

Road Safety Research Report 102

**Child–Parent Interaction in
Relation to Road Safety
Education: Part 2 – Main Report**

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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	10
1 INTRODUCTION	26
1.1 A note on terminology	27
1.2 Background	28
1.2.1 Accident statistics and the epidemiology of child road traffic accidents	28
1.2.2 Previous research	31
1.3 Conceptual framework	33
1.3.1 Project overview	38
1.3.1.1 Systematic review	38
1.3.1.2 Empirical study	38
1.3.1.2.1 Children’s and young people’s perspective	38
1.3.1.2.2 Parent’s perspective	38
2 METHODOLOGY	39
2.1 Project outline	39
2.2 Location of the study	40
2.3 Observation of roadside interactions between parents and children	41
2.3.1 Site selection	42
2.3.2 Development of the observation recording schedules	43
2.3.2.1 Child–parent pedestrian schedule	43
2.3.2.2 Car and bus use schedule	44
2.3.2.3 Cycling schedule	44
2.3.2.4 Reliability	44
2.3.2.5 Researcher familiarisation with the observation schedule	45
2.3.3 Conduct of the observation	45
2.3.3.1 Timing	45
2.3.3.2 The sample	45
2.3.3.3 Ethical considerations and safety	46

3 FINDINGS	65
3.1 Observation of road safety interactions between parents and children	65
3.1.1 Pedestrian activity	66
3.1.1.1 Control	66
3.1.1.2 Patterns of control	72
3.1.1.3 Levels of parent–child interaction	74
3.1.1.4 The effect of the environment on control and specific interaction	75
3.1.2 Modelling	79
3.1.3 Other methods of learning	81
3.1.3.1 Gender	84
3.1.3.2 Ethnicity	85
3.1.4 Scooters, tricycles, bicycles, cars and buses	85
3.1.4.1 Use of scooters	85
3.1.4.2 Cycling	85
3.1.4.3 Car behaviour	87
3.1.4.4 Bus behaviour	88
3.1.5 General findings	89
3.2 Children’s and young people’s perspectives	91
3.2.1 Draw and write	91
3.2.1.1 The sample	91
3.2.1.2 General comments	92
3.2.1.3 Key Stage 1: key themes	93
3.2.1.4 Key Stage 2: key themes	96
3.2.1.5 Comparison of areas	106
3.2.1.6 Summary of progression	108
3.2.1.7 Summary	110
3.2.2 Focus group discussions	110
3.2.2.1 Participants	111
3.2.2.2 Young people’s perceptions of risks on the roads	111
3.2.2.3 Influence of others on young people’s road safety behaviour	114

3.3.1.4	Preparing children to be independent road users	149
3.3.1.5	Cycling behaviour	152
3.3.1.6	Car behaviour and seat-belt use	153
3.3.1.7	Parents as providers of road safety education	154
3.3.1.8	Comparison of children's and parents' perceptions of effectiveness	156
3.3.1.9	Additional support required by parents	158
3.3.1.10	What was not said by parents?	160
3.3.1.11	Summary	161
3.3.2	Survey	162
3.3.2.1	Respondent profile	162
3.3.2.2	The children's profile	165
3.3.2.3	When parents start and stop teaching their children about road safety	167
3.3.2.4	How parents teach their children about road safety	169
3.3.2.5	Letting children out on their own	181
3.3.2.6	Going out on a bike	186
3.3.2.7	How parents try to keep their children safe when going out on a bike	187
3.3.2.8	Driving children in a car	189
3.3.2.9	Teaching children about road safety while driving in a car	190
3.3.2.10	Perceived effectiveness of different methods of teaching road safety	192
3.3.2.11	Challenges for parents in teaching their children about road safety	197
3.3.2.12	Summary	201
4	SYNTHESIS AND DISCUSSION	203
4.1	Perception of risk	203
4.1.1	Children/young people	203
4.1.2	Parents	204

APPENDIX 6: Summary of the observation fieldwork	240
APPENDIX 7: Focus group discussions with young people – interview schedule	243
APPENDIX 8: Focus group discussions with parents, round 1 – interview schedule	245
APPENDIX 9: Focus group discussions with parents, round 2 – interview schedule	247
APPENDIX 10: Survey of parents – questionnaire	249

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

- Children and young people are particularly vulnerable road users.
- Child pedestrian injury rates are poor compared with the rest of Europe.
- The factors that impact on children's road safety and their capability in traffic are numerous, multi-faceted and complex.
- The systematic review conducted by Cattani *et al.* (2008) as the initial phase of this study shows that:
 - parents see themselves as being responsible for developing their children's road safety awareness and skills;
 - holding hands is the most common road-crossing interaction between parents and children;
 - adults rarely make use of road-crossing events to give oral instructions;
 - few parents and children are consistent in their road-crossing behaviour;
 - roadside training by volunteer parents for groups of children can lead to significant improvements in children's road safety behaviour;
 - belief in fate seems to influence the likelihood of parents using restraints, such as seat belts or car seats, with their children; and
 - parents' understanding of the child's perspective in carrying out road safety tasks and their motivation to actively involve their child in making decisions at the roadside can be improved through training.
- Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) suggests that the modelling role of parents can make a significant contribution to children's learning about road use and their development of traffic competence whether or not parents are aware of this.
- The main aim of this study was to explore the way parents influence children and young people aged 0–16 years to be safer road users.
- This study included children and young people aged 5–16 and parents of children aged 0–16 years old.

Methodology

In order to explore child–parent interaction in relation to road safety education, multiple research methods were used:

- The research took a three-pronged approach focusing on:
 - observation of roadside interactions between parents and children;
 - the parent's perspective; and
 - children's and young people's perspective.

