



READY TO SAVE LIVES

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David Cairns Monday November 5th, 2018.

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Developed jointly in Geelong and Canada, the Road Ready program offers a rare fresh approach to driver education by engaging people to identify their own risk-taking behaviours.

Triggered by a News Corp call for new ways to reduce the number of young adults being killed or injured in car accidents, the program was developed by best selling Canadian neuroscience author Dr Jennifer Fraser and Geelong pair Robert Palmer and Aamir Qutub,

The program, endorsed by 'Life. Be in it.', is being trialled in a network of schools with its developers also in discussions with Victorian Police and the TAC.

Mr Palmer, an education consultant, said international research showed the major cause of road accidents involving young people began in their adolescent brain.

He said the online Road Ready program was a new approach using neuroscience to engage with young people through reading, images, auditory presentations and video clips.

"The course offers practical strategies, exercises and techniques in order to keep brains and bodies working together to keep our young drivers and other road users safe during the risky phase of adolescence," Dr Fraser said. "The key is to use the course as a platform, where the activities are presented and revisited over time.

"A participant can return to the materials many times, over any number of years, in order to approach driver safety, not as a single lesson or experience, but as deliberate practice."

Mr Palmer said the only way to seriously improve the tragic statistics on youth suffering serious injury and fatalities in car accidents was to have them repeat the learning, lessons, and activities that were structured in the Road Ready course.

"Think about how much time we put into teaching mathematics, learning a second language or playing a sport," he said. "This is the amount of time we need to put into safe driving if we truly want to reduce the number of serious road accidents and fatalities."

Mr Qutub, the chief executive of Geelong app and software developer Enterprise Monkey, said Road Ready was an interactive and structured learning program which did not teach the mechanics of driving. "It's about teaching the kids how to manage road rage and how to behave on the road, and respect for other road users," Mr Qutub said.

Key outcomes of the program include:

Making adolescents more aware about the workings of their developing brains;

Explaining why their brain development puts them at risk;

Showing how the desire for rewards overrides recognition of danger;

Providing a focus on specific risks such as sleep deprivation, alcohol and drugs, and distraction;

and,

Explaining the role peers play in influencing conduct; and providing techniques to minimise risk and danger.

More information and access to the full course is available at endabuse.online