

RESEARCH SUMMARY

Title	Theatre in education for road safety
Objective	To evaluate the effectiveness of the three Road Safety theatrical plays
Date	April 2010
Methodology	Qualitative: 9 x focus groups with years 6, 7 and 9/10, and 9 x in-depth interviews with teachers or heads of year at each school. Groups conducted immediately after the plays, 2-3 weeks after the plays and 3 months after the plays.

Key findings:

- The plays are highly effective at communicating the key road safety message to children, and lead to sustained behaviour change when it comes to being safe on the roads.
- The productions are impactful because they allow the audience to experience road safety tragedies in a very engaging way, playing out in detail the events that lead up to the death of a young person and delivering a hard hitting and emotionally compelling message about risk on the roads.
- Relevant content and touch points - such as friendships, TV programmes and music - help to give the play credibility and encourage self-reflection.
- The inclusion of topics that are pitched just beyond each age group add further credibility to the plays and help them break through the teen 'fortress' of trusted sources. This means that new information taught about road safety is respected and championed amongst the audience.
- The plays are appreciated for treating the audience as adults and encouraging young people to take responsibility for themselves, rather than simply lecturing them how to be safe on the road - a message they are told from a young age.
- All schools interviewed felt the organisation of the plays was seamless and praised the co-ordination and logistics. However, there is an opportunity to encourage more schools to take part by re-working the email sent out to make it more attention-grabbing, and by potentially positioning the program within the new compulsory PSHE curriculum in 2011.
- There is also an opportunity to help the messages live on through additional support materials and activities that learn from the successes of each play, such as drama workshops or video content on the school intranet.

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