

Road Safety Research Briefing 2:

Children and Traffic: Initiatives supporting vulnerable parents to educate their children about road safety are needed

O'Toole, S., & Christie, N. (2018). Educating Parents to Support Children's Road Safety: A Review of the Literature. *Transport Reviews*.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01441647.2018.1499678>

What we did:

A narrative literature review of academic research papers and grey literature was carried out. This research was funded by the Road Safety Trust

What we found:

- There have been limited evaluations of road safety initiatives targeting parents/caregivers, particularly those residing in deprived areas, from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, or who have children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Parent education on road safety can have positive impacts on both parent and child behaviour and knowledge, including: child safety seat use, knowledge of correct installation of child safety seats, child and adult pedestrian skills, parent and child cycling behaviour, and helmet use in children.
- Across all areas of road safety, interventions that targeted parents more directly and provided more hands-on training for parents were more effective in improving parent knowledge and behaviour.
- There is great variation in what constitutes parent education. Road safety programmes involve parents to varying levels and use a variety of approaches: workshops, information leaflets and videos, homework activities, books, and media campaigns. Further evaluation of the most effective means of providing educational information to parents needs to be undertaken.

Policy implications:

- A different approach to road safety education with parents from deprived and BAME backgrounds may be needed. Initiatives that engage with organisations already working with these "at-risk" communities have been found to increase the effectiveness of road safety education.
- In particular there is a lack of evaluations of initiatives involving parents of children with SEND. Children with SEND may be especially vulnerable on the roads and therefore represent an 'at-risk' group that should be targeted by initiatives.