

# Joint Media Release

7 February 2005

## Children back at schools: Motorists encouraged to slow down

**A region-wide campaign to encourage motorists to slow down around children starts today. Organised by RoadSafe Auckland, the 'Slow Down, Children Around' campaign provides a timely reminder for motorists that children often do the unexpected and dash across the road without warning.**



Campaign poster being used by nearly 200 schools across the Auckland region.

Children are particularly vulnerable on their journey to and from school as this is when traffic flows on main roads peak and pedestrian-related crashes typically occur.

“As motorists, we have a duty to look out for the unexpected and slow down where children may be around, particularly near schools sited on busy roads,” says Auckland Regional Transport Authority Chief Executive Alan Thompson.

“We are now in the peak child-pedestrian crash months. Billboards reinforcing the campaign message will be in place in bus shelters along main roads throughout February and March to serve as a reminder to motorists to slow down,” he says.

Lynell Martin, Principal of Glen Innes School, supports RoadSafe Auckland's Slow Down, Children Around campaign.

“Many of our families are keen to walk to school but are often concerned for their children's safety as motorists speed, or ignore the school crossing altogether. It's great to see this work being done to make the journey to school safer. We are using this campaign as a springboard to hold a pedestrian safety poetry competition and trial a walking school bus to make walking to our school even safer,” says Mrs Martin.

Nearly 200 schools have erected large posters in prominent locations to remind motorists of the need to take care. Participating schools are also distributing handouts that outline the campaign message and reinforce safe road-crossing behaviour to students and parents.

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**Photo caption:**

Alan Thompson, Chief Executive of the Auckland Regional Transport Authority and Lynell Martin, Principal of Glen Innes School with the campaign poster displayed at around 200 schools across the Auckland region.

High resolution photograph available on request.

**Child pedestrian safety facts:**

- Each year, there are over 120 child pedestrian injuries, including five deaths, on Auckland's roads.
- 38 percent of all child pedestrian injuries occur in the Auckland region. There are approximately 46 child pedestrian injuries per 100,000 children each year in the Auckland region compared with 38 for the whole country. Auckland, Gisborne, Wellington and Otago regions are the worst in the country with around 46-47 child pedestrian injuries per 100,000 children.
- Child pedestrian safety is an increasing issue for the Auckland Region with peaks in casualties around February (9% of total) to March (13% of total) and May (13%) each year.
- School aged children (generally more males than females for each age) are particularly vulnerable to pedestrian injury, especially before and after school times (54% of all child pedestrian crashes in the last 5 years occurred between 7-8am and 3-5pm on weekdays).
- The risk of death to pedestrians relative to motor vehicle speed rises from 10 percent at 30kph to 70 percent at 50kph and 90 percent at 60kph.

This initiative is primarily funded by Land Transport New Zealand.

RoadSafe Auckland is a region wide road safety group made up of representatives from Auckland's seven Territorial Local Authorities, Regional Council, Auckland Regional Transport Authority, Land Transport New Zealand, NZ Police, Transit New Zealand, ACC, Auckland Regional Public Health Service, Safekids, Alcohol Advisory Council and the Ministry of Health.

[www.roadsafeauckland.org.nz](http://www.roadsafeauckland.org.nz)

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**ARTA is responsible for the integrated planning, funding and implementation of all modes of public transport throughout the Auckland region.**

**ARTA is part of the Auckland Regional Council's family of organisations.**