

# Press Release

## Arrive safely this Christmas - it's the best gift you can bring

December 21, 2015 -

Schools out!! The hard work is done. Christmas is drawing near and long holidays are on the agenda.

Trips to the beach, parties... happy times lay ahead - as do dangerous times, especially for teenage drivers, eager to experience their new independence behind the wheel.

As we watch heartbreaking stories of young people losing their precious lives, hoping it never involves our own families.... Australia's leading youth road safety educator, Road Safety Education Limited warns that now is the time for young drivers and their parents to follow some golden rules:

- Buckle up and observe speed limits
- Be well prepared for road trips - leave plenty of time for regular breaks
- Don't get distracted by mobiles, gadgets and chatty passengers
- Be careful of that last celebratory drink.
- Don't try and burn the candle at both ends, squeezing in that last social event - driver fatigue is one of the leading factors contributing to road crashes in Australia.

Road Safety Education Limited (RSE), a not for profit organisation, is committed to reducing trauma on our roads by educating young people, when high school students in Year 11, take part in the flagship RYDA program. It provides powerful workshops to change the way young people think about road safety. The program is supported by Rotary Clubs around Australia and corporate sponsors, BOC, Toyota and Bosch.

After attending RYDA, one teacher commented, " it was important for us to educate the 'whole student' and this was our last chance to provide them with valuable life skills before they left school and were faced with the challenges of being a driver. We had a fantastic day and the students found it to be a positive and very worthwhile experience."

Recently released statistics showing a 47% reduction in youth road deaths since the RYDA program began, highlights the important role of education, along with increased policing, government campaigns and safer roads and vehicles.

President of the Australian Medical Association and Vice Patron of RSE's Foundation, Dr Brian Owler says, "broken bodies and broken lives go hand in hand with the choices we make on the road." "Everyone thinks road trauma can't happen to them but I know it can and it does" he said. "I have seen it time and again and it must stop".

"Getting behind the wheel of a car as a young driver or passenger is said to be among the most dangerous things a person will do in their entire life" according to Terry Birss, Managing Director/CEO of RSE. "Education is paramount to the road safety jigsaw" he added.

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Mr Birss added, "Christmas is a social time and there are few activities that rely more on a good social attitude than driving. The roads are full of people rushing and feeling stressed so keep your cool, give them space and consider doing something nice for another driver."

### **Key Facts and Figures**

driving

road safety

Christmas road toll

young drivers

**(ENDS)**

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