

Submission

No 20

INQUIRY INTO SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY

Organisation: Council of Catholic School Parents NSW/ACT
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Position: Chairperson
Date Received: 5/10/2011



Council of Catholic School Parents

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30 September 2011

Staysafe (Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety)
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To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing in response to the Parliamentary inquiry being conducted by the Staysafe (Road Safety) Committee into School Zone Safety.

The Council of Catholic School Parents [CCSP] is the peak body representing the interests of parents with children in Catholic schools in NSW. It represents the interests of the parents of over 240 000 students, making it the largest non-government school parent advocacy body in Australia.

The CCSP has been involved in road safety issues in NSW for many years and has been an active participant in a number of road and transport safety advisory committees and reviews.

In relation to the Committee's Terms of Reference the CCSP makes the following comments:

- The CCSP strongly believes that the school zone initiative continues to make a significant contribution to raising public awareness of safer driving practices around schools and therefore contributes to safer pedestrian environments within school zones.
- The actions (and driving practices) of parents and carers remain an important factor impacting on student pedestrian safety in and around schools. Guidance from the Roads and Traffic Authority, for example on Kiss and Drop Zones, has been very useful for schools in helping to manage traffic flows in and around schools and many schools now have policies and guidance for parents about safe driving at drop off and pick up times. However, we strongly believe that continued public awareness-raising about safe driving around schools, including the targeting of parents and carers of school age children, should be priority for the NSW State Government.
- Traffic volumes in and around school zones also contribute to pedestrian safety. Alternative travel arrangements for students should be encouraged as a means of reducing traffic flows at peak times in and around school zones.
- The CCSP believes that there should be a consistent state-wide approach to school zone requirements (that is, speed limits and times that those limits apply). We do not support variable school zone speed limits for urban, regional and rural zones.
- Similarly, the CCSP believes that the same school zones requirements should apply irrespective of whether the school is a primary or secondary school. While ensuring safer environments for young people, it also provides greater consistency and certainty for drivers.
- The CCSP believes that school zone speed limits should be seen as part of a repertoire of safety initiatives deployed around schools – instruments such as traffic lights, speed reduction facilities and fencing should also be considered and deployed after a needs analysis of the particular school environment.

- The CCSP believes that consideration could be given to removing school zone speed limits on major roads where other significant safety facilities, such as pedestrian over-passes, exist and where the major drop-off and pick up zones are on other (side) streets around the school - in effect, changing the 'boundaries' for the school zone. This would need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis after a needs analysis and community consultation.
- The CCSP also believes that consideration could be given to 'all day' speed limits in school zones such as in the Australian Capital Territory.
- The CCSP strongly supports the continuation of the current road safety education programs in NSW schools.

Yours Sincerely

Catherine Ible
Chairperson
CCSP NSW/ACT