

ROAD SAFETY WEEK 2021



What is a Road Safety Hero?

Find out more about some of the amazing people who help us make safe and healthy journeys and care for people after a crash and learn how you can be a Road Safety Hero too

Why do we need Road Safety Heroes?

- More than 1.3 million people die on roads every year
- Road crashes are the leading cause of death for children and young people worldwide
- More than six children are killed or seriously injured on roads every day in the UK
- Road crashes have a devastating effect on families and communities
- Good post-crash care is essential to save lives and prevent life-changing injuries.

More than 1.3 million people die on the world's roads every year and road crashes are the leading cause of death for children and young people aged 5–29 years.¹

In the UK, on average, someone is killed or seriously injured on a road every 20 minutes. Children are especially vulnerable on roads, with more than six children aged 15 and under killed or seriously injured on a road in the UK every day. Young drivers aged 17–24 are at particularly high risk of death or serious injury.^{2,3}

Road crashes are tragic events, and death and life-changing injuries have a devastating effect on families and communities. As well as the immeasurable cost of the misery inflicted on those injured and bereaved, the economic cost of reported and unreported road crashes is also immense, and estimated to be in the region of £36 billion per year.⁴



Read more about the safe system approach to road safety at www.brake.org.uk/safesystem.

Meanwhile, exposure to air pollution, including traffic emissions, is seriously damaging the nation's health, and is linked to cardiovascular and respiratory disease, cancer and reduced life expectancy. We are also facing an obesity crisis, with physical inactivity identified as one of the main risk factors.⁵

The good news is that death and serious injury from road collisions and pollution are preventable, if people who design, build and use roads all share responsibility for road safety. This is known as the 'safe system' approach to road safety.⁶

What is a Road Safety Hero?

We think that everyone who helps make journeys safer and healthier or helps care for someone after a crash is a road safety hero.

Here are some of our heroes:

- School crossing patrols
- Roads policing officers
- Road designers and highway engineers
- Fire and rescue services
- Ambulance services
- Medical staff in hospitals
- Other health professionals
- Police family liaison officers
- Support services
- Road safety charities
- Road crash victims
- Parents and carers
- Employers
- Everyone who uses roads safely to protect themselves and others.

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Road Safety Heroes who help us make safe and healthy journeys

School crossing patrols

School crossing patrols officers help children walk or ride safely to and from school. They wear a uniform, carry an official school crossing sign, and are entitled by law to stop traffic so that people can walk across the road. They are also called lollipop women or men. School crossing patrols can be employed by local councils, schools or other organisations.



Roads policing officers

Roads policing officers enforce traffic laws and ensure that anyone driving dangerously is caught and appropriately punished. They often focus on the 'fatal four' – the four main causes of serious injury and death on the roads, i.e.:

- Inappropriate or excessive speed
- Not wearing a seat belt
- Driver distractions, including using a phone while driving
- Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Road designers and highways engineers

When streets are designed to meet the need of people instead of traffic, everyone can make safe and healthy journeys. Safe roads are designed to reduce the risk of crashes occurring, and reduce the severity of injuries if a crash does happen. Safety features are incorporated into the road design from the outset, for example:

- Safe spaces for people to walk or cycle, away from motorised traffic
- Safety barriers to separate traffic travelling in opposite directions or at different speeds
- Safe speed limits, clear road marking, consistent signing and street lighting
- Well-maintained road surfaces, free from obstacles and damage.



Road Safety Heroes who care for people after a crash

Fire and rescue services

Fire and rescue services get people to safety after a crash and make crash scenes safe to protect people from harm. They use special cutting and lifting equipment and techniques to rescue people trapped in vehicles. They are trained to treat injuries in emergency situations. Fire and rescue services also play an important role raising awareness of road safety in schools and communities.

Ambulance services

Ambulance services get medical help to people as quickly as possible. They handle 999 calls and send ambulances to where they are needed. Paramedics provide life-saving treatment at the crash scene and trained drivers transport people to hospital if they need more treatment. Ambulance services work closely with the police, fire and rescue services, hospital emergency departments and other healthcare teams. They travel by car, van, helicopter, motorbike and bicycle. They also provide advice by telephone and over the internet.

Medical staff in hospitals

Good post-crash care is essential to save lives and prevent life-changing injuries. When someone is seriously injured in a road crash, the emergency services decide which hospital to take them to. A person with very serious injuries may be taken to a Major Trauma Centre for treatment. Major Trauma Centres are specialist hospitals that have all of the facilities needed to treat severe injuries. Road crashes are the second largest cause of admissions to Major Trauma Centres.⁷ An injured person may be cared for in a specialist unit, for example a unit for brain injury, spinal injury or burns. Some people are cared for in an intensive care unit (ICU) if they need constant, close monitoring and help to support bodily functions, such as breathing or heart rate.

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Other health professionals

After they leave hospital, many seriously injured people need extensive and ongoing help to recover from their injuries, or to adjust to life with new medical issues or disabilities.

Rehabilitation treatment may be provided by:

- Surgeons – if a person needs an operation to treat their injuries
- Physiotherapists – to improve or restore mobility and independence
- Psychologists – to assess an injured person's needs and provide therapy after a head injury
- Speech and language therapists – to improve a person's communication skills
- Occupational therapists – to enable an injured person to carry out everyday tasks, live more independently, or resume work or leisure activities.

Police family liaison officers

Police family liaison officers (FLOs) are specially trained officers who help families when someone is killed or seriously injured in a road crash. They provide support, comfort and a constant source of information to the family, at an incredibly difficult time, in a sensitive and compassionate manner.

Support services

Road crashes are devastating events for the people involved, for their family and friends, and for the wider community. Support services give emotional and practical support after a crash. They help road victims to feel able to cope, emotionally and practically, and adjust to a new reality.



Here are some ways support services can help after a crash

- Supporting people through trauma, talking to them about how they are feeling
- Finding them bereavement counselling
- Explaining court proceedings
- Helping them find financial or legal help
- Telling other people what has happened
- Finding a way to memorialise someone who has died.



Read more about how Brake's National Road Victim Service helps people after a crash at www.brake.org.uk/support

Road crash victims

Some road crash victims talk publicly about their own experience of a road death or injury to raise awareness, fundraise, and help support other road victims. Some people also lobby for change, run road safety campaigns or speak up about the importance of good post-crash care.

Road safety charities

Road safety charities support people affected by road crashes and campaign for change so people can make safe and healthy journeys. You can find out more about some of these organisations at www.brake.org.uk/orgs.



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Everyone can be a road safety hero

Whether we walk, ride or drive, we all have a responsibility to use roads safely to protect ourselves and others.

This means choosing safe modes of transport and safe vehicles, complying with road rules, travelling at speeds appropriate for the road conditions and educating people about safe road use. Governments can better regulate drivers, with licensing and traffic rules, roads policing and penalties that are robust and fair.

Parents and carers

If you're the parent or carer of young children, here are some ways you can help keep them safe:

- Hold hands with them when walking near roads
- Always cross roads at safe places
- Ride with children on safe paths away from traffic
- Make sure children wear a cycle helmet to protect their head if they fall off
- Make sure a child is sitting in a well-fitted, appropriately sized child seat if travelling by car.

If you're the parent or carer of older children, you can set a good example by driving at safe and appropriate speeds and never using a phone while driving. Always wear a seat belt and never drive after drinking or taking drugs.

All parents and carers can help children and young people use roads safely and choose active ways to travel or public transport where possible.

The Brake Roadmap to safe and healthy journeys helps you learn about, and commit to making, safe and healthy journey choices. Find out more www.brake.org.uk/roadmap

ROADMAP
to safe and healthy journeys



Employers

Driving for work is one of the most dangerous activities that employers ask their employees to do. Many road deaths involve a vehicle being driven for work, and work vehicles also cause pollution. If you employ people who drive for work, show that you're a responsible employer, who puts people first and cares about their safety:

- Buy, hire or lease the safest vehicles you can afford
- Prioritise safety over performance
- Champion safe driver behaviour
- Look after staff wellbeing
- Manage work-related road risk through rigorous policies and procedures to help prevent crashes and reduce pollution.

Brake runs Global Fleet Champions, a global campaign to reduce deaths and prevent pollution caused by work vehicles. Find out more and get free resources to help manage work-related road risk at www.globalfleetchampions.org



GLOBAL FLEET
CHAMPIONS

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