



# Media Release

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## RAC educates Wheatbelt students on road safety

RAC's [Community Education Team](#) is heading to the Wheatbelt next week to educate students and young drivers from Wagin Senior High School, Katanning Senior High School, Narrogin Senior High School, Kulin District High School and Lake Grace District High School about staying safe on the roads.

RAC Senior Manager Media and Government Relations Liz Carey said the Community Education Team has delivered the road safety message to over 400,000 Year 10 to 12 students since 2002.

"We teach students the importance of safe driving and the effects of alcohol, drugs and reckless behaviour on driving and being a responsible passenger," Ms Carey said.

"Last year, 184 people died on Western Australian roads and nowhere was the road fatality rate worse than in the Wheatbelt where 26 loved ones were killed. That's one every fortnight."

In 2014, drivers aged 17 to 24 accounted for 22 per cent of all WA road fatalities despite only making up 12 per cent of the population. RAC's most recent young driver survey showed almost 50 per cent of respondents used their phone while driving, while a further 20 per cent checked social media behind the wheel.

"These results are worrying, and reinforce the need to educate young drivers about safe driving."

Students are informed about the importance of considering a car's safety rating. RAC's 2015 [Used Car Safety Rating guide](#), which each year scores the safety of millions of second-hand cars, highlights how easy it is for people to make either a safe or alternatively, an uninformed choice for roughly the same amount of money.

"The difference between a 5-star rated used car and a 1 or 2-star car could literally be life and death. In the same crash, a driver of the lowest rating vehicle is more than six times as likely to be killed or seriously injured as the same driver in the highest rating vehicle."

Drug driving is a rising problem in WA so students are asked to try on the fatal vision goggles to get a feel for the loss of balance and vision that drugs and alcohol can cause.

"We ask the students, "would you get in a car with someone like that?" to really get them thinking about the dangers.

"These students are our next generation of drivers and we want to ensure they have a good understanding of road safety and the consequences of bad decisions."

Students will also hear a presentation from [Paraplegic Benefit Fund](#)'s Keith Conder, who will share his personal road trauma story and explain how different life is living with a permanent disability.

RAC is promoting road safety through the [Elephant in the Wheatbelt](#), a life-sized African elephant sculpture made out of wrecked cars who's encouraging discussion about the unacceptably high road fatality rate in the Wheatbelt.

Community Education travel across regional WA each year and will be making more than 12 trips in 2015.

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