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Oral Presentation

Traffic Safety Work with the Main Group Children (School Children) and Young Persons

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Abstract

In Bavaria, about 1.7 million children walk, ride a bike or take the bus to school. It is important that they all get to school and back home again safely. In the last few decades, we in Bavaria have been able to significantly improve safety on children's way to school. In the mid 1970s, up to 35 children were killed in accidents every year on their way to school. In the last few years, we have been able to lower this number to zero. However, the number of traffic accidents resulting in injured school children is still so high that the police, school authorities, road traffic authorities and many other organizations have to take steps to continue increasing safety on the way to school. Every year the Bavarian police practice with children beginning school how they are to conduct themselves on their way to school. Specially trained police officers educate children on traffic safety and explain the dangers of road traffic to them. First graders practice, for example, what to do at traffic lights, at crosswalks and when crossing the street so that they get to school and back home again safely. The Bavarian police educate more than 100,000 first graders every year throughout Bavaria on road safety. More than 30,000 citizens across Bavaria volunteer to help the Bavarian police and ensure that children get to school safely. Every year about 100 events take place with the purpose of educating over 700 school bus drivers and making them aware of issues especially relating to children. In addition, the police monitor and check the school buses used throughout the whole year. All road users, especially drivers, must observe a special speed limit of 30 km/h near schools. In order to monitor whether these speed limits are kept, the police in Bavaria carry out speed checks using technical equipment such as radars or hand-held laser devices. During these speed checks, the police also check for no standing violations as well as violations of the compulsory use of seat belts and child safety seats. The level of police monitoring is especially high at the beginning of the school year, as the first few weeks of school are the most dangerous for children. Local media also support the work of the police in an important way by picking up on safety issues involving children on their way to school, especially at the beginning of the school year, and also reporting on the safety measures that are carried out. In addition, the police and schools distribute leaflets and brochures containing important information to parents and children. Young drivers (18 to 24 years old) constitute about eight percent of the entire population of Bavaria. However, they are involved in a disproportionately high percentage of accidents resulting in serious injuries, namely 22%. Novice drivers do not have much driving experience, and some are also more willing to take risks. Thus, they are an important target group for the Bavarian police. In addition to enacting special provisions concerning traffic law, for example accompanied driving from the age of 17 or a blood alcohol limit of 0.00% for novice drivers, the focus of prevention work is not only on driving skills but also on one's personal views on participating in road traffic and taking responsibility for oneself and others.

Keywords: School children, Road, Young drivers.

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