



ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS IN SCOTLAND

NEWS RELEASE

Embargoed until 00:01 hours 20-06-08

Thursday, 19 June 2008

KEEP AN EYE ON THE KIDS AS SUMMER ARRIVES

Between 2002 and 2006, Scottish government statistics showed that on average one in every five road-related crashes involving children resulted in a school-aged child being killed or seriously injured.

During that same period, the statistics showed that on average one in every eight children who were killed in those road crashes died as a result of a journey to or from school.

Those startling figures, from the Scottish government's report, "*Road Accidents Scotland 2006*", are a concern to the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS). While the report reveals that child road injuries have been halved during the past 25 years, the number of children killed on a journey to or from school has remained constant - an average of two a year - since 2001.

The government report revealed that on average annually another 78 were seriously injured with 377 slightly injured while going to or from school during the same period. Three-quarters of those casualty cases were children walking to or from school, while the remainder were from crashes involving cars, buses or coaches, pedal cycles or other modes of transportation.

"With the school year ending next week and summer fast approaching, ACPOS and the Scottish Police Service would like to remind parents and motorists to be more aware of child safety – from children playing on or near roadways to them buckling up in the family car or even when abroad," said Chief Constable John Vine (Tayside Police), Chair of the ACPOS Road Policing Business Area.

To remind parents and motorists of their responsibilities, Scottish police forces will conduct the third of four '*Seatbelt / Speeding Days of Action*' for 2008 on Friday, June 20 with a special emphasis on children's journeys to and from school.

"During the school year, a whole host of public agencies, including police forces, strive to ensure that every child has a safe route to school whether it is by walking, by bicycling or any other means of transport," he added. "But the task of ensuring child safety becomes all the more difficult when school breaks for the summer holidays."

The same government statistics showed that June and September are the two months of the year when there are more casualties involving children. Whether it is a weekday or weekend, more children are killed or injured at the end or start of the school year.

In 1999, the Scottish government challenged the motorists to reduce deaths and injury on our roads and set demanding targets for casualty reduction.

“Scottish police forces are fully committed to reducing child fatal / serious casualties as part of the ACPOS Road Policing Strategy,” Chief Constable Vine concluded.

“The Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland looks forward to the driving public’s continuing support to do this and Friday’s ‘*Seatbelt/Speeding Day of Action*’ is one way of reminding parents and motorists of their responsibility in saving lives.”

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For further information, contact Graham MacDonell, ACPOS Communications, at: 0141 435 1241 or 07771 842 881 out-of-hours.

Notes to the Editor:

Information on road casualties involving children can be found in “*Road Accidents Scotland 2006*” published by the Scottish Government at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/11/20143740/0>