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Spring 2011



Teenage Highway Code

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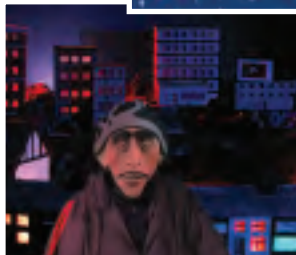
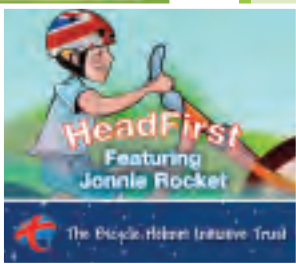
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RoSPA
The Royal Society for the
Prevention of Accidents

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Managing Editor
Janice Cave MBE

Editorial Consultant
Jim Barrow

Occupational Safety Adviser
Roger Bibbings MBE

Risk Education Adviser
Jenny McWhirter

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The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents,
28 Calthorpe Road,
Edgbaston,
Birmingham B15 1RP

Telephone: 0121 248 2000

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Merseyside teacher fined £20,000

A Merseyside headteacher has been fined £20,000 after one of his students suffered permanent injuries when he fell through the school roof.

The Health and Safety Executive prosecuted John Summerfield, 63, after he led a group of teenagers onto a roof at Sacred Heart Catholic College on Liverpool Road in Crosby.

He was found guilty of a health and safety offence following a trial at Liverpool Crown Court. The court heard that Mr Summerfield had taken the group onto the roof in August 2008 on the day of their A Level results.

One of the 18-year-old students, who has asked not to be named, fractured his skull, broke his ribs, perforated an eardrum and suffered permanent damage to his right eye when he fell 2.5 metres through a roof light.

Mr Summerfield, now retired, of Moorland Avenue in Crosby, was found guilty of breaching Section 7(a) of the

Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 by failing to protect the safety of his students when he decided to allow them onto the roof. He was ordered to pay £22,708 towards the cost of the prosecution, in addition to the fine.

Mike Sebastian, HSE Principal Inspector on Merseyside, said: "John Summerfield wanted to show his students a part of the school they had never seen but it left one of them suffering a permanent injury to his eye.

"The roof was kept out of bounds for a reason. As the headteacher, Mr Summerfield should have thought about the possible consequences before deciding to take them through two locked doors onto the roof.

"Students should expect to be in a safe environment when they're at school and look to their teachers for guidance on what is and what isn't safe. Sadly, a pupil suffered serious injuries because of the poor judgement

of his headteacher, and is unlikely to ever fully recover."

Falls from height are the biggest single cause of workplace deaths in the UK. During 2008/9, 112 workers in

Merseyside suffered major injuries from a fall and another 174 had to take at least three days off to recover. More information is available at www.hse.gov.uk/falls.

Prevention not cure

The chief executive of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents has urged the Government to display courage and imagination in how it deals with accidents, particularly since figures show the battle against accidents is far from being won.

While previous administrations have invested billions in "cure" and comparatively little in "prevention", Tom Mullarkey said the Coalition Government has an opportunity to be "logically consistent, financially prudent and sustainably radical". He made the call in his report to RoSPA's annual meeting.

Tom Mullarkey said "There

is an opportunity here for the new idea of the Big Society to reinforce the traditional, without contradiction. Our parents and grandparents, knew well what death and injury looked like and went out of their way to learn how to avoid the unnecessary suffering caused by accidents.

"Without sensible safety information, people do not have the knowledge and understanding to make coherent decisions for themselves. And accident prevention - balanced, reasonable, informative - is the low-cost, low-intervention, empowering solution and some small antidote to the crushing cost of the NHS."

Lee gets help with his driving



Lee with his supervisor, Elizabeth Wragg

Lee Ribchester undertook a two week student placement in RoSPA's driver and fleet solutions department and took the opportunity to get some advanced driving advice. He has failed his driving test five times so far.

Lee commented "The problems I have come across during my driving tests are that my risk perception skills are underdeveloped which meant I didn't anticipate risks before they occurred.

"During my time at RoSPA I learnt the fundamentals of driving safely. These were to drive in a more defensive manner giving cars space to manoeuvre around the car as well as giving myself greater driving space to react to situations.

"Since starting my driving lessons again this summer I

could see the difference in my driving as I started to anticipate the hazards before they occurred thus changing my driving style from reactive to proactive.

"One problem with young drivers is the overestimation of driving skills as young learners pick up vehicle control quickly they believe that this is the fundamental part of driving. As young drivers pick up this control quickly they believe they are a good driver and therefore choose not to develop their risk perception skills since they believe they don't need it.

"My experience at RoSPA was a hugely rewarding experience and will hopefully give me the knowledge and confidence to pass my practical test on the sixth time of asking."

■ Pupils striking posters spell out safety message on building sites

Pupils at Hauxton Primary School have designed striking posters spelling out the message that construction sites are not playgrounds for a competition set by Cambridge-based housing developer Lovell.

The poster competition is part of an ongoing campaign by Lovell to raise awareness among children and young people that they should never play on a construction site.

‘We’re always keen to make local young people aware of the potential dangers of building sites and construction activity’

The company is currently working in Hauxton on a development of 16 new homes for Wherry Housing Association, part of leading affordable housing provider Circle Anglia.

Lovell challenged pupils at the school in Jopling Way to design safety posters, with Wherry Housing Association choosing the winning entries. Lovell presented the first and second prize winners with £10 and £5 book tokens respectively, while all of the first, second and third prize winners were given Lovell-branded goodies including pencils, colouring books and toys.

“Wherever we work, we’re always keen to make local young people aware of the potential dangers of building sites and construction activity, and the poster competition is an excellent way of doing this,” says Lovell regional health and safety manager Darryl Hammond.

The project is due to be completed in January next year.



The Hauxton pupils show off their designs

■ Child safety goes worldwide

The executive board of the World Health Organization, has strongly endorsed the proposal for issuing a WHO-resolution on child injury prevention.

The proposed resolution, which was initiated by the Dutch government calls upon the WHO member states to:

- Prioritise the prevention of child injury within health policies and policies across government departments
- Ensure that national data collection across relevant sectors quantifies the burden of, risk factors for, and costs of child injury, and to assure that the resources available are commensurate with the extent of the problem
- Develop and implement a multisectoral policy and

plan of action which contain realistic targets for child injury prevention, and include promotion of standards and codes on product safety, school and play spaces, construction regulations and laws, as either a stand-alone policy or plan, or incorporated within the national child health policy or plan

- Enforce, and if necessary strengthen, existing laws and regulations relevant to the prevention of child injury
- Strengthen emergency and rehabilitation services and capacities, including first-response teams, the acute management during pre-hospital care and within health facilities of injured children.

The proposed resolution invites the WHO-secretariat to collaborate with member states in improving data collection and in establishing science-based public health policies for preventing child injury, and to collaborate with member states and non-governmental organizations to augment the capacities needed to prevent child injury. The secretariat is invited to report progress made in implementing this resolution to the sixty-seventh World Health Assembly in May 2014.

After a second reading of the proposed resolution in the Board early next year, the final proposal for a resolution will be put on the agenda of the World Health Assembly next May for final approval and endorsement.

Getting children out of cars

A new initiative launched by Gateshead Council could soon be helping teachers throughout the UK to get their pupils out of their parents cars.

School travel advisers at Gateshead Council have developed a new web-based resource for primary school teachers which could help reduce the number of car journeys to and from their school, improve pupils' fitness and reduce road traffic accidents.

The new website called travelmatters.org.uk gives primary school teachers direct access to a substantial repository of classroom resources, lesson plans and interactive games aimed at promoting sustainable travel to school – which local authorities have a duty to promote.

Many schools have devised school travel plans which look at how students, staff and visitors travel to and from school and contain measures intended to improve safety, encourage students and others to walk or cycle.

However, Travel Matters – offers a cost-effective and

efficient way for busy teachers to incorporate sustainable travel into their classroom using resources that are fully complementary to the curriculum.

The website has already been demonstrated at educational and road safety conferences and has been enthusiastically received.

Councillor John McElroy,

Gateshead Council's cabinet member for transport, says: "Walking or cycling to school has an important part to play in improving children's health, reducing traffic congestion and improving the environment – but including lessons about sustainable travel in a school's curriculum can sometimes be a real challenge. That's where this website can really help."

"Travel Matters can help teachers to deliver brilliant and imaginative lessons which can make learning about sustainable travel successful, effective and a real pleasure for the whole class."

He added: "Getting children out of their parent's cars has never been more important. With so many kids being driven on short journeys, it is not surprising there is growing concern not only about the effects such extra traffic is having on air quality and the environment in general, but also the effects on children's health."

"And with the school run accounting for around one-fifth of all vehicles on the roads in the morning, it is clear that parents driving their children to school are having a significant effect on

traffic congestion.

"Making children think about sustainable travel will also help parents to consider their actions and ensure that we all share a better, less polluted and healthier future."

The website's resources have been designed by a practising teacher to fit easily into existing areas of the curriculum. Resources include lesson plans and PowerPoint presentations, templates for classroom displays, role play scripts and other performance-based learning for pupils.

It also has an interactive area for pupils to use and has been specifically designed to appeal to schools throughout the UK.

Gateshead Council now plans to sell licences for the website throughout the UK.

Recent figures suggest that only 48 per cent of primary school pupils walk to school, and only 40 per cent of secondary school pupils walk to school. Although cycling to school is on the increase, it still accounts for a very small proportion of school journeys.



Longest walking bus has 186 in it

Caerphilly county borough's longest walking bus belongs to Ysgol-y-Lawnt in Rhymney – with a staggering 186 walkers on board!

As part of national Walk to School Week recently, hundreds of children from primary schools across Caerphilly county borough took part in a special 'Walking Bus' competition.

Ysgol-y-Lawnt in Rhymney were crowned the winners of the competition after 186 pupils, teachers, parents and support staff made theirs the longest walking bus in Caerphilly county borough

and probably one of the longest in the whole of Wales.

Officers from the local neighbourhood policing team and even the local vicar came along and took part in the 20-minute walk to school.

Cllr Rob Gough, cabinet member for transportation and planning presented Ysgol -y-Lawnt with a glass trophy for winning the competition.

Schools across the Caerphilly County Borough hope to build upon this success in time for October, which is International Walk to School Month.

Cycle helmets egged on

Next Spring Term, don't be surprised if your kids come home from school talking about eggs being smashed on the floor! If they do, it means they've probably taken part in a new scheme from the Bicycle Helmet Initiative Trust, explaining why they should always wear a bicycle helmet when riding their bike.

Each year hospital casualty departments see more than 40,000 children with cycle related head injuries. Approximately 70 per cent of child cyclist deaths are due to the head injury alone. Research has shown a helmet can reduce head injury severity.

Road safety organisation GEM Motoring Assist has announced its support of the Bike Helmet Initiative Trust's HeadFirst scheme launching in January 2011.

The scheme will be introduced in all primary schools across the country and will teach six to eight year old children the importance of protecting the brain and how a cycle helmet can do this.

The BHIT have also designed a 'Head Start' scheme and a 'Head Smart' scheme for nine to 11 year olds and 12 to 14 year olds respectively. Wearing a cycle helmet is so simple and easy to do yet many people, both parents and children alike,



don't use one.

David Williams, CEO of GEM Motoring Assist comments: "I

The importance of safe cycling is a subject which is not stressed enough and the sim-

Each year hospital casualty departments see more than 40,000 children with cycle related head injuries

have nothing but praise for the work which the BHIT has put into these programmes.

ple matter of wearing a cycle helmet could literally make all the difference should someone to be involved in an accident.

"We want to promote cycling, however, we know our environment can be dangerous and people need to take precautions to ensure they are as protected as possible. Wearing a cycle helmet should be second nature to cyclists, just like putting on a seatbelt is for drivers and this scheme will help get that message across to everyone."

Angela Lee, chief executive of the BHIT explained: "We have designed three programmes to target the different age groups as we recog-

nise that we cannot reach all age groups with the same message.

"We found a lot of older children are concerned about their image, whereas younger children simply don't understand what brain injury means and the effects that it could have on everyday life should the worst happen.

"We have tried to make the programmes fun and interactive yet informative. We hope to see many more people out on their bikes, and most importantly wearing their helmets and we are really grateful for the support of road safety organisations such as GEM and our other companies including Olympus, who have given both funding and their time and energy to help spread the word."

GEM has a free Guide to Safer Cycling booklet available offering tips, advice and information. A copy can be downloaded from GEM's website at www.motoringassist.com



Routes - The Teenage

Routes – the Teenage Highway Code is an interactive and engaging update on road safety for the 21st century.

It has been created by Jeremy Beard, of West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service and Steve Wright, engagement specialist and puppeteer of The Puppet Broadcasting Company. The project has been funded and developed by the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership.

Jeremy is the youth team manager at West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service and manages the schools education programme and youth initiatives in the fire service.

Steve has 15 years experi-

The Sussex Safer Roads Partnership, who commissioned the national and international award-winning seatbelt campaign ‘Embrace Life’ have launched another innovative road safety initiative, this time aimed at the 11-16 age group.

Barbara Hopkins reports

ence in delivering educational materials live to schools and youth venues across the UK, using streetwise puppets as a unique means of engagement.

Jeremy first encountered Steve’s work using puppets as a media tool at a Chief

Police Officers’ conference in 2007. They began working together on a small project for the Sussex Fire Service on the dangers of starting fires and hoax calls and soon realised that their approach could have positive benefits on road safety education.

Their work identified a clear gap in road safety information for the 11-16 age group. After completing the Green Cross Code safety education and cycling proficiency training as young children, there is no road safety awareness training available for youngsters until they learn to drive. Young people become particularly vulnerable as they acquire independence – and are subject to distractions by their peers.

Ian Jones was appointed Routes project manager in August 2009 and identified the need for the project on a pan-Sussex scale. The entire Sussex Safer Roads Part-



Steve Wright and young helpers at a Routes workshop

Age Highway Code



Routes puppet and friend

nership which includes East and West Sussex county councils, Brighton and Hove city council, Sussex police, East and West Sussex Fire and Rescue Services, the Highways Agency and the Courts Service, has been involved in the development of Routes. Jeremy Beard emphasises that the strength of the partnership has enabled the project's growth.

The aim, says Jeremy, was to provide a "tangible asset for education" which would be available to all young people, blending humanity with an educational message.

"By using puppets we aimed to remove hard hitting

imagery while connecting with real life stories in the third person," he explains. The puppets protect the identity of an individual, while giving the views and real life stories of young people. By using

'Using the puppets makes it easier to find common ground - for example, attitudes to risky driving'

this medium the young audience is not creating perceptions about the person whose views are being articulated.

A key role in the development of Routes was provided by Jonathan Millington, as-

sistant head of Worthing High School. Jonathan wrote the lesson plans and worked on the development of the project to fit into schools' Personal Social and Vocational Education and Personal

Health and Social Education programmes. It can also be used in a cross-curricular approach, for example in drama, art, design and technology.

For Steve Wright, one of the project's early challenges was

to make the subject of road safety accessible and interesting. Routes' objectives are to reduce the number of those killed and injured on the roads, as well as increasing safety, knowledge and skills in the 11-16 age group. These youngsters are involved in accidents as pedestrians, vehicle passengers, cyclists and later on as new drivers.

"Using the puppets makes it easier to find common ground - for example, attitudes to risky driving" he says. "Without using gory imagery, youngsters are absorbing the message that road safety affects everybody".

Workshops for those delivering these lessons - called

Teenage Highway Code

'Routes In Action' - are being held to roll out the Routes package to schools in Sussex and Steve uses a mixture of exercises including film, debate, a quiz and role play. "I want Routes to be a tool for teachers which is credible and gives safety professionals the respect they deserve," he explains.

Work began on Routes in 2008 and it was officially launched in October 2010. Pilot schools across Sussex have evaluated the pack and it's expected that every school in Sussex received their Routes lesson pack and accompanying DVD by the end of November.

Teacher feedback reports that it's a robust resource giving them confidence to deliver this important topic, while students are actively engaging in the debate.

Aimed at secondary school pupils in years 7-11 (Key Stages 3 and 4), there are 15 individual lesson plans and associated tools, giving teachers flexibility to integrate any of the modules into the PSVE/PHSE programme,

an assembly, activity day or other lessons as appropriate.

Road safety education is often deemed to be a difficult subject. With teens already recognised as a vulnerable age group, Routes many objectives include the empowerment of young people to make safe decisions, but also to take responsibility for their own safety.

Each module focuses on a different method of transport and the main menu includes a specific learning outcome; a section on laws and statistics; and an interview with a member of the emergency services or other professional, sharing their views or experiences from their workplace.

The final item on the main menu is 'Routesville' - the model town constructed for

Road safety education is often deemed to be a difficult subject. Teens are already recognised as a vulnerable age group.

the project. The puppet characters look at individual road safety issues and are voiced by young people.



Puppet Slasha, shown in the model town of Routesville

Designed in conjunction with the DVD, the lessons enable all three learning styles -

a progressive plan; this means that they can be used to target location-specific problems.

The department for transport annual statistical report for 2009 shows that more than 13,000 children were involved in road accidents. Of these, 70 were killed and more than 2,000 were left with life-changing injuries.

It's hoped that top level sponsors will support Routes so that it can be distributed to schools country-wide free, as in Sussex. Michelin are already offering support in Staffordshire.

The next development for Routes is to build a national road safety community and the website www.routesroadsafety.com goes live in January 2011. This will give region-specific information and bespoke modules for road safety training. A further advantage is that road safety officers around the country will be able to access information on developments in counties other than their own.

For more information on Routes go to www.sussexsaferoads.gov.uk

Steve Wright's Puppet Broadcasting Company: www.getyourheadroundit.co.uk



**Screenshot for the national regions website
RoutesRoadSafety.com**

Hackney gets the message

Hackney council's road safety team has been praised for their efforts to inform young people about important road safety messages.

MMC, a group of young people from Hackney aged 15-19, proudly premiered the film they have produced, directed and starred in, to help communicate road safety messages to their peers, at a special red-carpet event in Dalston.

Concrete Dreams is the result of a project organised by the road safety team, in partnership with Abbot Street Studios, African Caribbean Development Foundation and Dbiz8 Empowerment Consultancy, which began with a series of free, half term "Make your Messages Count" workshops in October 2009.

The group is made up of ten young people who took part in the workshops, which included drama/script writing, film production, social networking, radio production, advertising and music and dance sessions, and were then selected to develop and produce the film.

Speaking at the premiere, MMC group member Ethan May who was a production assistant said; "It started with statistics. We did a survey of over 200 young people from two different schools in Hackney and realised that only 14 percent actually remember the road safety messages aimed at them. So that is why we created our own road safety film, Concrete Dreams, with support from the council and partners."

The 15-minute film is intended to be used as an educational tool by schools, community organisations and youth groups, and will also be put on YouTube and Facebook.



Members of the Concrete Dream team

£20,000 funding on offer

Applications are invited for the third round of funding available through the RoSPA/BNFL accident prevention scholarship.

This scheme, established with £500,000 of legacy funding following the winding up of BNFL, provides support for safety-related research which will produce defined, practical and influential outcomes to help save lives and prevent injuries.

Grants of up to £20,000 a project per year are available. The closing date for applications for the 2011 round of funding is April 1.

Applications are invited for projects addressing any of the following themes: home safety: to reduce home accidents (particularly data collection/analysis, poverty and deprivation, or child safety); water and

leisure safety: to reduce injuries in water and leisure activities (particularly safety in outdoor education); safety education: to enhance risk understanding and awareness (particularly risk awareness in preparation for work); and general safety: to increase public awareness of safety and accident prevention (particularly safety and risk literacy among key decision makers and communicators).

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents established the scholarship scheme after British Nuclear Fuels donated £500,000 to fund research which would have a significant impact on improving safety in the UK and around the world.

Previously funded projects include: researching into the scale and impact of child in-

juries in Nepal, the threat posed by cold water immersion, the effectiveness of a learner-driver coaching programme, the impact of child safety interventions and perception of approaching vehicles by older motorists.

The RoSPA/BNFL Scholarship Scheme is a unique accident-prevention scheme. It is envisaged that it will run for 10 years, with up to three projects awarded grants annually. The researcher who produces the best work each year will receive a further cash prize as an added incentive for excellence.

For more information, email Roger Bibbings at rbibbings@rospa.com or call him on 0121 248 2095. Further details at www.rospa.com/occupational-safety/occupational_health/bnfl_rospa_scholarship.htm

Work experience is

By Cassius Francis

Since I started work for RoSPA in October 2008, we have supported 11 young people though short-term (one week to six months) placement opportunities with the organisation. Our most recent young person on placement, Jenny Spink, said that she became interested in water safety after seeing a friend almost drown at the age of 11.

With support from Fairbridge West Midlands, Jenny did an initial risk assessment training day at RoSPA HQ to plan an event for young people last Christmas, and as a result she asked if she could come back on placement for two weeks.

Within the context of limited resources in the current economic climate there are legitimate questions about the value of such placements.

My experience suggests that in the framework of

RoSPA's youth participation strategy and the aim of raising the organisation's profile among the 14-19 age group this work has value, but does require careful planning, supervision and evaluation as a minimum in order to be successful.

Well, yes Cassius I hear you say, isn't everyone arguing the same thing to justify their jobs at the moment? Perhaps, there is some truth in that but, don't take my word for it take it from the people who have been involved starting with Jenny herself.

At RoSPA Jenny has been researching about children and young people from the UK who drowned abroad. "I didn't know about the number of drownings which occurred [before the placement]. I have gained experience by doing work which was set in work hours."

Jenny has now signed up for a pool lifeguarding course with Royal Life Saving Soc-

iety in February and in the meantime she aims to work on getting herself fit.

While on placement Jenny was supervised by Nathan Hazlewood, RoSPA's leisure information officer. Nathan

looked at drownings abroad between 1996-2003 but this is the first time this work has been followed up."

This work is not just important within the current economic climate, with the in-

'I have gained experience by doing work which was set in work hours'

has trained on the RoSPA Academy, an internal programme designed to equip members of staff for more senior roles in the future. However, he said, "The placement has really helped Jenny gain experience of a workplace, while developing skills to help her in the future."

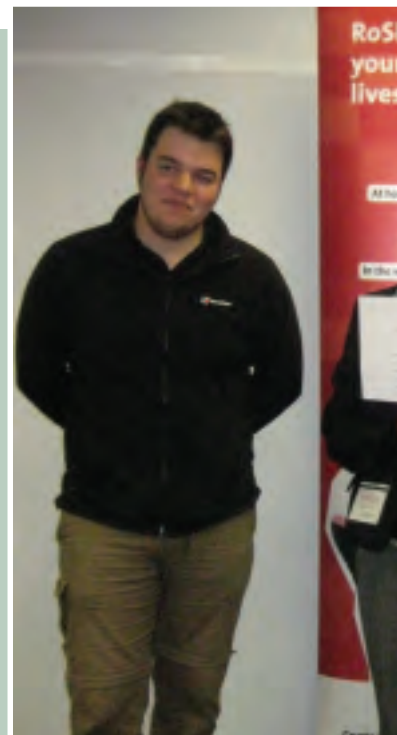
"I think she got more out of the placement than she thought she would. This was due to the level of workload, and the varied tasks involved. This included taking her out of her comfort zone with the final presentation which she had to do. But, the placement was also beneficial to me as it made me aware of the importance of effective communication, and also furthered my management skills including motivation."

What did Jenny actually achieve I hear you say? Through her research, Jenny discovered that 67 children from the UK (42 boys and 25 girls) had drowned abroad between 2003-2009. The largest number of deaths (26) happened in Spain. The most common location was in a swimming pool, where 39 of the drownings happened.

Peter Cornall, head of the Leisure Safety Department at RoSPA said, "The information Jenny has compiled had not been looked at before, so it gave us an opportunity to analyse data and provide further insights into a growing problem. We had previously

vestment which RoSPA has to make in staff time to support the young person while they are hosted on placement, but there are important questions in relation to the political climate and the coalition Government's agenda. The coalition have stated the importance of equipping young people to get them into employment by building their skills.

There also a wider question of the 'Big Society', the Government's initiative designed to enable communi-



Jenny Spink with Nathan Haz

a success story

ties to have more influence and for groups to be able to act with less state interference. Although this is not a policy targeting young people, there are some important themes suggesting how people can play an active role.

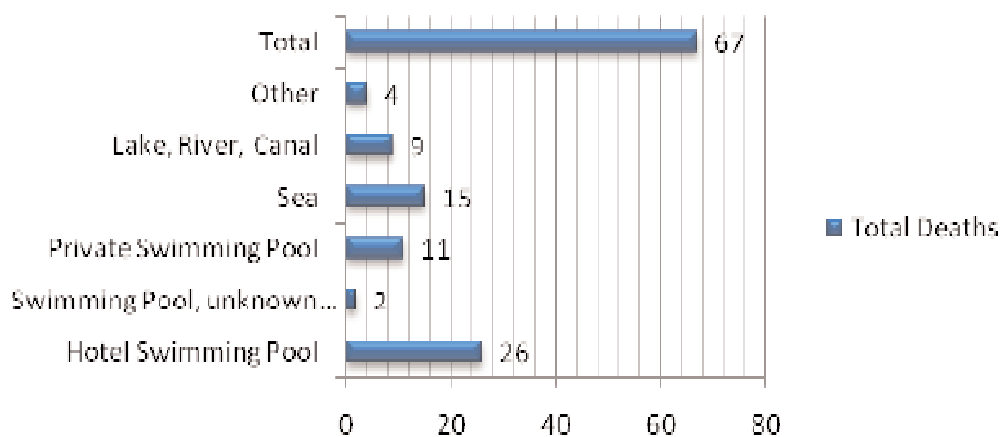
Below is an excerpt from the Cabinet Office document "Building Big Society" which outlines the main themes.

- Encourage people to take an active role in their communities
- We will take a range of measures to encourage volunteering and involvement in social action, including launching a national 'Big Society Day' and making regular community involvement a key element of civil service staff appraisals.
- We will take a range of measures to encourage charitable giving and philanthropy.



elwood, left, and Peter Cornall

Breakdown of Child Drownings 2003 - 2009: Water Type



- We will introduce a National Citizen Service. The initial flagship project will provide a programme for 16 year olds to give them a chance to develop the skills needed to be active and responsible citizens, mix with people from different backgrounds, and start getting involved in their communities.

I would argue that if we are in the business of saving lives and reducing injuries, it is not a huge leap to see how work equipping and giving confidence to young people can also help them to play a more active role in their communities.

In his recent paper, 'Turning Youth Participation into Big Society', Dan Moxon writes, "As with all services youth participation will find 'the age of austerity' a challenging and difficult time in which funding may be cut and services will be under pressure. However, youth participation is able to make a clear contri-

bution to the Government's agenda and has the potential to find and shape a new purpose with the new Government."

What is unclear at the time of writing is the detail of the Government's proposals and there is understandably a lot of uncertainty within all sectors including those of safety

‘Youth participation is able to make a clear contribution to the Government's agenda’

and youth work. What we can be certain of at this time is the value that these opportunities can make to individual lives.

I will leave the final word to Natalie Glanfield, who has worked with Jenny through Fairbridge West Midlands for some time. She said, "The placement met all of the objectives. Jenny gained so much from her 10-day placement particularly regarding work ethic, commitment, time-keeping and hard skills such as IT and giving presentations. There was also the

general work experience and the opportunity for Jenny to work within a team in a formal setting. I would say that everything was beneficial for Jenny,

"I can't praise RoSPA enough for their support and the suitability of the work placement for Jenny. In addition to this the individual staff who supported Jenny really made a difference in increasing her confidence

and assisting her to think about her future aspirations. As a result of the placement, Jenny has recent experience of being in a work environment which has helped her to realise that this is where she wants to be. She has now proved to herself that she can do this."

Web link www.fairbridge.org.uk Fairbridge works with young people aged 13-25 that other organisations find difficult to engage – giving them the motivation, self-confidence and skills they need to change their lives.

New NICE safety guidance

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has published three pieces of complementary guidance which aim to help keep children and young people safe from serious harm.

Unveiled in November, they consider: strategies to prevent unintentional injuries (PH29); home safety assessments and the provision of safety equipment (PH30); and road design and modification (PH31).

RoSPA welcomed the new guidance, which covers England, and said it looked forward to working with NICE and other organisations to turn the recommendations into realities.

NICE's recommendations are based on evidence about

measures which work to save lives and protect children from serious injuries.

Speaking at a briefing about the guidance, Prof Mike Kelly, director of the Centre for Public Health

‘Don't wrap children up in cotton wool’

Excellence at NICE, outlined the reasons behind the three documents. "Unintentional injuries are a leading cause of death and serious injury in children and young people under 15," he said, before explaining that the guidance was aimed particularly at children from disadvantaged backgrounds. "These events are not evenly spread across the population," he said.

While the guidance focuses

on measures which can prevent injuries and deaths, Prof Kelly also stressed that it was not over-the-top. "The intention behind this is not to try to create environments which wrap children up in cotton

wool," he said. "Children need to be as safe as reasonable, not as safe as possible."

Prof Catherine Law, chairman of the Public Health Interventions Advisory Committee at NICE and professor of public health and epidemiology at the University College London Institute of Child Health, told the briefing about the road design and modification recommendations.

These include measures to

reduce speed, such as 20mph limits and zones, and consulting children and young people to ensure they are implemented in the right places. "It makes sense to make these changes where children are - where they walk, where they live, where they play," she said. "And engineering measures should be considered for particular routes, not just particular streets."

Welcoming the guidance, RoSPA said it was delighted that its guiding principles - that minor injuries, such as bumps and bruises, are a normal part of childhood, and that life should be "as safe as necessary, not as safe as possible" - were recognised.

RoSPA also supports the focus given to injury surveillance as a vital tool in determining accident trends and prevention strategies, and evaluating the effectiveness of interventions. The UK had a world-leading injury surveillance system until 2002 and, since then, RoSPA has campaigned for the re-instatement of data collection and analysis.

And in the road safety guidance, the focus on slowing down traffic in areas commonly used by children is welcomed by RoSPA.

There are a variety of leisure-related recommendations in the "strategies" guidance, including about the provision of water safety information during swimming lessons, something RoSPA has called for over a number of years.

In all three documents, RoSPA supports the general focus on preventing serious accidents to disadvantaged children who have, for a long time, been known to be one of the most vulnerable groups.

The guidance and quick reference guides are available online at: www.nice.org.uk/guidance/PH29; www.nice.org.uk/guidance/PH30; and www.nice.org.uk/guidance/PH31.

Message goes on DVD



Building on the success of their own peer-to-peer safety project, students from Heartlands Academy in Birmingham have been working on a resource to help other schools run similar initiatives.

The students spent the last year working with the Child Safety Education Coalition and a variety of supporting organisations to deliver their

Have Fun Be Safe project, which culminated in a school-wide programme of activities during Child Safety Week in June.

They recently met up once again with representatives of CSEC and the supporting organisations to work on a DVD toolkit for other schools.

The purpose of the 45-minute DVD is to help teachers

or group leaders facilitate a group of 14-19-year-olds in the delivery of a high quality practical safety education project.

The documentary-style DVD follows the week-long programme of events co-ordinated by the Heartlands students, covering road traffic injuries, trips and falls, burns and scalds, drowning and poisoning.

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