

Joint Media Release from Global Road Safety Partnership South Africa and partners

29 April 2015

Third UN Global Road Safety Week 2015 'Children and road safety' (4-10 May, 2015)

As part of "Improving global road safety"-a new UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution requested WHO and the UN regional commissions to facilitate organization of the 3rd UN Global Road Safety Week in 2015. These UN global road safety weeks serve as important platforms for concerted advocacy to address the problem of road trauma which claim over 1.3 million lives across the world annually. Global, regional and national events involve governments, civil society, foundations, academia and the private sector to save lives by improving safety on the roads. As milestone events on the global road safety calendar, UN global road safety weeks give added impetus to the Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011-2020) and its goal of saving 5 million lives.

This year, the UN Global Road Safety Week will be held from 4–10 May 2015 under the theme 'Children and road safety'. The Week will draw attention to the urgent need to better protect children and generate action on the measures needed to do so. Partners worldwide are encouraged to establish a national or local organizing committee and develop a plan of activities, including through engagement with children. These global and national activities will be organized within the framework of the global campaign #SaveKidsLives that was launched in November 2014 by the UN Road Safety Collaboration. For South Africa, the Week comes at an opportune time; coming as it does after the publication of new regulations that require that children that are being transported in a motor vehicle be buckled up with appropriate child restraints.

Why focus on children?

Several factors (including their physical and cognitive limitations) make children a particularly vulnerable road-user group. Across the world, the commute to school is a particularly important source of children's exposure to road traffic crashes since in most countries, almost all children

and youths aged 5-18 are enrolled in schools. It is therefore little surprise that road traffic crashes are the leading cause of death among those aged 15-19 and the second leading cause of death for those aged 5-15 years. Millions more children are injured each year and require hospital care for non-fatal injuries as a result of road traffic crashes. This year's campaign seeks to highlight the plight of children on the world's roads; generate action to better ensure their safety; and promote the inclusion of safe and sustainable transport in the post-2015 development agenda. The centrepiece of the #SaveKidsLives campaign is a child declaration, developed with input from children around the world.

On a broader scale, the Global Road Safety Partnership South Africa (GRSP ZA) together with its partners is involved in and implementing various projects aimed at reducing the vulnerability of children to road traffic crashes including (but not limited to) the commute to school through advocacy and community-based pilot interventions. For instance, GRSP ZA has been implementing a Safe Roads 4 Youth programme and will shortly be piloting a Safe to School-Safe to Home project at selected Gauteng-based schools in partnership with Shell South Africa, Childsafe in partnership with Discovery Insurer are implementing a scholar transport project, Imperial Holdings has been running a scholar patrol programme across the country while Bakwena is involved in scholar travel interventions along the N4 Corridor. With regard to the 3rd Global Road Safety Week itself, we will be organising various activities as part of our contribution during the week. For instance, in the Western Cape, GRSP ZA will partner with Childsafe and the Department of Transport (Western Cape Government) in signing #SaveKidsLives declaration online, organising events at selected primary schools and crèches as well as interacting with motorists visiting the Red Cross Children's Memorial Hospital in Cape Town during the week. The events will also be supported by the South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL). The interaction with motorists is aimed at increasing awareness on the need to 'buckle up children' in cars. In this regard, it is heartening to know that legislation dealing with this matter has recently been approved and GRSP ZA and Childsafe would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who worked tirelessly to make this possible.

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About GRSP ZA

GRSP ZA acknowledges the link with the GRSP International, its objectives, its management structures and the intended role of the Advisor. GRSP ZA has been in existence since 2004 and formally registered as a Section 21 company in 2007. GRSP ZA operates with a functional and expert board and advisors, nominated and formalised by its members. GRSP ZA's vision is a South Africa free of road crash death and injury.

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About Childsafe

Childsafe South Africa, a campaign of the Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Southern Africa (CAPFSA), is an organisation founded in 1978 for the purpose of educating caregivers on how best to give the children they look after a healthy, safe environment. Children are the most vulnerable when it comes to easily preventable incidents. CAPFSA aims to strengthen community responsiveness with respect to these problems. CAPFSA is a non-profit organisation which believes strongly that every child has the right to grow and live safely. Since 2008, we have been functioning under the new name Childsafe, with our motto being "keep kids free from harm"

For more information visit: <http://www.childsafe.org.za> or contact

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