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Blue Datto Road Safety Program: Protecting young drivers

The Blue Datto Foundation has showcased its first behavioural road safety program for Year 10 students, teaching them how to speak up and get out of difficult situations as they become drivers and passengers in peer driven cars. The Blue Datto program aims to reduce the impact of catastrophic injury and death among young people on NSW roads, with statistics showing that nearly one driver under twenty years old dies and sixty are injured on NSW roads each week¹.

Ambassador for Blue Datto Foundation, Triple M presenter and NRL legend, Mark Geyer spoke to students about the importance of looking out for each other, “Forty five percent of young Australians who die can be attributed to road traffic crashes, this is an unbelievable statistic, but through education we can make a difference.”²

“We don’t want you to be another statistic. Make a plan to stay safe; make sure you speak up if you don’t think something is right. Look out for yourself and your mates, and by doing that you will help to keep everyone safe.”

The Police Association of NSW is also a strong supporter and sponsor of Blue Datto. Police Association President, Scott Weber, said, “As police officers we see the carnage and horrible waste of young lives sometimes under horrific crash circumstances.

“The impact on families, entire communities and all first responders is truly devastating and long-lasting.

“Any road safety initiative that keeps young people safe on our roads has our support. Education is vital in preventing more deaths and injury to younger drivers and all road users.”

Liz Ellis, an Ambassador for the Blue Datto Foundation, said the Blue Datto Foundation will help schools deliver a behavioural road safety program for year 10 students in NSW.

“Road accidents don’t just cost these young people their lives, but the emotional and monetary cost to families, emergency services and the wider community is significant. Access Economics estimate medical, social support, loss of productivity, emergency services and other costs following an accident involving young people to be well in excess of \$1 billion per year³.

“Blue Datto programs aim at year 10 students – while they are becoming passengers in peer driven cars; while they are learning to drive, and before they get too confident. There are already some really good programs operating in NSW; however this adds to the education that a student will receive, including those students who don’t progress to senior education.”

The Foundation will offer courses to Year 10 students in schools and community groups from next year by Council area, focusing initially on schools in Western Sydney before moving into regional and country areas and other schools in NSW. If you are interested in booking your school into the program, sponsoring a program or to find out more information please email info@bluedatto.org.au

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About Blue Datto Foundation

Blue Datto Foundation Limited (Blue Datto™) was formed to promote safety programs for students, their parents and the wider community. The Foundation was developed by the family of Philip Vassallo, a 17 year old renowned for his blue Datto, who died in a motor vehicle accident in July 2014. Blue Datto’s vision is to be recognised as the first point of call for safety programs that promote our Keeping Safe™ philosophy to young people and the community in NSW. Our aim is to educate to protect lives and to keep young people safe. www.bluedatto.org.au

¹ <http://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/downloads/crashstats2013.pdf>

² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2007). Young Australians: their health and wellbeing. Cat. no. PHE 87. 2006, Canberra: AIHW, [available here](#).

³ Cutler H, Cheung S, McKibbin R: Spinning out of control. The economic cost of road trauma in young people in NSW, Report by Access Economics Pty Limited for The Balnaves Foundation. 2011.