

## > BEST PRACTICE IN ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION

Based on (including excerpts) Summary of Changing Mental Models: How recent developments in teaching and learning can be applied to road safety education in schools, M. Chamberlain and P. Hook.

Much research has been done around what is effective and what is not effective in changing people's mental models and behaviours. Whether considering walking, cycling or driving there are clear research findings that show the effect of a variety of approaches. In order to achieve the best outcomes for our students, our practise should reflect these findings.

The design and delivery approach are also very important. While the information useful for students to know as regards to road safety is clear, how this content is taught can have a major effect on how deeply it is learned and to what extent mental models can be changed.

### IMPORTANT THREADS

Road safety education needs to be supported through schools, homes and communities. Recent learning theories suggest that to change mental models of young people, we need to consider four key features of our approach:

- 1 Designing activities deliberately linked to how young people learn
- 2 Ensuring relevance that motivates and engages young people
- 3 Creating dissonance and developing deep knowledge
- 4 Developing competencies for making decisions and taking action

### AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL

Ideally road safety education needs to happen over time, be school wide and be developmentally appropriate throughout students' school lives. It needs to be based on best evidence about effective teaching and learning.

### AT THE CLASSROOM LEVEL

Learning should be interactive and should encourage students to develop social competence and resilience. It should be relevant and focused on individual learning needs.

### AT THE STUDENT LEVEL

Students should consider the needs and voices of pedestrians, cyclists, passengers and drivers. They should be encouraged to be active citizens who consider our roads a shared space and should be given opportunities to use their learning to make a difference for themselves and others.

**Illustrated below are approaches that work well according to the evidence.** Less effective are those that are not linked with ongoing learning and lack clear goals. Programs that promote early licensure, focus on vehicle emergency handling skills and use scare tactics without providing a parallel positive experience are actually detrimental to students.

Approaches based on best evidence about effective teaching and learning

Focus on individual learning needs

effective  
Best Practice  
at a glance

Content which is explicit, appropriate and challenging

Approaches that are evaluated

Targeting causes of risk behaviour

