

The Need

In 2025, New Zealand experienced a significant improvement in road safety, recording 273 road deaths, the lowest in recent years despite population growth, marking a third consecutive year of reduction. Despite these improvements 21% of these deaths were youth aged 15-24 years, indicating young road users die from road crashes at a much higher rate than older age groups.

New Zealand road deaths still remain too high and this reduction shows that change is possible and we need to continue to prioritise safety, particularly for our high-risk young drivers. It is also important to recognise that for every fatality there are dozens of people injured, often with life-long consequences.

The Response

“While more still needs to be done, it is pleasing to see that successful interventions from novice driver restrictions to targeted, specialised education, such as Ryda, are seeing a positive shift in these statistics,” states Road Safety Education Limited’s (RSE) CEO, Maria Lovelock. “All the evidence points to best practice road safety education making real changes to attitudes to road use, and behaviour on the road, for drivers and their passengers.”

To understand the difference our Ryda programme is making to road safety we undertook longitudinal research in 2025 – results show that retained student knowledge increases by 75% up to three months post participation in Ryda, that students were up to 54% less likely to engage in risky behaviour after the Ryda workshop, and that three months post Ryda, 93% of students had applied strategies they learnt on the road.

Dunedin at a glance:

Workshops held 25th to 28th May 2026 @ The Edgar Centre

4 Workshops



761 Students



30 Teachers



12 Facilitators



24 Volunteers



Facilitators included Police Officers Ross Greer and Peter (Eddie) Smith

Dunedin schools participating included: Taieri College, Trinity Catholic College, John McGlashan College, Columba College, Kings High School, Queens High School, Otago Girls High School and Logan Park High School

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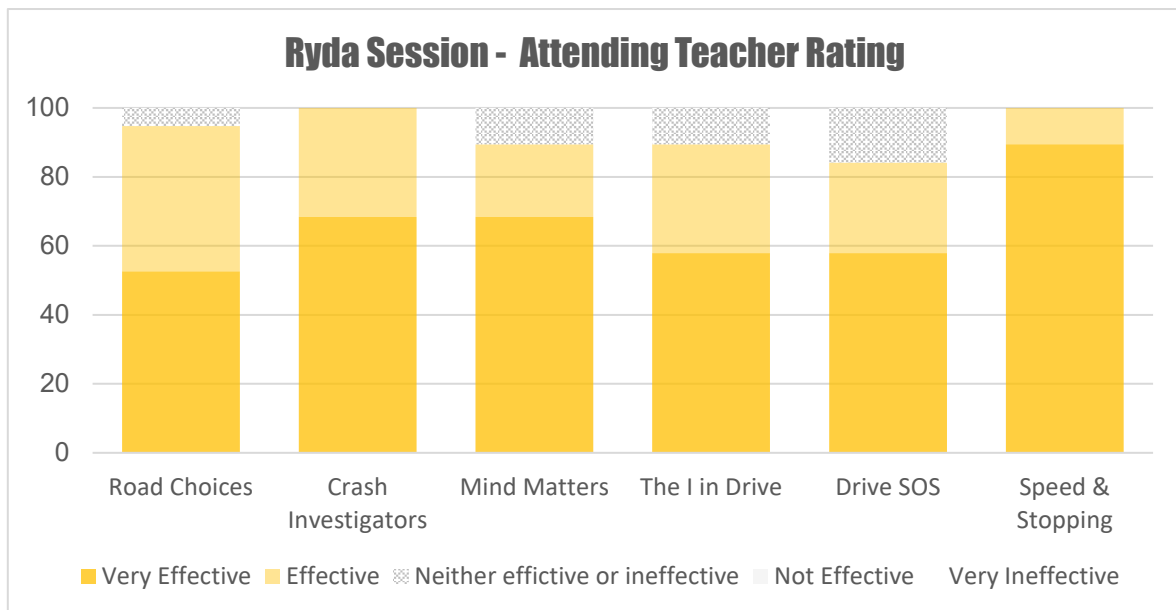
Feedback

RSE conducts regular and robust program evaluation designed to measure knowledge retention, attitude shift and intended and practiced behaviour change across time. As part of this evaluation we survey students and teachers.

Teachers – Post Workshop Surveys

The feedback received from 20 Dunedin staff attending Ryda in 2026 showed that 100% of teachers found our programme “worthwhile” including 56% one who found it “very worthwhile”. All staff stated that the Ryda workshop should be compulsory for senior high school students. 100% also experienced personal changes as a result of accompanying students to Ryda, all stating they “Increased knowledge about road safety” and “Developed road safety knowledge and skills to share with family and friends”.

We ask teachers to rate facilitator performance, session content and relevance from 1 to 5 (5 being very effective and 1 being not effective). In 2026 Dunedin teachers who attended Ryda told us:



Below are some notable comments by Dunedin teachers attending Ryda in 2026:

“Thank you, the students were very engaged.”

“Thank you! Its been a great day out and I look forward to students completing the online unit standards.”

“All staff professional and interacted well with students.”

“The 30 min workshops worked really well to engage students”

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Student – Post workshop surveys

After every programme we ask students to complete an anonymous online survey. We utilise the learning outcomes to help us evaluate and develop our programme and sessions, and to enable us to make the most impact on the youth we contact.

All apart from one of the 56 Dunedin 2026 student respondents stated that they would “likely” apply the things they learn at the workshop when they are driving or being a passenger, 62% stated that they were “very likely”.

Students were also asked the most valuable messages or strategies picked up from Ryda. Below are the top responses from Dunedin 2026 students:

- *increased understanding of crash factors and their impact on the occurrence and severity of a crash*
- *increased understanding of the relationship between speed and stopping distance*
- *strategies to manage mind state / head space*

Students were asked to indicate their understanding of road safety issues after attending Ryda compared to before. Below are the top responses of “much more aware” from Dunedin 2026 students:

- *How small increases in speed can cause big changes in impact and crash trauma*
- *The positive and negative influence passengers can have on young drivers*
- *How following the car ahead too closely increases the chances of a crash*

Below are the top responses of “much more equipped and prepared” from Dunedin 2026 students:

- *Use the ANCAP car safety rating system when buying a car*
- *Be a good passenger, positively affecting the environment of the car*
- *Increase your own hazard perception skills*
- *Perform quick safety checks on a vehicle (tyres, seatbelts, etc)*

Student quotes received from this survey included:

“All the sessions were very valueable and I learnt something every session”

“I liked the investigation, because I learnt that anything can happen at any time and to always wear your seatbelt”

“very very fun and informative”

“This course really helped me realise that speed is dangerous, and “if in doubt, spit it out”. So from now on, I will speak my mind when I am uncomfortable in a car.”

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"Hearing from Anita and her experience was really effective to show how crashes impact lives. And the car watching the stopping distances and how they increase as speed increases was such a shock and has made me really think about speed and its effects."

"I drive at a slower speed now that I have visually seen stopping distances."

"I really enjoyed the day and I definitely learned more than I expected."

"Talking to people and asking questions allowed us to learn more."

"I am super likely to think harder about my decisions every time i get in a car now"

"I learnt a lot and will definitely be applying my learnings to real life scenarios."

"I really enjoyed all the workshops that I took part in. Each was enlightening and expanded my knowledge on the road rules."

"Each lesson was engaging and not too long for teens. I found it easy to listen to and take in information."

In another survey students were asked which of the six workshop sessions impacted them the most and the reason for this decision. The top three rated by students across New Zealand are highlighted with a black border, the top three rated by Dunedin 2026 students are highlighted yellow. We've picked out a few entries from student feedback below:



*Indicating Dunedin students top rated workshop sessions align with the nation

School:	Most impactful session:	Reason for choice:
Logan Park High School	Crash Investigators	We got to talk to someone who was in a crash themselves and learned the severity of the crashes people can get into to and we learnt how to be like a crash investigator
Taieri College	Crash Investigators	It was interesting to learn about the effects that a crash can have on someone's life
John McGlashan College	Crash Investigators	It gave real life example of a crash victim and made you realise the real truth and dangers

Taieri College	Drive SOS	<i>The information regarding trucks was valuable as people are often not taught about the dangers of being around trucks and the blind spots of the drivers</i>
Queens High School	Mind Matters	<i>We were role playing in a group, everyone was able to contribute and everyone had a great time while being able to learn about how emotions affect the driving. People after the activity were even talking about how great it was</i>
Queens High School	Mind Matters	<i>It made me think about how important I am in the equation of driving and that I can work on myself to better myself and be safer on the roads</i>
Logan Park High School	Speed & Stopping	<i>Most engaging and interesting. It was very fun to see how the speed of the car changed the stopping distance</i>
Logan Park High School	Speed & Stopping	<i>Watching the dummy go flying shows how the faster you go the more damage you do</i>
Columba College	Speed & Stopping	<i>It showed me the distance it took the brake. I did realise how long of a distance it took to fully stop and the big difference from 50km to 60km when braking</i>
Taieri College	Speed & Stopping	<i>It was more practical and we got to go outside and see something happen. We guessed then measured the brake distance in real time. It helped the information stick in my head a lot better</i>
Taieri College	Speed & Stopping	<i>It gave me clarity on how fast 60km really is, as when I am driving, it does not feel/ look that fast</i>
Taieri College	Speed & Stopping	<i>We could actually see how stopping distance changes depending on the speed</i>
Queens High School	Speed & Stopping	<i>It showed the real consequences of speeding and stopping</i>
Kings High School	Speed & Stopping	<i>It was very interesting to see the strength of the brakes and how much longer it takes the car to stop even only going 10 k faster</i>
John McGlashan College	Speed & Stopping	<i>Showed most of us something that we didn't expect - the stopping distance was more than what we thought and was cool to see it first hand</i>
John McGlashan College	Speed & Stopping	<i>Showed me how long it takes to stop your vehicle completely even if you are only 10kph over the speed limit</i>

Logan Park High School	The I in Drive	The quiz helped me get to know my strengths and weaknesses. It helped me come up with a plan for risky situations, and gave me coaching tips
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Students were asked what was “the most useful strategies/pieces of information from Ryda”, below are some responses from Dunedin 2026 students:

<i>Being able to speak up whenever i feel unsafe or concerned in a car</i>
<i>How long it takes to slow down at different speeds, is going to make me more aware of my speed especially in busy areas</i>
<i>How your emotions affect driving a lot</i>
<i>How to manage things better when driving</i>
<i>You take longer to stop than you think</i>
<i>How the different speeds effect how far a car brakes</i>
<i>All of it the speeding distance, the blind spots of trucks I didn't know that, hearing about the story's of others</i>
<i>When you double your speed you quadruple the stopping distance</i>
<i>Wearing my seatbelt can save my life and prevent multiple injuries like the ones that happened to Anita</i>
<i>Make sure your cars safe and when you drive there are no distractions</i>
<i>I found it very interesting that people drive so stupidly on the road. this course has shown me how to be a great, safe, confident driver</i>
<i>Go the speed limit because 10 km can be the difference between life and death</i>
<i>I will use the right car app to see the safety rating of my car</i>
<i>How to talk to friends to tell them to slow down</i>
<i>Made me more aware of how we have peripheral vision that means we cant fully process what goes on in that area. I didn't know this before attending the Ryda workshop so now know why we need to do head checks</i>

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Images of Dunedin Ryda workshops



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Below is a table showing the breakdown of students and schools in the Dunedin region who participated in our Ryda workshop in 2026:

Schools attending Ryda:	Students:
Taieri College	141
Trinity Catholic College	90
John McGlashan College	83
Columba College	53
Kings High School	143
Queens High School	95
Otago Girls High School	23
Logan Park High School	133
Total Students	761

- Please note: those students who were unable to attend the workshop are also positively impacted - through the use of our complementary classroom and online learning resources utilised by teaching staff

By attending our Ryda road safety programme over 760 young people from Dunedin have been equipped with essential cognitive tools to better assess risk, resist distraction, avoid negative peer pressure, and make safer choices when faced with challenges on the road. Evidence shows the Ryda programme enhances young drivers outcomes enabling them to thrive while also contributing to safer roads and stronger community wellbeing.



DUNEDIN 2026

A report for Road Safety Education Supporters



Road Safety Education programmes benefit not only the students that attend the event but the lessons learned also foster healthier, safer communities across NZ.

This would not be possible without our supporters!

making our roads a safer place

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