



MEDIA RELEASE

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Teen Driver Safety: Parents, There Is More To Do

The Blue Datto Foundation is calling on all parents to talk about safe driving with their teenagers ahead of the Easter Break this coming weekend.

Blue Datto Foundation CEO, Erin Vassallo, said, "Our goal is to reduce the impact of catastrophic injury and death among young people on NSW roads. It's all about encouraging positive discussions between parents and their teenagers – whether as drivers or passengers – and the attitudes and behaviours they bring when getting into a car.

"We know young drivers continue to be overrepresented in crash statistics. Young, primarily male drivers, are involved in almost 30% of fatal crashes and 29% of motor vehicle crashes, despite the fact that they constitute only 16% of all license holders¹.

"This Easter in particular, we want to encourage conversations at home and across social media about safe driving, including: getting enough sleep before driving; not being in a car where the driver is under the influence of recreational drugs or alcohol, turning your mobile phone off in the car; and not speeding.

"Parents are the biggest role models on the road, and you can start the conversation with your teenagers & their friends by using the Blue Datto prompt attached: It's Never Too Late and It's all about Keeping Safe™.

"There is a ripple effect with road trauma: if a young driver makes a bad decision, it will affect the driver, their passengers, and other road users, emergency response teams, and the friends, families and colleagues of all involved and is often devastating and long-lasting."

The Police Association of NSW (PANSW) is a strong supporter and sponsor of Blue Datto.

PANSW President, Scott Weber, said, "We can't highlight enough the importance of parents sitting down and talking with their teenagers about safe driving. A few words could make a world of difference to ensuring a young person reaches their destination alive.

"As police officers we see the carnage and tragic waste of young lives, often under horrific crash circumstances. There is nothing more distressing for an officer than knocking on a door at 3am telling families their loved ones have died in a crash. Safe driving is the conversation you need to have."

At Blue Datto they believe every child should have the right to live into adult hood, and every parent should see their children make that journey. It is all about embedding positive attitudes and behaviours towards driving as an ongoing life skill. They want to curb the high fatality and injury rates of young people resulting from road crashes and work towards ensuring every child returns home safe after being on our roads.

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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 Datsun, 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

Blue Datto will provide driver behaviour education in schools initially throughout Western Sydney targeted at Year 10 students (16 years of age) commencing July 2016. There currently is no behaviour training offered to this age group and many young people leaving school to pursue a trade miss out on this important training and life skill. Schools and communities wishing to participate should contact Blue Datto.

¹ StaySafe Committee – Report on Young Driver Safety, & Education Programs – Parliament of NSW 2008