

Thursday, 20 August 2009**For Immediate Use**

PARENTS URGED TO SET A GOOD EXAMPLE

SCOTTISH road policing chiefs are urging parents to be responsible when driving with children in their vehicles.

In 2007 over 1800 children were injured on Scotland's roads. This figure included nearly 900 pedestrians, 174 who were riding their bicycle but also over 750 who were travelling as passengers.

Experts acknowledge that children can pick up the habits of their parents from an early age and this is especially true when travelling by car. Children invariably follow the examples set by their parents including the wearing of seatbelts.

In an effort to drive home the message, all eight Scottish police forces are taking part in a one day campaign organised by ACPOS which is planned to coincide with the return to school for many children following the summer holidays. The campaign will take place on Thursday 20 August 2009.

Chief Superintendent Brian Anderson from Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary, the ACPOS Road Policing lead for Casualty Reduction said:

“Scottish forces along with our road safety partners continually strive to reduce the number of casualties on our roads. With the schools returning from a summer break this is an appropriate time to remind drivers to drive carefully especially around schools and for children to also take extra care.

The number of children injured on our roads is reducing year by year but too many still become the victim of a road crash. We all have a responsibility to ensure they complete their journeys safely, from parents who ensure their children wear a seatbelt or a cycle helmet, to motorists taking real care when passing schools.”

Michel McDonnell, Director, Road Safety Scotland said: “Children are one of the most vulnerable groups of road users, and the gradual development of their body strength means that, for long period of time, they are unlikely to be able to escape injury or withstand the trauma of an accident, even at relatively low speeds.

“In 2008, 572 children were injured while travelling in cars, 55 of whom were seriously injured and 13 killed. Studies have shown that children can be killed at speeds as low as 5mph, so it is impossible to understand why some people don't make sure their children are properly restrained. Road Safety Scotland offers its full support to the police in their bid to stamp out this problem once and for all and welcomes this campaign”

NOTES TO NEWS EDITORS:

- In 2008, 572 children were injured while travelling in cars, 55 of whom were seriously injured and 13 killed.
- In 2007 1814 children (aged under 16) were injured on Scotland's roads, this figure includes 268 children who were seriously injured and nine children who died on our roads.
- In 1997 719 children were seriously injured and 26 killed on Scotland's roads.
- In the recently published 'Scotland's Road Safety Framework' the Scottish Government has set targets which include a 50% reduction in the number of children killed and a 65% reduction in the number of children seriously injured by 2010.

For further information please contact ACPOS Communications on 0141 435 1240 or 07771 842881