

# Running your Road Safety Week: Guidance for schools, colleges and pre-schools

**Road crashes are the biggest killer of young people worldwide. Schools can play a key role in preventing road casualties and enabling children, families and everyone to use roads without being endangered.**

Taking in part in or organising a Road Safety Week is a chance to educate children, young people and parents about the dangers on roads and how we can protect children. It can make a huge difference to children's lives and help to prevent deaths and injuries. All children and young people use roads and most have experienced road danger, so it's a great topic for a lesson or project to engage students.

Road Safety Week is also a time when you can raise awareness about the importance of road safety among other local people and the authorities in your area and call for safer roads. This could be about persuading local drivers to slow down and look out for children, or calling on your local authority to put in safe pavements, paths, crossings or a lower speed limit, to better protect children and families.

## STEP ONE: Check if there's a Road Safety Week where you are

Check our [Road Safety Week map](#) to see if there is a Road Safety Week you can take part in in your country or region, or contact your local or national authority. You can also use the map to browse case studies for ideas and information from existing Road Safety Weeks around the world.

If there is already a Road Safety Week in your country or region, put the date in your diary and plan how you can take part. Use the ideas below, plus any guidance provided by your national/regional organisers, to help you get involved.

If you don't have an existing Road Safety Week where you are, don't worry – you can organise your own using the

advice below, on a week of your choice. We suggest planning your event at least two months in advance, choosing a week when you and the students won't be too busy. You could contact local government officials and/or emergency services to see if they can help. You could even encourage them to organise a regional Road Safety Week and promote it to other schools and organisations.

## STEP TWO: Choose a topic

Whether you're taking part in an existing Road Safety Week or organising your own, it's a good idea to consider in advance what road safety issue(s) you will focus on, what you're aiming to achieve and therefore what messages you want to promote and to whom. If you're taking part in an existing Road Safety Week, find out if there is a theme that might be relevant for you to address.

To help you choose your focus, consider what are the main risks students face on roads, and if there are any barriers to them getting around safely, sustainably and healthily. For example, you may be worried about children on foot having to walk or cycle along and cross over busy, fast roads to get to school or around the local area. Or you may be concerned that increasing numbers of parents are driving their children to school, impacting on their health and the environment.

To help you decide your focus, you could survey the children or parents on their views and experiences in relation to road safety in the area, which is also a great way to get everyone thinking about road safety. Download our sample 'hands-up' surveys for [5-11 year olds](#) and [11-18 year-olds](#) and parents. You could also get the students to carry out a road safety audit of your area.

You could explore the [resources](#) available on on [www.roadsafetyweek.org](http://www.roadsafetyweek.org) or the [information](#) on Brake's UK website for ideas, or consider using the [Brake Pledge](#), a six point pledge covering important road safety topics, promoting one or more of the Pledge points.



## STEP THREE: Plan activities

Whether you're taking part in an existing Road Safety Week or organising your own, here are some ways you can do it, with links to resources and extra information:

### Educate the students

Road safety is a great subject in which to engage children. You could organise:

- Lessons on road safety using Brake's [lesson ideas](#).
- Road safety assemblies with speakers from local police, fire service or local agencies.
- A project where students create a road safety poster, film, theatre performance or a local campaign. You can base these around topics such as:
  - The benefits and disadvantages and level of safety of different modes of transport (cars, buses, cycling, walking etc.).
  - The stopping distances of cars travelling at different speeds (using Brake's [stopping distance tool](#)) to show why fast traffic is more dangerous.
  - Distractions for drivers and pedestrians that can pose a danger.
  - Exploring the consequences of road crashes – death, life changing injuries, the effects on families and communities.

See our [tools and resources for children](#) page for more activity ideas and materials you can use to run these

### Raise awareness among parents

It's great if you can use your Road Safety Week to not only teach road safety to children, but also to engage parents and ensure they are doing everything they can to protect children and set a good example. This could be done by:

- Telling parents what your school is planning for Road Safety Week in your school bulletin, newsletter or website, including explaining what parents can do to help keep kids safe.
- Inviting them to an event. This could be a road safety walk or presentation with the children or local emergency services professionals.
- Putting up posters in your entrance hall or on a noticeboard where parents will see, encouraging parents to drive safely.
- Sending parents details of the [Brake Pledge](#), encouraging them to sign it as a family, committing to always use roads as safely as possible.

## Campaign for safer streets

If you want to campaign for lower speed limits or better facilities for safe walking and cycling in your local area, Road Safety Week is the perfect time. Contact your local government agency and tell them what measures you think are needed in your area and if you are organising your own Road Safety Week, ask them to support and publicise your activity. You can also promote safe driving messages to local drivers, especially calling on them to slow down to protect children. You could:

- Include a campaign launch in your school newsletter and/or website, with pupils giving views on what should be done to make roads safer.
- Set up a display in a local supermarket or community noticeboards with posters designed by the children calling on drivers to slow down and look out for children.
- Write a joint letter to your local government agency (with responsibility for roads) from all the schools in your area, calling for safer streets for children.
- Get the children to film clips of each other saying why it's important that they can walk safely, and/or measuring out stopping distances to show why drivers should slow down, and use these on your website, through social media, or show them at an event.
- Promote your campaign in local newspapers, radio and TV by telling journalists about it over the phone or through a press release, explaining what you're calling for. You could organise a 'photo call', inviting photographers from newspapers to take photos of children holding up a banner they have designed calling for safer roads. Read Brake's [publicity and media guidance](#).

Check out Brake's online [guide to community campaigning](#).

## STEP FOUR: Organise resources

Whatever you're planning, make use of resources to support and promote your activities and get important road safety messages out. Free downloadable posters and other tools are available on the [tools & resources page](#).

The [Brake shop](#) can also deliver Road Safety Week branded resources internationally including t-shirts, balloons and posters, to help you let everyone know it's Road Safety Week.

If you are organising a Road Safety Week as part of an existing national or regional Week, check if the national or regional organisers have resources available.

## STEP FIVE: Engage partners

Partnerships are a great way to pool resources and promote road safety to more people. Partners may be able to offer educational talks for assemblies, road safety training for pupils, and provide support with organising larger events.

Partners may include your local authority's road safety team, police, emergency services, community groups or local companies. It's a good idea to get in touch with them early on, while planning your activities, to find out if and how they can help and give them plenty of notice.





## STEP SIX: Publicise your Week

Whatever activities you are planning, help build excitement and enthusiasm for your Road Safety Week by publicising it in advance, during and after the event. This could include letting everyone taking part know when Road Safety Week is happening, what you're planning and why road safety is important through:

- Putting posters up with the date of your Week where pupils and parents will see them. You can use Brake's generic [Road Safety Week poster](#) with space for your date.
- Including articles in your in your school bulletin/newsletter/website. You can download Brake's [Road Safety Week web banner](#) and [Road Safety Week logo](#) for use in your communications.
- Surveying pupils and parents on their views on road safety in advance, letting them know it's part of the preparations for the Week.
- Contacting potential partners as above and asking them to promote the Week through their communications.
- Sending a press release to and/or contacting local media a week or two in advance to let them know what's happening. See Brake's [publicity and media guidance](#).

As well as doing the above in advance of your week, it can help get the message out to do more publicity like this during the Week itself, promoting your road safety messages, and afterwards letting everyone know how it went. Taking pictures of and filming your activities will help show how your Road Safety Week has been a success, get the road safety message out, and promote next year's event. (It may be a requirement to get permission from parents for children to be filmed or photographed. Your school may already have a policy and form for this).

## STEP SEVEN: Tell Brake how it went

Once you've run your Week, please tell us how it went. We are keen to find out about Road Safety Weeks around the world and share the experiences and ideas of Road Safety Week organisers and participants. [Tell us about your Week here](#).

## STEP EIGHT: Plan for next year

Road Safety Week is great for focusing everyone's attention on road safety, but it should be a priority year-round, so use the experience of running your Road Safety Week to consider how you can continue teaching and promoting road safety. It's also a good idea to set the date for your next Road Safety Week as soon as the last one is over, so you can start planning what you could do next year well in advance.

- Browse case studies of existing road safety events for ideas at [www.roadsafetyweek.org/projects-map](http://www.roadsafetyweek.org/projects-map)
- Get tools and resources for your Road Safety Week at [www.roadsafetyweek.org/tools-resources](http://www.roadsafetyweek.org/tools-resources)
- Contact us and tell us about your event at [www.roadsafetyweek.org/contact](http://www.roadsafetyweek.org/contact)
- Sign up for Brake UK's road safety bulletin for schools at [www.brake.org.uk/joinus/educators](http://www.brake.org.uk/joinus/educators)

This guidance is part of [www.roadsafetyweek.org](http://www.roadsafetyweek.org), a global resource developed by Brake, the road safety charity, in partnership with Fundación MAPFRE, for anyone interested in organising a Road Safety Week, or a similar awareness-raising event, in their country, locality or organisation.

Our aim is to encourage more Road Safety Weeks to spring up around the world during the [UN's Decade of Action for Road Safety](#), and help more organisations, government agencies and communities take action to improve road safety and prevent casualties.

Brake has domestic operations in the [UK](#) and [New Zealand](#), and coordinates national Road Safety Week [UK](#) and [NZ](#). Brake also offers internationally relevant guidance, resources, research and webinars, which can be accessed by organisations around the world to help you promote road safety and support road crash victims. Sign up for our free termly [educator bulletin](#) to get updates on Brake resources, events and news for schools and colleges.

