

RSE Newsletter

“Don’t throw them on the mercy of their own good sense”

“Young drivers need quality practice”, says Samuel Charlton who recently joined the RSE Advisory Council.

Sam currently has research projects on drivers’ impairment from alcohol, their awareness of their own impairment, drivers’ perception, and their speed choice compared to road conditions.

The reason Sam is interested in this area is that most adults drive, and they drive a lot. “They are skilled at it and I’m interested in attention, memory and problem-solving in skilled behaviour.”

“If we get it right, we can find out a lot about how the mind works; and by choosing to study it with driving it has huge payoffs in reducing the number of lives lost and increasing efficiencies in travel.”

“ Young drivers need to make good decisions when they start out because very soon after that they become automated and they don’t think about it any longer ”

“Even when driving on autopilot on a familiar route, part of your mind is always working - the monitoring process – guiding your behaviour using the skills you’ve built up. If this monitoring process sees something hazardous, it will try to get your conscious mind’s attention. But if your conscious mind is filled up, for example if you are thinking

hard about something, or having a cell-phone conversation, it takes longer to get that attention.”

Sam says this affects young people more. “They don’t have quite as much experience and can’t predict when something bad is going to happen.” We asked Sam what were priority areas for young driver and passenger road safety education.

“Don’t throw them on the mercy of their own good sense”, he says. “They’ve never seen those situations before.”

“Young drivers are the same as anyone else, and I’ve never met anyone who wanted to be a bad driver. The problem is that most drivers don’t have a model of what it is to be a good driver. With movies like Fast and Furious, and even older shows like the Dukes of Hazard,



“ Young people are, very often, more passionate and put more emotional energy into talking to someone in the car or on a phone, and have a harder time regulating that. ”

Young drivers need quality practice he says. “Not just hours behind the wheel and not where parents quit their involvement as soon as the young driver gets their licence. There’s a role for parents even when their son or daughter gets their full licence, for example the first time going on a long journey of many hours - they are different situations and young drivers have never experienced that. A bad storm or a unsealed road are other examples. If you care about your children you should still be involved.”

the only role models they have are drivers who go very fast”, Sam said.

Through the RYDA program we strive to change all that by introducing students to good community role models, such as police and driving instructors and asking them to rethink their ideas about road use.

Please see page 4 for more information on Sam Charlton and his appointment to the RSE Advisory Council.

The hidden road toll

A message from the CEO/MD, Terry Birss

The number of serious injuries from road crashes was described as “an unspoken, invisible epidemic” by Associate Professor Michael Fitzharris from Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC). He was speaking to the Innovative thinking in reducing road trauma Seminar in Melbourne recently.

The death toll on Australia’s roads in 2014 was 1,153 however it was highlighted by A/Prof Fitzharris that 32,500 people were seriously injured by road crashes in the same period.

For each reported road death there are a further 28 people with a permanent life changing road crash injury!

He posed the question - what does serious injury mean? The stereotypical view of a hospital stay and an eventual full recovery, he said, was misleading and he went on to list the permanent affects of car crash injuries - inability to do seemingly minor tasks such as shopping (lifting items off high shelves), inability to return to work in weight-bearing occupations, depression, alcohol and drug abuse, sleep disorder, post-traumatic intrusive thoughts and relationship problems.

He urged participants to push for a serious injury toll to get the same status as the ‘official’ road toll (of deaths). This, he said, would give a truer indication of the real cost of crashes - estimated at \$27 billion peryear in Australia. He urged people to reflect on the discrimination that the injured face. A/Prof Fitzharris called for a re-creation of the road safety conversation, and seeing crash prevention as an investment in people.

Since its beginning, RSE has worked alongside brain and spinal injury organisations to not only share stories of the car-crash injured with thousands of young people, but to support injured people in their rehabilitation through community engagement. The session is highly rated with students and teachers, but importantly, achieves the outcomes of a best practice road safety education program.

Crash presenters make an impact

- but all in context

One of RYDA’s aims is for students to increase their understanding of road risk and reflect on the consequences of a crash.

In the new After the Crash session, students interact with someone who’s had a crash resulting in brain or spinal injuries. The session was part of the earliest program but has gone through a series of changes. RYDA 3.0 represents a further development.

After a brief introduction describing the effects of such injuries, the speaker tells their story focusing on the lead up to the crash and the effect on their life - short and long term. The second part of the session is student questions and responses. They are asked to predict the effect of a similar crash on their hopes and dreams for the future. The session ends with discussion and further interactions with the presenter.

The session integrates with other sessions where students develop strategies to reduce their risks for the most common causes of young driver crashes. This contrasts with programs where the crash speaker is the sole component of the program or where students are left without an opportunity to process road safety messages.

Gary Farrow, an experienced Crash Presenter from New Zealand made the following observation: “I’ve delivered my stories at school and at RYDA. I really notice the difference the context of the RYDA program makes. In schools I get the feeling that students think it’s a sad story but don’t get, as they do at RYDA, that it could happen to them and they can develop strategies to avoid it.”

You can learn more about Gary on the back page of this Newsletter.



RYDA 3.0 - as the students see it

We’ve been asking students to write in and tell us what their favourite RYDA session was and why, here’s what Caroline from Abbotsleigh had to say:

“After the Crash provided a real life situation in a common scenario which gave me a deeper insight into the consequences of a crash”

Teachers welcome RYDA 3.0

We have spent the first term of the school year delivering RYDA 3.0 at our metropolitan schools. Although the program was extensively piloted in 2014, term one gave us the opportunity to seek even more feedback from teachers and make small tweaks before training and rolling out at regional venues.

As part of this process, we have been talking to and surveying teachers on their reaction to the changes.

The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. The two new sessions, The Personality Test and Genevieve's Story, have been especially welcomed by teachers.

Sandy Begg, deputy principal of Green Bay High School in Auckland described the

Personality Test session as "awesome", saying that it added to the program. Geoff Wood, Rosmini College's head of health liked that it was anticipatory.

About Genevieve's Story, one teacher from Covenant Christian School said "I am also challenged by Genevieve's Story and how I am going to ensure my kids are well prepared when they start to drive."

Another teacher, from the same school added "I liked the GPS as it involved students in the learning process".

Through surveying, 92% of teachers rated the new program as worthwhile or very worthwhile. One commented, "this is an extremely important program which is needed by all young people who are learning to drive or just got their P plates."

We also used the time in term one to gather feedback from facilitators and government agencies. Again, the vibe is great with one respected government agency stating "it is good to see activities that encourage young drivers to develop practical and usable strategies that are relevant to young driver situations".

Term 2 sees the program adopted at all remaining venues across Australia and New Zealand. We would like to thank all who provided insight during this latest stage of evaluation. We also thank our partners in Rotary who have taken on the challenge of identifying and recruiting new facilitators and updating their venues with the resources needed for the new program. It's been hard work but this latest feedback from students and teachers makes it all worthwhile.

Caring for your PETS in Victoria

No, not the dog or cat but Rotary PETS – the Presidents Elect Training Seminar.

Each year all incoming Rotary Club Presidents attend a training seminar to receive information and plan club activities for the year commencing July. This year approximately 400 "Presidents Elect" from all five Rotary Districts in Victoria gathered in Ballarat for two days - under the 2015-16 Rotary theme of "Be a gift to the World" the future club presidents were encouraged to make a genuine difference in the lives of others and to leave behind something real and lasting.

Embracing the theme, the Presidents Elect gave an overwhelming response to the RYDA presentation given by RSE Director of Program Development Greg Rappo.

At the RSE display booth we were pleased to receive expressions of interest from 59 Rotary clubs from across the state who wish to become involved and support their local high schools to attend the RYDA Program. The support shown by the Victorian Presidents Elect and the five incoming Rotary District Governors has helped us to expand the awareness of our program to every corner of Victoria. From Warrnambool to Sale, Albury to the Mornington Peninsula, Swan Hill and Bendigo to Geelong we couldn't have asked for a better response from our community partner.

One incoming Victorian District Governor is even considering adopting RYDA as his district project for the upcoming Rotary year and will be visiting a RYDA program day in April along with three Rotary Clubs to see what it's all about.

Our Victorian Program Venue Coordinator, Catherine Smith, is busily following up all leads and heading off to deliver presentations to Rotary Clubs and their members. If you'd like Catherine to present to your Rotary Club, please contact her at catherine@rse.org.au or on 0412 625 847.



RYDA 3.0 - as the students see it

Here's why Austin from Nuriootpa High School thought "Speed and Stopping" topped the list.

"the stopping distances demonstration really emphasized that being over a few kilometres can have massive effect"

RSE welcomes Dr Samuel Charlton to the Advisory Council

It is with pleasure that we announce the appointment of Dr Samuel Charlton to RSE's Advisory Council.

Sam, originally from the USA, is Associate Professor and Head of the School of Psychology at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand.

A member of the Traffic and Road Safety Research Group (TARS) for the past 20 years, his work has examined a range of road issues such as driver attentiveness and fatigue, driver risk perception, acute protracted error effects associated with alcohol, the effect of phones on driver performance, the conspicuity and comprehension of hazard warning signs, and the design of self-explaining roads.

Sam is also interested in driving as skilled behaviour, and how it can inform theory development in attention, decision-making, and automaticity of performance.

For many years he was technical director of human factors and training analysis for the US Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center. His work on human performance issues for the Global Positioning System, the Consolidated Space Operations Center, and other key projects earned him the US Air Force's Exemplary Civilian Service Medal in 1993. In 2005 the NZ Automobile Association recognised his work in the area of driver behaviour by awarding it's first-ever Research Excellence Award.

We are excited that Sam has committed to sharing his expertise with the Council, which consists of three other world renowned road safety psychologists, Professor Barry Watson, Associate Professor Teresa Senserrick and Dr Neale Kinnear.

Sam replaces Dr Dorothy Begg who resigned from the Council after a two and a half year tenure. We thank Dorothy for her contribution and wish her well in her future endeavours.



More RSE recruits

While we're on the topic of new faces... we have three more to welcome to the team.

Simone Randle has recently taken on the role of Program Venue Manager, New Zealand. Simone is a project manager with more than nine years of experience working in the child injury prevention and road safety field. She has implemented evidence-based initiatives to address a range of road safety issues including driveway safety, child passenger safety, cycling and pedestrian safety.

Simone is a strong collaborator and has fostered solid relationships with key stakeholders across the health, road safety, and injury prevention sectors.

With a special interest in programme evaluation and formerly the lead evaluator for Safekids Aotearoa, Simone received



Simone Randle stands with members of the Rotary Club of Henderson and welcomes the boys from Rosmini College to the RYDA Program

the gold award in the evaluation category at the 2012 Safety Media Awards.

Sydney also has a new Program Venue Coordinator in Leonie Bosworth.

Leonie has extensive experience as a production coordinator, responsible for event production and project delivery. Leonie has worked closely with stakeholders and volunteers on a variety of community and corporate events.

In her most recent role she has worked with sponsors and exhibitors; managing production and onsite requirements while monitoring the progress and quality throughout the event. Leonie enjoys the onsite element of events, working with volunteers and managing logistics.

Finally, we are also pleased to have Joe Broun as part of the RSE team. Joe has joined us as Senior Accounts Administrator for RSE Australia and New Zealand. He brings with him a wealth of knowledge and experience, having spent the last 30 years in the field of accounting in a variety of industries. Joe's role is part time and based out of the national office.

Three great additions to the RSE team. They each bring with them experience, fresh ideas and a lot of enthusiasm for the work of Road Safety Education and the RYDA Program.

The end of speeding: new traffic apps encourage road safety

Excerpt from 26 February article by Paul Cleary, published in *The Australian*

It's a familiar occurrence on our roads. A line of traffic approaches a speed camera, slowing down to a respectable 10km/h below the limit, until it passes the camera — and then the cars accelerate past the speed limit again.

But what if the speed of all motorists was constantly monitored? This would eliminate the need for costly cameras and the familiar conga line of cars slowing down to pass them. Some will feel increased monitoring of our speeding is an excessive intrusion into our lives, but it might help save lives.

In fact, the technology is already here, but it's the private sector, not government, that is rolling it out. Trucking companies use global positioning system technology to check that drivers take regular breaks and

don't speed. Transport companies use the technology, which is sophisticated enough to even monitor excessive braking and acceleration.

You no longer need to buy expensive tracking devices, as smartphones can accurately track speed and even acceleration and braking via GPS.

Companies in the US and Britain have unveiled a range of apps that track driving but can also cut out distractions like SMS messages, emails and phone calls.

Some of the apps are pitched at parents who want to make sure that their teenage children drive safely, while others are designed for insurance companies. Here's a closer look at a few of them...



There's an APP for that

- TextArrest: Disables texting and email on smartphones while driving.
- ZoomSafer: Limits access to email, texting, browsing, and calling when driving.
- Key2SafeDriving: Restricts phone use when car is running and sends automated replies to incoming texts.
- The AAMI Safe Driver: Monitors speed, breaking, acceleration, phone use and gives report on compliance.
- RMS Speed Adviser: Tells drivers what the speed limit is and alerts them when they exceed it.
- Samsung S-Drive: Limited trial in Australia. Cuts the phone's signal while driving and tracks speed.



Facebook chatter

RSE's Facebook page 'Roadchoices' featured plenty of great stories and photos of students attending RYDA programs in the beginning of 2015 in New Zealand (Waitakere & Wairarapa) and also in regional NSW at Dubbo.

We also featured a great social media campaign from the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020. The campaign, called #SaveKidsLives, is a call for action to mark UN Global Road Safety Week in May 2015. It also urges world leaders to include a target to halve road traffic fatalities globally in the Post-2015 Development Goals, so that kids everywhere can be kept safe. Head to their website and sign the declaration to show your support. You can also take a #safie and post it online to help raise awareness the campaign – we've posted ours!

Our 2015 Bumper Sticker winner was announced and we are currently featuring the winning design as our



Pictured clockwise from top: Martin Page (BOC), Leonie Bosworth, David Murray and Greg Rappo (RSE)

Below: the winning entry in the 2014 Bumper Sticker comp



Facebook background. Congrats again to Jonathan from Girraween High School who is the proud owner of an Apple iPad.

And last but not least we shared a link to our very own Greg Rappo (Director Program Development) who was invited to appear on ABC 24, to discuss the issue of youth road trauma. Nice work Greg!

Did you miss any of these great stories over the past few months? Head to our Facebook page RoadChoices to catch up. And don't forget to find us on Instagram @ryda_program.



RYDA 3.0 - as the students see it

Claudia from Cheltenham Girls High School voted "Genevieve's Story" as her favourite session. Here's what she said:

"This session was relatable and made me realise how something so small and simple can change your life and everyone else's around you for the worse. It taught me to appreciate what I have and to not take risks that could end it all in seconds."

Inside the GPS

A brand new feature of the RYDA program is the new student booklet, the GPS - a place to record GOALS, PLANS and STRATEGIES.

Originally designed as a workbook for use during the day, the booklet has evolved into so much more. It is designed to be taken home and shared with classmates and family and used as the start of a personal road map to safe driving.

It's a place where students record their thoughts and complete some of the personalisation exercises from the sessions. Each session has a page or two where they can write down

information and thoughts about different issues.

We've also included trivia and fun facts, links to further resources, self-coaching tips and suggested follow-up exercises and discussions for home or back in class.

Finally, the booklet contains the student's Certificate of Attendance, which is a great addition to a burgeoning resume.

The GPS asks students to "set their course" and develop strategies to become a safer person around cars, support friends and lessen their chances of being in a crash.



Inside the teenage brain

Why Teens Are Impulsive, Addiction-Prone And Should Protect Their Brains

Excerpt from npr.org's health blog

Teens can't control impulses and make rapid, smart decisions like adults can — but why?

Research into how the human brain develops helps explain. In a teenager, the frontal lobe of the brain, which controls decision-making, is built but not fully insulated — so signals move slowly.

"Teenagers are not as readily able to access their frontal lobe to say, 'Oh, I better not do this,'" Dr. Frances Jensen tells *Fresh Air's* Terry Gross.

Jensen, who's a neuroscientist and was a single mother of two boys who are now in their 20s, wrote *The Teenage Brain* to explore the science of how the brain

grows — and why teenagers can be especially impulsive, moody and not very good at responsible decision-making.

"We have a natural insulation ... called myelin," she says. "It's a fat, and it takes time. Cells have to build myelin, and they grow it around the outside of these tracks, and that takes years."

This insulation process starts in the back of the brain and heads toward the front. Brains aren't fully mature until people are in their early 20s, possibly late 20s and maybe even beyond, Jensen says.

"The last place to be connected — to be fully myelinated — is the front of your brain," Jensen says. "And what's in the

front? Your prefrontal cortex and your frontal cortex. These are areas where we have insight, empathy, these executive functions such as impulse control, risk-taking behavior."

The interview goes on to cover topics such as:

- why teenagers are more prone to addiction
- the effects of binge drinking and marijuana on the teenage brain
- teenagers' access to constant stimuli; and
- not allowing teenagers to have their cellphones at night

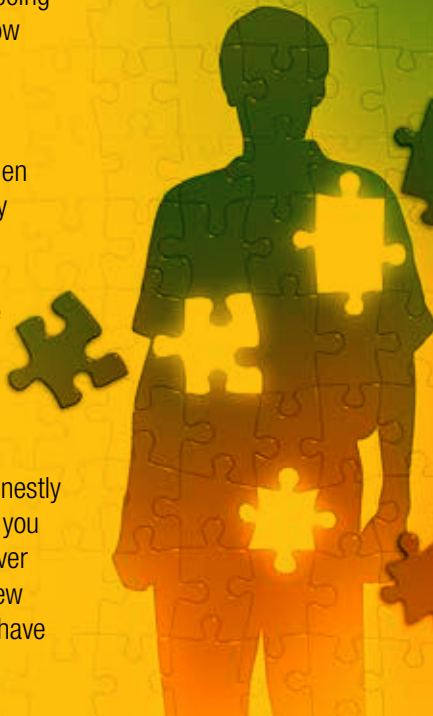
Google this article's sub-heading if you would like to read more.

How's your self control?

If you had to answer these questions on a scale of one to five (with one being "never" and five being "always") how would you do?

- » I think before I act
- » If someone is angry at me, or when I'm in a hurry I find it easy to stay calm and not get affected
- » Even with lots of things going on around me I can still concentrate on the task at hand
- » I am a patient person – I don't get frustrated quickly.

Could you answer the questions honestly and what would those answers tell you about your own risk profile as a driver or passenger? It's all part of the new Personality Test session and you'll have to attend RYDA to find out!



RSE Joins the United Nations Global Road Safety Week



Road traffic injuries are a pressing global health concern with approx 1.3 million people killed on the world's roads each year and up to 50 million people seriously injured. RSE supports the United Nations sponsored Decade of Action for Road Safety and this year will be actively involved in the UN Road Safety Week to held in the first week of May under the banner of SaveKidsLives. Watch our Website and Facebook page for students at RYDA showing their support to SaveKidsLives.

BOC - Leading the way

A Member of The Linde Group

At RYDA, students develop strategies to manage distractions, especially the increasing problem of mobile phones. In an effort to reduce driver distractions and motor vehicle incidents, the program's founding sponsor BOC has set a good by banning the use of mobile phones, including hands-free devices, while driving in company vehicles or on company business.

The BOC policy to not use any communication device while driving is only one of the "Golden Rules for Driving" established within BOC to demonstrate that safety is BOC's top priority. The BOC "Golden Rules for Driving" have a focus on a wide range of driver behaviours to ensure that vehicles are operated safely and responsibly at all times including always wearing a seatbelt, driving appropriately for the conditions and within the speed limit and not driving when fatigued.



Local council support for RYDA

The RYDA Program receives fantastic local council support around Australia and New Zealand.

An example of this was seen at our Logan venue in Brisbane when Logan Road Safety Advisory Committee Chairperson and Deputy Mayor, Cllr Russell Lutton, attended a recent program. Mr Lutton said that he was

proud Council could provide such a great facility for the program, which is supported by Rotary Clubs. "It's very important that we create a positive attitude to driving in young people, and I think it should be compulsory for all young drivers to attend a program like this."

Thanks to the Logan City Council for their ongoing support.

RYDA 3.0

- as the students see it

Hao from Wellington Secondary College loved "The Personality Test". Here's why

"Through The Personality Test I found out more about the area in which I need to improve and different tips that allow me to easily reflect on myself and take necessary actions to overcome the weak areas."

A story to share..... Gary Farrow, crash survivor

Every day, 90 New Zealanders sustain a brain injury. It happens mainly to men and boys under the age of 34.

Gary Farrow shares his story about his traumatic brain injury....

One sunny day in February seven years ago, Gary Farrow set out on a road trip from Auckland. He packed supplies for the day and headed to Whangarei. On the way home Gary's life changed forever when a drunk driver ploughed head-on into Gary's car.

Aged 19 at the time of the crash, Gary was studying politics at university, and looking forward to a career as a political journalist. The crash changed all that.

"As well as countless broken bones, I suffered a traumatic brain injury. I spent over two months in hospital, and another seven and a half months in a live-in rehab centre. For years after that, I underwent several days of intensive physiotherapy and occupational therapy, every week."

With all the muscles in the right side of his body permanently affected, Gary had to learn basic functions, like walking, all over again. A right-hander by nature, he's had to teach himself to write with his left.

"These days, I can get around all right. But I walk with an unusual gait and can only use one hand to perform everyday tasks. That puts extra strain on my body, so I'm starting to experience flow-on effects such as tendonitis and joint issues."

Gary eventually went back to university, completing his degree in 2010. But the ongoing effects of his traumatic brain injury means he still gets tired easily, and can't concentrate for long periods. Given the intensity of the world of political journalism, Gary no longer sees it as a viable career option. He's currently a volunteer worker for a student radio station, and a public speaker for various organisations promoting road safety.

Gary is a frequent speaker at the RYDA Program telling his story to over 5,000 students across Auckland in the past

couple of years. It is no surprise that he has a huge impact on attending students.

Harmony from Kelston Girls High School posted on Facebook, "Thank you for sharing your inspiring story with us, it took a lot of strength & courage to do what you did for us! Sharing a tragic time in your life to give us a better understanding of how important road choices are, you made a great impact on our yr12 girls & I know you made a major impact on me. I will think twice (when I start to drive) about my road choices. A BIG thank you to the programme, without it we wouldn't have learnt as much as we did! Thank you once again."

What drives Gary to share his story? "I want to see our roads safer in the future. I don't want any people to experience what I have, and the reactions of these students tells me that we are indeed saving people from that fate. Today's children are the future, and it is fantastic that they are able to willingly learn these lessons from RYDA".

Pictured, Gary Farrow (left) and with students from Kelston Girls High (below)



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