

## 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.

## Timaru at a glance:

Workshops held 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2026 @ Fraser Park Community Trust Centre

2 Workshops



425 Students



17 Teachers



8 Facilitators



14 Volunteers



*Facilitators included Police Officer Deborah Qusted, Abrielle Morse, Steve Loxham, Dallas Robertson and FENZ Officer Donna Lindsay*

*Schools participating included: Craighead Diocesan School, Timaru Girls High School, Waimate High School, Mountainview High School, Roncalli College, Geraldine High School and Opihi College.*

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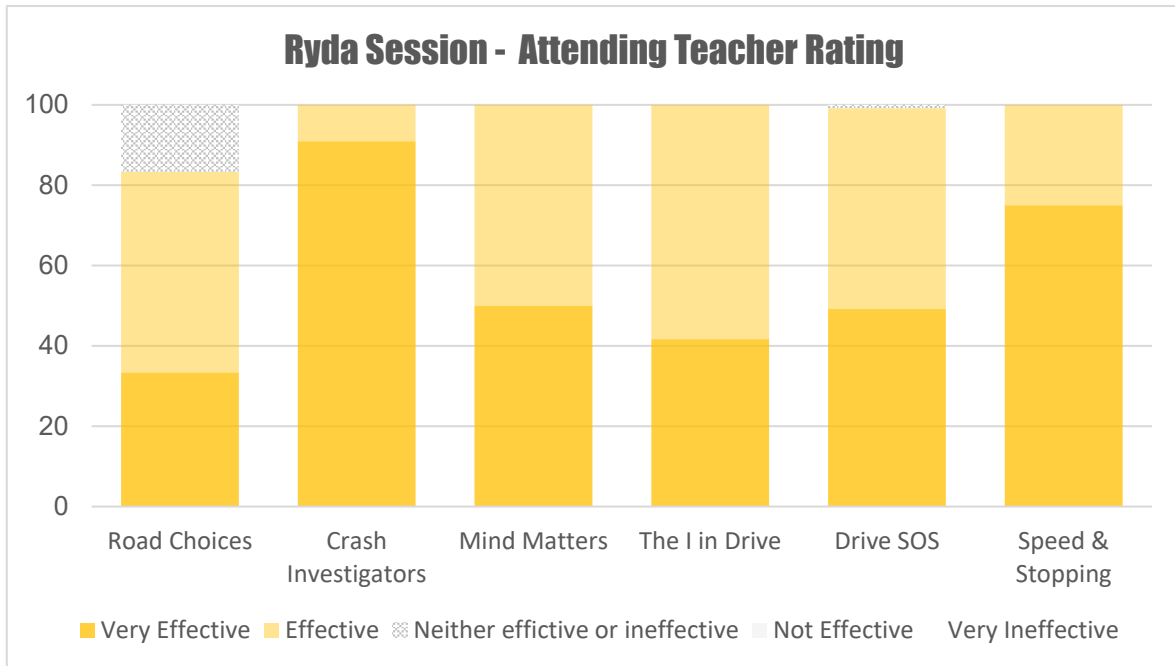
### Feedback

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 12 Timaru staff attending Ryda in 2026 showed that 100% of teachers found our programme “worthwhile” including 75% who found it “very worthwhile”. All staff apart from one 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 “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 not effective). In 2026 Timaru teachers who attended Ryda told us:



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

“Great informative workshops -excellent content.”

“The activities were great and engaging..”

“A really valuable day with a wide range of lessons”

“Great location this year - easy to access due to location in Timaru town. 30 minutes was perfect length for workshops to maintain engagement. Excellent expertise of facilitators.”

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*"A great day - well organised and informative"*

*"Great course and venue being in town."*

*"Well organised and run - always surprises me how much the students get out of it"*

## 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.

88% of 24 Timaru 2026 student respondents stated that they would "likely" apply the things they learn at the workshop when they are driving or being a passenger, 76% stated that they were "very likely".

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

- *strategies for speaking up (direct, indirect etc)*
- *increased understanding of the relationship between speed and stopping distance*
- *strategies to manage mind state / head space*
- *increased knowledge of vehicle safety features*

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

- *How small increases in speed can cause big changes in impact and crash trauma*
- *How talking hands free on a phone negatively affects driving*
- *How personality factors and mood affect risk*
- *The risks of driving tired and ways to avoid it*

Below are the top three responses of "much more equipped and prepared" from Timaru 2026 students:

- *Be a good passenger, positively affecting the environment of the car*
- *Speak up if you feel unsafe*
- *Perform quick safety checks on a vehicle (tyres, seatbelts, etc)*

Some notable quotes from students responding to this survey included:

*"it was really well done and helped me learn a lot."*

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*"Very interesting to learn about the impact and affects it can cause"*

*"They where all amazing to hear and learn new information."*

*"It was very good and organized I liked learning about all the different aspects you have to be aware of when driving"*

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 49 Timaru 2026 students are highlighted yellow. We've picked out a few entries from student feedback below:



School:	Most Impactful Ryda Session:	Reason for Choice:
Craighead	Crash Investigator	<i>It taught me how the police and firefighters respond to crashes and how they can calculate what might've happened</i>
Craighead	Crash Investigator	<i>It was interesting to learn about how police and crash specialists work out what occurred during the crash. It was also useful to understand what happens during a crash when you don't have or use safety features. Melissa's story was incredibly eye opening for the dangers of driving</i>
Geraldine High School	Crash Investigator	<i>It was eye opening to see the severity of the crash and how it can not only affect the driver and person hurt but also everyone around them who can witness it. it was also interesting to see how cars brake at different speeds</i>
Mountain View High School	Drive SOS	<i>Very interesting helped me with blind spots</i>
Craighead	Drive SOS	<i>It was really well explained and informative about peripheral vision and how trucks are bigger blindspots</i>
Roncalli College	Drive SOS	<i>Good to learn about hazards and peripheral vision</i>
Roncalli College	Drive SOS	<i>I think it was cool to see that tunnel vision takes a big toll on people's driving. I didn't know that it was so easy to only focus on one thing and block everything else out</i>

Mountain View High School	Mind Matters	<i>It was a practical activity and It made me realize how emotions can affect driving that I hadn't clicked</i>
Timaru Girls	Mind Matters	<i>It was interesting to learn about how different scenarios and people can impact your emotions so deeply while driving, and it helped me understand the importance of keeping a clear head and being around calm people whilst driving</i>
Geraldine High School	Mind Matters	<i>I loved acting out the scenario as the passenger, being able to be a little more overdramatic than I would have been in this position. It is very useful to know that emotions and outbursts are common enough to talk about. The strategies we came up with are definitely going to help me when driving. So thank you</i>
Roncalli College	Mind Matters	<i>It was fun to act out the unique scenarios of what can happen when emotions take control when your driving</i>
Timaru Girls	Road Choices	<i>I got to be in the shoes of what the police do. This made me feel more appreciative of them and by realising that they have to see that and tell people their loved ones have died. It also showed me that not to rush as having a quick nap could prevent a terrible crash. By showing me the outcomes made me realise how important not crashing is</i>
Mountain View High School	Speed & Stopping	<i>It was helpful to learn about the correct stopping distances and times</i>
Mountain View High School	Speed & Stopping	<i>It was good to see how fast a car can stop at different speed and it also was helpful to learn the safe distance from other cars</i>
Timaru Girls	Speed & Stopping	<i>I learnt about the difference braking distance when going 30 km/h and 50 km/h. I also learnt about how long it takes for the brain to react and what would happen if a car would hit a person if it's going 60 km/h</i>
Timaru Girls	Speed & Stopping	<i>Made me think more carefully about how important speed is when driving</i>
Craighead	Speed & Stopping	<i>It showed realistically how long it takes to stop from certain speeds and was interesting to see the faster you're driving the more damage will result</i>
Craighead	Speed & Stopping	<i>I could visually see how the change in speed can effect the consequences</i>
Craighead	Speed & Stopping	<i>It gave me a really good idea of how dangerous it is to go even a little over the speed limit</i>

Geraldine High School	Speed & Stopping	<i>It helped me become aware of how speeds that seem less or slow can actually still cause a crash because it still takes time for the car to come to a full stop after the ABS brakes have been pushed</i>
Geraldine High School	Speed & Stopping	<i>It taught me that speed as an impact on how fast you're able to brake</i>
Geraldine High School	Speed & Stopping	<i>It was interesting and very useful for real life experiences, also it was very fun</i>
Roncalli College	Speed & Stopping	<i>I found it very interesting how long it actually takes to stop and the risk that even driving at 50 or 60 kms can be to pedestrians</i>
Roncalli College	Speed & Stopping	<i>We got to stand outside and watch the demonstration of a car braking at different speeds. We had to guess at what point the car would stop, and the results were pretty surprising as the car would go a lot further than my friends and I expected it to. And the man running the session gave us interesting facts about safety features (eg. The front of the car is called the crumple zone, as it's supposed to crumple during a crash to take most of the impact/force</i>
Geraldine High School	The I in Drive	<i>I got to learn about me and what my strengths and weaknesses were. When I'm driving I need to remember what they are and how it can affect my driving</i>
Roncalli College	The I in Drive	<i>It was interactive and fun and taught me useful information about driving safe</i>
Opihi College	The I in Drive	<i>I learned new stuff about myself</i>

Students were asked what was “the most useful strategies/pieces of information from Ryda”, below are some responses from Timaru 2026 students:

*To ensure that you never drive if you're fatigued. Take a break or ask someone else to drive. Don't drive for long periods of time without stopping. Minimize the amount of distractions you have as the driver. Keep your phone on silent and in the glove box to ensure you keep your eyes on the road*

*I learnt that it is up to everyone to keep everyone safe in the roads. If you are fatigued or have alcohol in your system, you are immediately a danger. Everyone should be aware of their limits, and not take large risk that can cause major harm*

*Driving with a cell phone free kit still takes 40% of the mental resources needed to drive safely*

*Do not drive if you are not in the right mindset, take a break, go for a walk and then drive. This not only helps yourself but other drivers on the road*

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<i>Don't go driving if you can't stay alert and ready to react to other factors on the road. If you're fatigued, drunk, injured and such there's always other ways to find transport whilst keeping other road users safe</i>
<i>Knowing how a 10km difference can make a big difference when you need to brake in a hurry</i>
<i>Get rid of all distractions so your sole attention is focused on driving</i>
<i>To speak up when I think something is not right like the driver speeding</i>
<i>Everyone contributes to the safety of the roads, not just the drivers</i>
<i>A car takes a lot longer to stop than you think. From a the distance it takes a car to stop going 30km an hour to the distance it take to stop going 60km an hour is almost quadruple</i>
<i>To always speak up even if they are your friends, because life matters more than ensuring that your friend/relative may get offended if you tell them they are doing something wrong while driving on the road. I learnt that there are different ways to point out the problem like making a joke and then laughing it off but enough for the person/driver to be aware that they are doing something wrong or be direct and point out straight away what they are doing wrong</i>
<i>The importance of checking the vehicles safety features and making sure that you as the driver is doing everything in your power to be the safest you can be to other pedestrians and also to passengers and yourself</i>
<i>Risk management. I learnt what causes accidents and how most accidents are caused from things that can be prevented</i>

## Images of Timaru Ryda workshops



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

Schools attending Ryda:	Students:
Craighead Diocesan School	60
Timaru Girls High School	84
Waimate High School	21
Mountainview High School	78
Roncalli College	83
Geraldine High School	75



# TIMARU 2026

## A report for Road Safety Education Supporters



Opihi College	24
Total Students	425

- *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 425 young people from the Timaru 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.

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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