

Rotary Youth Driver Awareness (RYDA) – Information from 2025 at Level’s Raceway

Our RYDA programme is aimed at 16-18 year old students with a focus on making good decisions. This isn't a licencing programme (although works well with them) and is designed for all students whether they are driving yet or not. The RYDA programme includes a practical and powerful full day workshop delivered by local mentors including Police, Driving Instructors and Crash Survivors, and is backed up by comprehensive pre/post classrooms resources and web portal - to augment the life-saving messages. The whole cohort approach is inclusive, increasing social equity, and means all students receive the same opportunity, reducing exclusion.

We have also recently added a parent/caregiver programme called Driver Coach. The aim of this programme is to provide information to parents/caregivers to best support their child during this high-risk time.

RYDA is the most evaluated road safety programme in the country and is annually updated to include the latest road safety information and education techniques available. Our latest longitudinal student survey showed knowledge of road safety risks at 39% pre workshop, 79% post workshop and 72% three months post the RYDA workshop.

We began providing our programme in 2006 to a handful of Auckland schools and since that time have grown exponentially throughout the country to 190 schools participating in 2025. Timaru schools began participating in 2013. Last year 385 Timaru students participated in RYDA, please see feedback from these students and their teachers in document attached. The staff leaders of these schools have again requested our programme for their next cohort of Year 12 students.

Craighead Diocesan School 70
Geraldine High School 65
Mountainview High School 75
Opihi College 20
Roncalli College 70
Timaru Girls High School 75
Waimate High School 20

Youth road trauma is a community problem that needs a whole of community response. Road Safety Education is in a unique position to bring together all the essential elements to provide an effective and highly successful education programme for young people.

We strongly believe every young person should have the opportunity to attend this programme, not just those that can afford it. .

With your support we hope to grow the programme throughout New Zealand providing more young people with our road safety programme contributing towards safer drivers on our roads.

LOCAL RYDA FEEDBACK – TIMARU

Road Safety Education has provided our RYDA programme to eight Timaru schools and 385 students in 2025. Feedback below is from teachers and students from these schools who participated in workshops.

TEACHER EVALUATIONS

The feedback received from staff attending RYDA from Timaru in 2025 showed that 100% of teachers found our programme **“worthwhile”** including 63% who found it **“very worthwhile”**. 100% of staff stated that RYDA workshop should be compulsory for senior high school students. 93% also experienced personal changes as a result of accompanying students to RYDA, all stated an **“increase awareness of road safety issues”** and **“Personal satisfaction from helping learner drivers to be safer on the road”**.

We ask teachers to rate **facilitator performance, session content and relevance** from 1 to 5 (5 being very effective and 1 being very ineffective). In 2025 Timaru teachers who attended RYDA told us

RYDA Session - Attending Teacher Rating

Below are some notable comments by Timaru teachers attending RYDA in 2025:

“I learnt heaps. I hope the students did as well”

“All facilitators were really friendly and great with our students”

“Good information delivery/content/interactive students very engaged”

“This should be a compulsory course made FREE for every student in NZ”

“Good course, very practical. Should be available to all school students in senior school”

“I think it is very beneficial to support education of our young people and road safety. Well presented, informative and real”

“Found the day to be very worthwhile for the students. Very relevant for them right now as they are sitting learners and restricted driver licences now”

“This is an excellent course I believe all students should participate in”

STUDENT EVALUATIONS

After every programme we ask students to complete our online surveys. 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.

96% of Timaru student respondents stated that they were **“likely” to apply the things they learn at the workshop** when they are driving or being a passenger, over one third said they were **“very likely”**.

Students were asked to indicate their **understanding of road safety issues** after attending RYDA compared to before. Below are the top three responses of **“much more aware”** from Timaru 2025 students:

- How following the car ahead too closely increases the chances of a crash

- How small increases in speed can cause big changes in impact and crash trauma
- How the police and the graduated licence system (rules for young people) helps protect you and others

Below are the top three responses of “**much more equipped and prepared**” from Timaru 2025 students:

- Be a good passenger, positively affecting the environment of the car
- Monitor your risk areas long term
- Protect and help other road users with your actions

Students were also asked the **most valuable messages or strategies they pick up from Ryda**. Below are the top four responses from Timaru 2025 students:

- increased understanding of the relationship between speed and stopping distance
- increased understanding of personality risk factors
- strategies for sharing the road with heavy vehicles and vulnerable road users
- increased understanding of crash factors and their impact on the occurrence and severity of a crash

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 boarder, the top**

three rated by Timaru students are highlighted yellow. We’ve picked out a few entries from student feedback below:

*showing Timaru students top rated sessions match those of the nation

School	Most Impactful Session	Reason for Choice
Craighead Dioscean School	Crash Investigators	I enjoyed finding out how investigators investigate why crashes happened and I enjoyed listening to the guys experience and what he's gained from it even though it was a hard experience
Craighead Dioscean School	Crash Investigators	Teaches us that even if you make a bad decision there are always ways to overcome them and keep on going. This really creates an eye opening experience and makes you realise how important it is to make the
		effort to think about the safest option to do something going forward
Craighead Dioscean School	Crash Investigators	I think it's so awesome he is willing to share his story and bring awareness to it to potentially help save lives. It was also fun to be able to become "investigators" to find out the details of the crash
Timaru Girls High	Crash Investigators	We got to hear a perspective of an actual person that has experienced a crash and got injured from it so it showed that not everyone's perfect but we can learn from these mistakes

Mountain View High School	Mind Matters	I liked how we got to pretend to experience a situation that might happen in real life. It was also entertaining to watch everyone scream and attempt to stay calm under pressure. The scenarios were interesting to read and it showed me how important it is to drive safely
Craighead Dioscean School	Mind Matters	I got to interact with my friends, while also seeing how fast things escalate and how your mood and passengers can impair your driving ability
<p>I liked doing the acting course as I was the driver and it was interesting to see how many times I looked away from the road</p> <p>Interesting learning about how the speed can impact the slowing time</p> <p>It really showed how dangerous the road can be and how essential reaction time is</p> <p>Very interesting seeing how only going a little over the speed limit could affect someone's safety severely and puts them at risk</p> <p>I learnt how speed can significantly impact a situation even if only a small amount of k's over the limit</p> <p>It was inclusive and we were able to see first-hand what happened when different speeds stop</p>		
Mountain View High School	Speed & Stopping	It really put it in perspective what going 10k/h over the speed limit can do for a pedestrian
Mountain View High School	Speed & Stopping	We got to guess when the car would stop depending on its speed - an insight into how far away from a car you should be spaced, and why you should slow down on pedestrian-busy roads (like schools or the centre of the city)
Craighead Dioscean School	Speed & Stopping	I enjoyed doing practical learning and actually getting to watch how speed effects how fast you can stop and the distance you can go when you press the brakes. I think that everyone took a lot out of this session because it was very confronting to see what effect speed can have on your car and using the dummy showed how significant it is to be careful when driving
Craighead Dioscean School	Speed & Stopping	I liked learning about the safety features of cars and how important they are
Craighead Dioscean School	Speed & Stopping	Interesting to learn about how different speeds affect the timing of the affect of breaks
Timaru Girls High	Speed & Stopping	Interesting to see just exactly how far you can still travel after slamming on your brakes from certain speeds as well as hearing about how your car is actually made and suited to secure your safety whilst driving
<p>Quite interesting learning about how different aspects of our personality could affect what happens on the</p> <p>road as the driver or a passenger</p>		

Students were asked what was **“the most useful strategies/pieces of information from RYDA”**, below are responses from Timaru 2025 students:

“There are many things in the car and outside of the car that could be a potential hazard or distraction to the driver. For example passengers could cause crashes by making the driver look away for one second, and speeding along roads is never a good idea as you can put yourself, passengers, other road users and pedestrians at risk of injury or death”

“Your emotions affect your ability when driving which can make you a danger to others on the road”

“I need to be more alert when I’m driving and watch out for multiple hazards on the roads that I may not see as often, I also learned that truck drivers have multiple blind spots and they find it hard to spot cars so I need to be more careful when passing large truck and trailers”

“Even if you are going 10km over the speed limit it can make a big difference on where you stop”

“Prior to going to RYDA I was planning on purchasing a car that has a 1 star safety rating. Now I know how important that rating is and I will not be doing that”

“Speeding can really harm someone, even if you’re only going a couple kms over the limit”

“Learning how to speak up for myself if I am in a situation in a car such as speeding and don’t feel safe”

“To put your phone in the glove box or centre console so that it won’t be in sight to distract you at any point of your drive which with your phone being out of sight helps to not influence you to pick it up at any point to check your notifications etc as talking on your phone takes up around 40% of the mental resources needed for driving”