



National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education: Intentional Teaching

The early years are a critical time to introduce key concepts for lifelong learning. Road safety education is an important component of early childhood education as it lays the foundation for children to become safer road users. The National Practices for Early Childhood Road Safety Education have been developed by early childhood education and road safety experts across Australia and New Zealand. The eight national practices are aligned with the Early Years Learning Framework.

National Practice No. 4 – Intentional Teaching: Engage in intentional teaching which extends and expands children’s learning about road safety.

What is it? Purposeful support from early childhood education and care educators enriches children’s learning. Intentional teaching involves educators being deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful. Intentional teaching occurs every day as teachers make decisions connected to children’s learning. This may include decisions about the organisation of educational spaces through the quality of the interactions with children in the time educators provide for children to play. Planning intentional teaching practices includes planning in response to, or planning to engage children in thinking and action about an aspect of road safety, such as:

- Plan learning experiences that provide children with the opportunity to explore and practice being a safer road user – for example, play experiences and games that develop children’s sense of spatial awareness.
- Provide materials, toys and resources that allow children to think about becoming safer road users, and the responsibilities they need to practice. For example:
 - hang up posters or signs displaying appropriate child restraints/ booster seats
 - stock the room with seatbelts and other props for play
 - choose storybooks that provide an opportunity to discuss road safety.
- Invite children to engage in the risk assessment process before leaving the facility. Children could use discussion, images and props/toys to identify what to be mindful of and how to keep safe. Facilitate a purposeful discussion that allows children to make connections themselves.
- Engage in respectful and meaningful conversations with children that includes key road safety concepts, and uses questioning as an intentional teaching practice to facilitate children’s learning. Some example questions may include:
 - How did you get here today? How will you leave?
 - Tell me about where you sit in the car, and what your seat is like?
 - What other ways do you know that children can get to preschool?
 - When you are walking, how do you know when it’s safe to cross the road?
 - What do we look for when we are crossing the road? What kind of sounds might we hear?
 - Do you wear anything special when you ride your bike? What might happen if you didn’t wear this?
- Encourage children to be active advocates of their own safety, and the safety of their peers – for example, by discussing risks and incidents within their own community, and planning strategies to keep themselves and their loved ones safe.
- Ask questions about the types of road safety experiences children have previously had, and seek to maximise the connection to local community by asking students to share examples of application of safe road behaviours to their life.