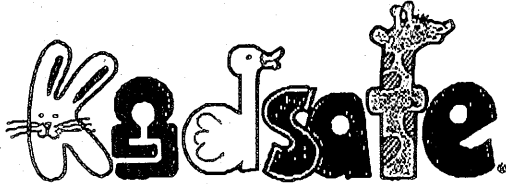


Submission

No 23

INQUIRY INTO SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY

Organisation: Kidsafe NSW
Name: Ms Christine Erskine
Position: Executive Officer
Date Received: 7/10/2011



Facsimile Transmission

To: Staysafe (Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety) Parliament House Macquarie St Sydney NSW 2000	From: Vicki Milne Kidsafe NSW
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MESSAGE:

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The Hon Greg Aplin MP
Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety

**KIDSAFE NSW SUBMISSION TO
INQUIRY INTO SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY**

Please find attached the Kidsafe NSW submission to the Inquiry into School Zone Safety.

Comments have been provided on specific terms of reference as listed.

Thank you for the opportunity to be involved in this important Inquiry and to provide comments for consideration.

For further information please contact Vicki Milne on (02) 9845 0890.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Christine Erskine'.

**Christine Erskine
Executive officer
Kidsafe NSW**

6.10.11



**SUBMISSION TO PARLIAMENTARY JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ROAD
SAFETY
INQUIRY INTO SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY**

The effectiveness of school zones in reducing pedestrian casualties during school times

Comment

An audit of school zones conducted by the Audit Office in February 2010 showed that following the introduction of school zones in 1993, road crash casualties with school age pedestrians decreased significantly from 1998 to 2008.

The major contributing factors to pedestrian casualties in school zones

Comment

There appear to be a number of factors which may contribute to pedestrian casualties in and around school zones. These include:

- *Non compliance by drivers with the set speed limit in school zones.*
- *Poor driver behaviour in setting down and picking up school children often in unsafe or illegal spots.*
- *Lack of understanding by pedestrians of appropriate road safety behaviour.*

Age as a factor in pedestrian crash risk and the major contributing factors for casualties by age cohort around school zones.

Comment

Kidsafe NSW supports:

- *consideration being given to the extension of the school zone regime or similar in areas where there is an early childhood centre or preschool. There should be some warning to drivers that there are young pedestrians about in these areas.*

While the school zone regime may not be suitable for all centres due to the variable operating times, it may be an option for those preschools that have set operating times from 9:00am to 3:00pm. Currently school zones are only in operation for primary and secondary schools.

An audit undertaken by the RTA found that motorists continue to exceed the 40km speed limit in school zones, and that enforcement is almost entirely dependent on fixed speed cameras.

The audit found that 93% of speeding infringements were issued in school zones with fixed cameras, even though the number of school zones with fixed cameras (44) accounted for less than 1% of the total school zones in NSW. (http://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/publications/reports/performance/2010/school_zones/InBrief-schools.pdf)



Kidsafe NSW supports:

- *targeted public education campaigns on the impact of 40km speed limits and associated child pedestrian safety benefits.*
- *the targeting of school speed zones enforcement by means other than fixed speed cameras*
- *a review of other factors in addition to speed which may lead to an increased risk for pedestrians. This could include: driver behaviour in school zones, parking/enforcement of parking and bus stops in schools zones i.e anything that can obscure views. Parental education about safe road crossing in school zones is also of critical importance to child pedestrian safety.*

The deployment of alternative facilities to reduce reliance on school zones, such as grade separation, traffic lighting and fencing.

Comment

Kidsafe NSW supports:

- *consideration of any options which can improve child pedestrian safety. Motorists need to be aware when they are approaching areas with high pedestrian activity.*

The introduction of flashing lights in school zones is a good visual reminder for motorists. Many motorists are not local drivers or parents of school aged children and are not always aware of the school days. School terms also vary from state to state which can be an added complication for motorists.

Kidsafe NSW supports:

- *consideration being given to implementing extension of flashing lights to all school zones in NSW.*
- *A review of planning laws for any future school access guidelines. Consideration should be given to moving primary access points off high traffic areas where possible and providing suitable facilities for parents and carers to pick up and drop off children safely.*

The appropriateness of single approach school zone regime as opposed to modifying zones based on existing infrastructure and other current safety measures employed around schools.

Comment

Schools are positioned in a wide range of locations so a single approach school zone regime may not be always appropriate.

Kidsafe NSW supports a system whereby a range of factors are taken into consideration when reviewing safety for pedestrians around schools. What may be



appropriate in one school location may not necessarily be the safest option for another school so all environmental and infrastructure factors should be assessed.

Consideration needs to be given to providing safe drop off zones and turning circles for parents and carers particularly in high traffic areas to reduce the risk to children when being dropped off and picked up.

The availability and effectiveness of current road safety education programs in NSW schools

Comment

The RTA and DET provide a lot of resources for road safety education but there needs to be an effective strategy for evaluation of these programs particularly in terms of the take up rate by schools and implementation of road safety education in the curriculum. Consideration could be given to including road safety education initiatives in the Annual Reporting requirements for NSW schools. It is important that any road safety programs are developed and implemented on evidence of effectiveness.

Road Safety Consultants at the Department of Education and Communities could be used to promote Road Safety Champions – that is those schools who have introduced innovative road safety initiatives that have been successful.

Kidsafe NSW also supports development of a training program for teachers on the most effective methods for undertaking road safety education across all stages.

Any other related matters

Comment

There needs to be an ongoing education campaign for parents and drivers around safe speeds and the safety considerations behind parking restrictions around schools. Drivers can become complacent and are not always aware of the benefits to pedestrian safety of reduction in speed limits and other safety measures.