelihood of being involved in a crash relative to their peers (crash-risk optimism), their crash history, stereotype of the young driver and concern over another health issue. A self-enhancement bias was found for all items in which self/other comparisons were made. These items formed two major factors, perceived relative driving ability and perceived relative driving caution. These factors and perceived luck relative to peers in avoiding crashes significantly predicted crash-risk optimism.

The study concluded:

This study showed strong evidence for self-enhancement biases on all the items on which the participants were asked to judge themselves relative to others of their age. The items formed two factors, one that appeared to reflect participants' judgment of their driving ability relative to their peers, and the other that reflected their judgment of their relative driving caution. These factors and the item concerning relative luck in avoiding crashes significantly predicted crash-risk optimism. No other items were correlated with crash-risk optimism. Men showed greater self-enhancement than women on the driving ability factor, but less self-enhancement on the driving caution factor.

For young people to leave the U-Turn the Wheel program considering that they have much better awareness, are safer drivers, have better judgement, are better prepared as drivers and in avoiding crashes, is a very concerning result. Even considering themselves more likely to obey the road rules than their peers is of concern since many drivers will over estimate the speed of other vehicles and thereby justify their own speeding or lack of awareness of their speed (Walter and McKeown, 2001).

The responses to the question related to stereotypes of the young driver were predominantly negative indicating that the participants possibly did not include themselves amongst the group of young drivers who could be at risk. This is also of concern since all young drivers are more at risk due at least to lack of experience.

The self enhancement bias suggested by the last questions of the evaluation indicate that the program is possibly attempting to encourage students to think of themselves as safe, capable drivers without taking into account the extensive experience and awareness of the road and traffic environment necessary to the development of safe and capable drivers.

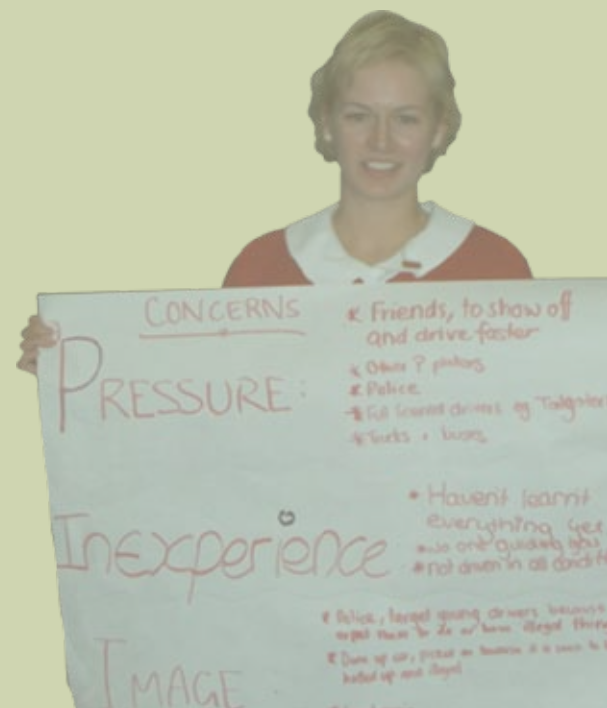
Asking the questions in the evaluation in itself is likely to encourage students to think that the program is intended to make them safer, more capable drivers. The program however, cannot be seen as having such an aim. It's aim is limited to raising the awareness of young people to the dangers of driving and to assist them in taking their role as drivers and the long term development of driving ability seriously.

## CONCLUSIONS

Overall the evaluation suggests that students in this age group are receptive to information that they see as directly relating to them such as details about licencing procedures and buying a used car since they can see themselves getting a licence and buying a used car in the future if they have not already done so. They appear less receptive however to the concept of being aware of other road users.

Enjoyment of the program by participants is indicated in the evaluations, however, there is evidence in the evaluation of the October program to indicate that it may not assist young people to become safe, responsible and careful drivers, and that it may in fact induce over confidence. Safety messages for both drivers and passengers need to be firmly established for each session. The safety messages that could be included in each session need to be articulated firmly and clearly and to have been carefully developed for the session. With some of the sessions such as Safe Celebrating and U-Choose it was clear what the safety message was and how it was being delivered to young people had been considered. The Used Car session could deliver a safety message related to the limitations of car safety no matter how much technology is included with particular models if they are driven in risky ways.

It was recommended that the aim of the program be clarified by the committee and made clear to participating schools and volunteers, and that the aim should be no more than that the program informs young drivers about getting a licence, buying a car and some of their obligations and responsibilities as drivers. Future evaluations should not contain the questions added to the last page as they imply that the program is able to make young drivers safer, more aware, have better judgement and be better able to avoid crashes.



Campbelltown

# YOUNG DRIVER FORUM



Thirty two young people from schools in the Campbelltown area were invited to attend a forum in which the emphasis was on maximum input from participants. Evaluations of the Fairfield Traffic Awareness program and the Campbelltown U-Turn the Wheel program showed that the young people who participated welcomed any opportunity for discussion of road safety issues and their concerns as young drivers. Campbelltown council was interested in having young people involved in developing a local safety campaign aimed at young drivers. The forum was developed as an opportunity to involve young people and to give them maximum opportunity for discussion and development of their ideas.

The Road Safety Officer David Behrens, the Youth Officer from Campbelltown Council Jenny Gleeson and the Campbelltown Council Youth Reference Group were involved in developing the forum, inviting young people from schools in the area to attend the forum and in the facilitation of the forum.

In the introduction David Behrens gave some background to the local road safety issues and the involvement of young people in crashes. Sarah Redshaw then explained that the forum had been organised because she had heard young people say in many contexts that they were not involved enough in decisions or given opportunities to discuss and speak about their concerns and views. The emphasis of the day would thus be their input, giving them opportunities to discuss amongst themselves, with the researcher, road safety officer and youth officer and members of the youth reference group what their concerns were as young people who travelled in cars with friends.

The young people were then divided into groups and set up at tables. There was a representative from the youth reference group at each table to help guide discussion and ensure input from all members of the group. The road safety officer, youth officer and researcher went around and spoke with the different groups throughout the process.

The groups were first given the following questions to consider:

- What are some of the main difficulties that young drivers and passengers have to deal with?
- What are your concerns as drivers/passengers?

They were asked to make a list of the concerns raised and then to select three main ones to report back to the whole group with. The main themes that were brought up related to their vulnerability as inexperienced drivers who 'Haven't learnt everything yet', have not necessarily driven in difficult conditions and may not have 'good perception'. Pressures from their peers as well as other drivers were mentioned by all groups. Speeding to 'look good to friends', revving and 'showing off' to impress others were mentioned and the difficulty of dealing with 'too close, impatient drivers, beeping drivers' and 'full licenced drivers, e.g: tailgaters' were noted concerns. Dealing with technology such as 'answering phones, text messages, changing CD's' was another pressure that participants noted.

Another theme mentioned concerned more information and knowledge about rules such as the rules for roundabouts and the 'new rules of type/performance of cars young people can drive'. One group was concerned about access to professional driving instruction stating that 'parents don't want to take lessons – too expensive'. Another group stated that they wanted to know 'How to let a friend know areas they could improve on'.

There was a perception that young people are 'stopped by cops' more frequently and that there is a 'stereotype of P platers by experienced drivers'. They felt that 'P platers spoken to more worse than older drivers'. At the same time there were complaints about speed limits being too slow and reports of frustration 'at other drivers going too slow' often stated by young people.

A further concern for one group was with the cars that young drivers are able to get access to. They stated: 'Cars are too expensive for beginner drivers to afford so unreliable cars are purchased.'

The groups went on to work on the concerns they had raised, coming up with a 'hot tip' related to their chosen concern and finally working on an idea for a campaign that the council would consider for a local campaign targeting young drivers. Campaign ideas included a message to young people to 'take care, be aware – drive defensively' (being aware of surroundings, respecting other drivers), a campaign on tailgating targeting all drivers and appealing to them to give 'L's and P's more room', a campaign to address peer pressure with the message 'let the driver do their thing' and a campaign about buying a car which stated 'you can't put a \$ (price) on safety' as they were concerned that 'price comes before safety'.

The ideas and discussion generated in the two hours of group work were impressive with concerns being considered from a number of angles and perspectives and ideas representing different points of view. The response of the young people to the workshop, besides 'meeting new people', was overwhelmingly that they valued the discussion time as it gave them the opportunity to talk and think things through:

Sitting down really talking about issues that are in everyday life.

It made you think about safety.

I learnt what others thought, and ideas. We all thought tailgating and peer pressure were big issues.

This helped them to gain information.

Learning how others' views also impacted on mine in the areas of driving pressures and inexperience that young drivers have. Learning how such small situations, eg: tailgating can cause such bad problems and if you are the one tailgating. It's your fault if you have a crash because of it.

I found that today was good for finding things that could help to stop all sorts of things that are dangerous.

Just what things really make you do the wrong things. How important it is to do the right thing. And how they use many different techniques to let people know what can happen.

Being able to have a say and contribute was clearly important:

I thought the fact that the leaders of our community care about what teens feel on driving, driving issues and laws on driving was the most valuable thing. For the teens of Campbelltown to be given a voice in what concerns us I think is the best thing you can do. I learnt a lot from today by my fellow teens because everyone had their own ideas and opinions.

Responses by the young people to the forum were very positive, and positive responses were also received from the representatives from the Youth Reference Group and the council officers who were present. Campbelltown council has been able to use the results and responses of young people from the forum to help develop and establish targeted local initiatives.

# OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

# OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

The young people in all programs expressed a desire for more discussion and certainly showed an appreciation of the opportunities to gain relevant information. Local initiatives such as the Fairfield Traffic Awareness program and Campbelltown U-Turn the Wheel program offer the opportunity for young people and police and other key groups in the community to build relationships and to understand each other's perspectives. Safety messages need to be expressed clearly and strongly in all of these contexts and the contribution that positive, guided discussion could make to the learning experience of the young people cannot be underestimated. The Campbelltown forum with young people indicated that a greater discussion focus can be rewarding and fruitful for them.

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