Road Safety Early Years Resource Consultation: Analysis of Responses

Final Report

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Appendix One – Survey questionnaires

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In March 2009, Road Safety Scotland commissioned ODS Consulting to analyse the responses to their consultation on a new Road Safety Education Early Years Resource. The analysis will help to inform the development of the new road safety resource for Scottish children.

1.2 Background to the consultation

Since 1995, the Children's Traffic Club in Scotland (CTCS) has provided road safety information for parents, carers and teachers of children aged 3 to 5. Any 3 year old child in Scotland can join the club. A recent evaluation in 2005 concluded that there was a strong link between low levels of CTCS membership, and high levels of social deprivation. The research recommended that Road Safety Scotland should consider adapting its approach to providing road safety education for young children, focusing on ensuring the approach is appropriate for children, parents and carers in areas of high social deprivation.

In 2007, the Scottish Government approved the development of a new road safety education resource for early years. To progress the new resource, Road Safety Scotland undertook a consultation exercise to gather the views of key stakeholders – including parents, early years practitioners, road safety professionals, educationalists and psychologists. A survey was issued to early years establishments and parents, and qualitative interviews took place with a wider range of stakeholders.

Having gathered these views, Road Safety Scotland commissioned ODS to analyse the responses.

1.3 Consultation methodology

The consultation exercise was led by staff within Road Safety Scotland. Road Safety Scotland's Education Sub-committee and Early Years Working Group (whose membership is drawn from stakeholders, including local authority and police road safety officers) provided advisory support to the consultation.

In the first phase of the consultation, self-completion questionnaires were distributed to early years education establishments (e.g. nursery schools) in all Scottish Local Authorities and to

parents / guardians of pre-school age children. The questionnaires for education establishments and parents had slightly different questions, although focused on similar themes. Both contained mainly closed questions, with space for noting additional comments. The questionnaires were sent out by email, and respondents either replied by email or printed the questionnaire and returned a completed paper copy. Copies of the questionnaires can be found at Appendix One.

The second phase involved more 'qualitative' consultation with stakeholders. This focused on a few 'case study' locations, and aimed to include areas with high levels of social deprivation, urban / rural areas, and children with additional support needs. The stakeholders consulted included staff in Road Safety Units and early years education establishments, other relevant professionals and organisations, parents and children. The consultations took the form of small group discussions and one-to-one interviews. These were based around the same themes covered in the questionnaires. A member of staff from Road Safety Scotland wrote up field notes from comments made at these events.

1.4 Analysis methodology

A number of stages were involved in the analysis of the survey response and the qualitative interviews.

- **Inception and data gathering / inputting** – Following appointment we held an inception meeting with Road Safety Scotland to agree priorities / expectations for the study, agree the final methodology, collect survey responses and interview transcripts and discuss emerging themes with the RSS team. Survey data was then inputted onto a database for analysis. Due to the separate nature of the surveys the responses from parents and organisations were inputted and analysed separately.
- **Survey analysis** – We undertook an initial analysis of respondents to identify any imbalances or gaps. Individual respondents were analysed by gender, age, occupation and whether living in a deprived area[1]. Organisations were analysed by type of establishment and type of locality (urban / rural). The initial analysis was presented in a short report to Road Safety Scotland. We then undertook a detailed analysis of the responses to each of the survey questions and compared responses according to the respondent categories, identifying any trends in the responses.

[1] Which we measure as living within one of the 15% most deprived datazones in Scotland, according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

- **Analysis of stakeholder views** – We undertook an analysis of the written up field notes from the qualitative interviews undertaken with stakeholders. This analysis involved a manual coding exercise according to key themes.
- **Reporting** – We then produced a draft Final Report highlighting the key themes emerging from the analysis and presenting key findings. The draft will be discussed with Road Safety Scotland before producing a final version.

1.5 About this report

This report sets out the findings from the survey and qualitative interviews. Section Two sets out the views of the parents / guardians responding to the survey. Section Three gives the survey findings for early years education providers. Sections Four summarises the views expressed in the interviews with stakeholders. The final section provides our findings and conclusions from the consultation exercise.

2. Views of parents and guardians

2.1 Introduction

This section considers the views expressed by parents and guardians. Self completion surveys were completed by parents and guardians of pre-school age children from across Scotland.

2.2 Parents / guardians responding to the consultation

A total of 75 parents / guardians responded to the questionnaire.

Table 2.1: Parents / guardians responding by gender

Gender	Number	%
Male	3	4
Female	71	96
Total	**74**	**100**
No answer	*1*	-

The vast majority of parents / guardians were female (71 – 96% of those answering). Only three men (4%) responded to the survey.

Table 2.2: Parents / guardians responding by age group

Age group	Number	%
Under 20	1	1
21 to 30	20	28
31 to 40	42	59
Over 40	8	11
Total	**71**	**100**
No answer	*4*	-

Most of the respondents (42 – 59% of those answering) were aged between 31 and 40 years old, and nearly a third (20 – 28%) were aged between 21 and 30. Very few parents / guardians from the youngest age group responded to the questionnaire (1 – 1%) although this may reflect low numbers in this group generally, rather than any significant gap in the sample. Eight respondents (11%) were aged over 40 years old.

Table 2.3: Parents / guardians responding by occupation

Occupational group	Number	%
Employed	50	69
Unemployed	6	8
At home	14	19
In education or training	2	3
Total	**72**	**100**
No answer	*3*	-

More than two thirds of the respondents answering this question (50 – 69%) were employed and 14 respondents (19%) said that they are 'at home' and not currently working. Just two respondents (3%) said that they are either in education or training.

Six respondents (8%) stated that they are unemployed. UK unemployment stood at 6.5% for the three months to January 2009[2] so this is a relatively proportional sample for this group.

Table 2.4: Parents / guardians responding by area deprivation

Living in a deprived area	Number	%
Postcode in most deprived 15%	10	13
Other areas	65	87
Total	**75**	**100**

Respondents provided their postcode when completing the questionnaire. We checked the postcode against the datazones identified as the 15% most deprived areas in Scotland by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. We found that 10 respondents (just over 13%) lived in one of these areas. Given that the datazones are broadly similar in population size, then this represent a good sample of those living in deprived areas.

2.3 Views on the existing Children's Traffic Club in Scotland (CTCS)

2.3.1 Awareness of the CTCS resource

The respondents were asked whether they had heard of the Children's Traffic Club in Scotland (CTCS).

[2] Office for National Statistics, 2009

Table 2.5: Parental awareness of CTCS

Heard of the CTCS?	Number	%
Yes	56	75
No	19	25
Total	**75**	**100**

Three-quarters of the respondents (56 – 75%) had heard of the Children's Traffic Club resource while 25% had not. There were no notable trends in terms of awareness by age or whether living in a deprived neighbourhood.

Table 2.6: Parental awareness of CTCS by area deprivation

Heard of the CTCS?	Postcode in most deprived 15%	Other areas
Yes	7 (70%)	49 (75%)
No	3 (30%)	16 (25%)
Total	**10**	**65**

Survey respondents were slightly less likely to have heard of the Children's Traffic Club if they lived in an area within the 15% most deprived datazones in Scotland – although the relatively low numbers would not indicate any significant trend.

Table 2.7: Parental awareness of CTCS by age group

Heard of the CTCS?	Under 20	21-30	31-40	Over 40
Yes	1 (100%)	13 (65%)	33 (79%)	7 (88%)
No	-	7 (35%)	9 (21%)	1 (12%)
Total	**1**	**20**	**42**	**8**

Respondents aged between 21 and 30 years were less likely to have heard of the Children's Traffic Club resource although, again, the relatively low numbers in this group mean that no significant trend is identifiable.

2.3.2 Views on the CTCS resource

The 56 parents / guardians who said that they had heard of the CTCS resource were asked for their views on the existing content. Respondents considered six elements of the resource (the workbooks, balloon characters, child characters, competitions, stickers, and the website) and rated them between 1 (excellent) and 5 (poor).

Table 2.8: Parent / guardian views on CTCS resource

CTCS element	1 Excellent	2	3	4	5 Poor	*Don't know*	Rating Av.*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
The workbooks	25	**34**	14	7	11	*9*	2.39
The balloon characters	23	**32**	13	9	13	*11*	2.50
The child characters	21	**32**	23	7	7	*9*	2.41
The competitions	5	**29**	21	13	7	*25*	2.83
The stickers	**36**	27	13	13	5	*7*	2.19
The website	4	7	5	4	5	***75***	3.00

*Average <3 = positive; >3 = negative

As Table 2.8 shows, respondents were generally positive about the content of the CTCS resource. The final column shows that the rating average for nearly all of the elements was less than '3' meaning that the responses were more positive than negative. It was also the case that '1' or '2' was the most common response for these elements of the resource (shown in bold).

The clear exception to this was the Children's Traffic Club website which received a 'neutral' average rating from the respondents (3.00). Seventy-five per cent of respondents said that they didn't know how to rate the website – presumably due to low usage / awareness of the site.

The stickers were the most popular element of the resource with 63% rating this as either '1' or '2' – and overall having the most positive average rating (2.19). The workbooks were also popular among parents / guardians with 59% giving '1' or '2'. The majority of respondents were positive about the balloon characters (with 55% giving 1 or 2) and the child characters (53%). However, the balloon characters received the most negative responses with more than a fifth (22%) giving them either a '4' or '5'.

While the response was generally positive, there was less awareness of the CTCS competitions. Twenty-five per cent of those that had used CTCS didn't know how to rate the competitions – and a fifth gave this element a negative score of their '4' or '5'.

There was some difference in the views on the CTCS resource between those responding from deprived areas – and those from other areas.

Table 2.9: Parent / guardian views on CTCS resource by area deprivation

CTCS element	Positive view (1 or 2)		Negative view (4 or 5)		Rating average*	
	Most deprived 15%	Other areas	Most deprived 15%	Other areas	Most deprived 15%	Other areas
The workbooks	43%	61%	29%	16%	2.71	2.34
The balloon characters	29%	59%	43%	18%	3.14	2.40
The child characters	43%	55%	29%	12%	2.71	2.36
The competitions	29%	35%	29%	18%	3.00	2.80
The stickers	72%	61%	29%	16%	2.14	2.20
The website	0%	12%	14%	8%	4.00	2.83

*Average <3 = positive; >3 = negative

Generally, respondents from areas outside the 15% most deprived were more positive about the content of the CTCS resource. This was notably the case for the CTC website where no respondents living in deprived areas gave a positive response. However, parents / guardians living in deprived areas were more positive about the stickers that children receive than the respondents from other areas. Respondents from the most deprived 15% of datazones were also significantly more negative about the balloon characters in the resource with 43% giving either '4' or '5' for this element.

Respondents were invited to make additional comments on the CTCS resource. There were mixed views on the content of the workbooks:

"Really like the books, great level of detail and engaging for 3-5 year olds." (Parent / guardian)

"The general advice to parents and the checklists are good. It's good to think, 'yes I do that' or, 'maybe I should work on that with my child'". (Parent / guardian)

"I feel the books should be updated. My 20 year old and 13 year old children were in the Traffic Club and now my 3 year old son is. Not much has changed over the years - updated books would be great with new pictures etc." (Parent / guardian)

There were particular concerns expressed about the appropriateness of the material in the existing resource and the 'wordiness' of the content:

"I used the CTC with my child however I think he was a little too young at the time (3 yrs) to be properly engaged." (Parent / guardian)

"My son receives the workbooks but often finds them hard to follow. He likes the colouring and the stickers (he is 3 and a half)". (Parent / guardian)

"The best features are where there is something for the child to do. The cutting and sticking are good as are the talkabout pages. The writing is for the adults but it can look too wordy and put you off doing it. Sticking to the checklist and one activity per page would be better." (Parent / guardian)

While one parent / guardian was supportive there were negative comments about the balloon characters in the CTCS resource:

"I especially liked the balloon characters in this book. My child enjoyed talking about it when we went outside, crossing the road & standing on pavements." (Parent / guardian)

"Too many balloon characters" (Parent / guardian)

"I don't find the balloon characters add anything helpful at all." (Parent / guardian)

There were also comments to suggested limited awareness of the full range of formats that the CTCS resource was available in – and particularly the website:

"Didn't realise there was a website - will look at it now I know." (Parent / guardian)

"Have not seen the website or books." (Parent / guardian)

2.4 Activities and road safety practice

The survey asked parents / guardians about their activities with their child(ren). This included walking outdoors, playing outdoors and journey in the car and on the bus.

2.4.1 Walking outdoors

The respondents were asked how often they walk with their children outdoors (for example going to the shops or walking to school / nursery) in both the autumn / winter months and in spring / summer.

Table 2.10: Walking with child(ren) outdoors – parents / guardians

Frequency	Autumn / Winter		Spring / Summer	
	Number	%	Number	%
Daily	45	60	67	89
More than once a week	25	33	7	9
Once a week	4	5	1	1
Fortnightly	1	1	0	-
Monthly	0	-	0	-
Rarely	0	-	0	-
Total	**75**	**100**	**75**	**100**

In the autumn / winter months less than two-thirds (45 – 60%) of parents / guardians walk outdoors with their child(ren) on a daily basis. A further third (25) walk with their child(ren) more than once a week. Just one respondent said that they walk outdoors less than once a week. As expected, outdoor activity increased in the spring / summer months with the vast majority (67 – 89%) walking outdoors with their child(ren) on a daily basis. In these months, all of the respondents walk outdoors with their child(ren) at least once a week.

There was some variation in the response from parents / guardians living in areas which experience different levels of deprivation.

Table 2.11: Walking with child(ren) outdoors – parents / guardians by area deprivation

Frequency	Postcode in most deprived 15%				Other areas			
	Autumn / Winter		Spring / Summer		Autumn / Winter		Spring / Summer	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Daily	9	90	10	100	36	55	57	88
More than once a week	1	10	-	-	24	37	7	11
Once a week	-	-	-	-	4	6	1	1
Fortnightly	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
Monthly	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rarely	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**10**	**100**	**10**	**100**	**65**	**100**	**65**	**100**

Across both halves of the year, respondents living in the most deprived 15% of datazones were more likely to walk outside with their child(ren) – typically on a daily basis. Parents living in other areas walk outdoors with their children less frequently – in the autumn / winter months 45% (29 respondents) do not walk outdoors with their child(ren) every day.

2.4.2 Playing outdoors

The respondents were asked how often, on average, their child(ren) play outdoors independently during both the autumn / winter and spring / summer months.

Table 2.12: Child(ren) playing outdoors independently

Frequency	Autumn / Winter		Spring / Summer	
	Number	%	Number	%
Daily	11	15	47	66
More than once a week	21	29	10	14
Once a week	10	14	1	1
Fortnightly	6	8	0	-
Monthly	1	1	0	-
Rarely	23	32	13	18
Total	**72**	**100**	**71**	**100**
No answer	*3*	-	*4*	-

There were mixed responses in terms of independent play outdoors. Thirty-two respondents (44%) said in the autumn / winter months their child(ren) play outside independently either daily or more than once a week. However, nearly a third of parents / guardians (23 – 32%) said that their child(ren) only 'rarely' play outside on their own.

In the spring / summer months children play outside more frequently with two thirds (47 respondents) stating that their child(ren) play outside independently every day. However, nearly a fifth (13 – 18%) said that their children 'rarely' play outdoors independently during the spring / summer months.

Table 2.13: Child(ren) playing outdoors independently – by area deprivation

Frequency	Postcode in most deprived 15%				Other areas			
	Autumn / Winter		Spring / Summer		Autumn / Winter		Spring / Summer	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Daily	3	30	5	50	8	13	42	69
More than once a week	1	10	1	10	20	32	9	15
Once a week	-	-	-	-	10	16	1	2
Fortnightly	-	-	-	-	6	10	-	-
Monthly	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-
Rarely	6	60	4	40	17	27	9	15
Total	**10**	**100**	**10**	**100**	**62**	**100**	**61**	**100**
No answer	-	-	-	-	*3*	-	*4*	-

There were no clear trends in outdoor play by area deprivation although there was a greater range of responses from those living in less deprived areas (potentially due to the larger sample of respondents from these areas). Comparatively, children living in the more deprived areas were more likely to play outdoors every day during the autumn / winter months than those in other areas. The opposite was true in the summer months where children living in less deprived areas were more likely to ply outdoors every day.

2.4.3 Car journeys

The respondents were asked how often, on average, they take their child(ren) on a car journey.

Table 2.14: Car journeys

Frequency	Number	%
Daily	35	47
More than once a week	23	31
Once a week	9	12
Fortnightly	3	4
Monthly	0	-
Rarely	4	5
Total	**74**	**100**
No answer	*1*	-

The majority of parents / guardians (58 – 78%) said that they take their child(ren) on a car journey either every day or more than once week. Sixty-seven respondents (91%) said that their child(ren) take a journey in a car at least once a week.

Table 2.15: Car journeys – by area deprivation

	Postcode in most deprived 15%	Other areas
Daily	5 (50%)	30 (47%)
More than once a week	2 (20%)	21 (33%)
Once a week	1 (10%)	8 (13%)
Fortnightly	-	3 (5%)
Monthly	-	-
Rarely	2 (20%)	2 (3%)
Total	**10**	**64**
No answer	-	*1*

There was no significant difference in the frequency of car journeys by area deprivation. Proportionately, respondents from more deprived areas were more likely to state that their

child(ren) 'rarely' take a journey in a car (20% compared to 3% in other areas) although numbers responding were low.

2.4.4 Bus journeys

The respondents were asked how often, on average, they take their child(ren) on a bus journey.

Table 2.16: Bus journeys

Frequency	Number	%
Daily	5	7
More than once a week	2	3
Once a week	4	6
Fortnightly	1	1
Monthly	9	13
Rarely	51	71
Total	**72**	**100**
No answer	*3*	-

Buses were not a regular mode of transport for the parents / guardians responding to the survey with 51 respondents (71%) stating that their child(ren) 'rarely' travel on a bus. Just five respondents (7%) take their child(ren) on a bus every day.

Table 2.17: Bus journeys by area deprivation

	Postcode in most deprived 15%	Other areas
Daily	3 (30%)	2 (3%)
More than once a week	-	2 (3%)
Once a week	-	4 (6%)
Fortnightly	-	1 (2%)
Monthly	-	9 (15%)
Rarely	7 (70%)	44 (71%)
Total	**10**	**62**
No answer	-	*3*

There was less variation in the responses from parents / guardians living in more deprived areas. Children in these areas either 'rarely' used a bus or did so every day. Propositionally, children in more deprived areas were more likely to travel by bus daily (30% compared with 3% in other areas) although, again, the number of respondents was low.

2.5 Views on how road safety messages should be delivered

Parents / guardians were asked for their views on how road safety messages should be delivered to their children. The respondents were asked if they supported the delivery of road safety messages by parental example, and if they supported the teaching of road safety through early years educational institutions.

Table 2.18: How road safety messages should be delivered – parents / guardians

Method	Yes	No	Total	*No answer*
By parents through good example	70 (95%)	4 (5%)	**74**	*1*
Through teaching in nursery / playgroup / school	70 (96%)	3 (4%)	**73**	*2*

There was strong support from the respondents for the delivery of road safety messages through both parental example and teaching in nursery / playgroups / school. This suggests that there is broad support for a dual approach to reinforcing road safety messages.

Table 2.19: How road safety messages should be delivered – parents / guardians by area deprivation

Method	Postcode in most deprived 15%			Other areas		
	Yes	No	*No ans*	Yes	No	*No ans*
By parents through good example	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	-	62 (97%)	2 (3%)	*1*
Through teaching in nursery / playgroup / school	10 (100%)	0	-	60 (95%)	3 (5%)	*2*

There was no significant trend in the responses to this question by area deprivation.

The survey respondents were also asked whether they would like to be kept informed of the road safety education being delivered by early years educational institutions.

Table 2.20: Staying informed about early years road safety education

Method	Yes	No	Total	*No answer*
Would you be interested in knowing what Road Safety messages were being taught to your children in their nursery / playgroup / school?	73 (100%)	0	**73**	*2*

All of the parents / guardians responding to this question said that they would like to know about the road safety messages being taught to their children. This suggests that there is support for a partnership approach to delivering road safety messages to young children.

2.6 Views on a new road safety resource

The survey asked parents / guardians for their views on what should be contained in a new road safety education resource for early years children. The respondents were asked to rate the importance of suggested elements on a scale of 1 (vitally important) to 5 (not important at all).

Table 2.21: Parent / guardian views on suggested content of a new resource

Suggested element	1 (Vitally important)	2	3	4	5 (Not important at all)	*Don't know*	Rating Av.*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Interesting stories	**65**	31	1	3	0	*0*	1.42
Stickers	35	**39**	12	11	1	*1*	2.03
An interactive website	**31**	30	20	8	5	*5*	2.23
A DVD	**35**	**35**	23	5	0	*1*	1.99
Songs	**51**	26	15	7	1	*0*	1.82
A board game	**30**	**30**	26	11	1	*1*	2.22
Free reflectors	**64**	18	10	7	0	*1*	1.58
A parents' guide	**63**	27	6	3	1	*0*	1.52

*Average <3 = positive; >3 = negative

The respondents were positive about all of the suggested content for a new resource. For each element the majority of respondents gave either '1' or '2' and each element had a 'positive' rating average of less than 3.

The most popular element was 'interesting stories' – 96% of parents / guardians said that this was important (giving 1 or 2) and 65% said that it was 'vitally important'. Other popular suggestions were: 'a parents' guide' which 90% said was import or vitally important; and 'free reflectors' which 82% said was important or vitally important. Nearly three quarters of those answering the question said that including stickers in the resource was important / vitally important. The inclusion of songs and a DVD were also suggestions that were supported by 70% or more of the respondents.

Although popular ideas, there was slightly less support for the development of an interactive website or the inclusion of a board game.

There was some difference in views on content for a new resource between those responding from deprived areas – and those from other areas.

Table 2.22: Parent / guardian views on content for a new resource by area deprivation

Suggested element	Important / vitally important (1 or 2)		Less important / not important at all (4 or 5)		Rating average*	
	Most deprived 15%	Other areas	Most deprived 15%	Other areas	Most deprived 15%	Other areas
Interesting stories	100%	95%	0%	3%	1.30	1.44
Stickers	90%	72%	0%	15%	1.40	2.13
An interactive website	70%	60%	10%	14%	1.78	2.30
A DVD	80%	69%	10%	5%	1.60	2.05
Songs	78%	77%	0%	10%	1.67	1.84
A board game	78%	58%	0%	15%	1.56	2.32
Free reflectors	90%	81%	0%	8%	1.20	1.65
A parents' guide	100%	89%	0%	5%	1.11	1.58

*Average <3 = positive; >3 = negative

Respondents from the most deprived 15% of datazones were more likely to state that the suggested elements were important. Respondents from more deprived areas were particularly supportive of the inclusion of stickers and a board game compared with those from other areas. However, given the significantly higher number responding from other areas, it was more likely that there would be a 'spread' of answers from these respondents.

The parents / guardians were invited to make any additional comments on a proposed new resource – or make further suggestions for content. The comments related to: ensuring that the content is engaging; ensuring there is a link to practical experiences; developing links with other initiatives; and undertaking wider activities including support for parents.

The following suggestions were made in relation to engaging content for a new resource:

"Interesting characters making it fun to learn but so the kids realise it's a serious matter."
(Parent / guardian)

"Songs with the tune included (e.g. to the tune of baa, baa, black sheep, etc.)" (Parent / guardian)

"Pop-up books" (Parent / guardian)

"Inter-active website - judging by the popularity of the Cbeebies website" (Parent / guardian)

"Interactive website - depends on the age of the children." (Parent / guardian)

Several respondents emphasised the need for experiential learning to accompany and resource materials:

"The use of practical demonstrations or games when out and about at nursery." (Parent / guardian)

"Bringing the children outdoors and putting what they have learned into practice" (Parent / guardian)

There were also suggestions as to how parents could be supported to deliver road safety messages:

"It would be good to have local road safety classes." (Parent / guardian)

"Parent talks with shock tactics to scare them into being aware." (Parent / guardian)

One respondent said that they would like to resource to be used in a more sustained way – and would like to see a resource that caters for older age groups:

"My children have both enjoyed doing 'traffic club' and really enjoyed the stickers. They also liked doing the suggested games / activities in the books e.g. running around whilst whispering something then standing still while I whisper something. The books were used as more of an event though and weren't revisited. I would like more resources similar to Traffic Club to use with my older child too (7) as I'm not sure what she learns at school on the subject and 'Traffic Club' is now a distant memory for her." (Parent / guardian)

Another parent / guardian said that there is scope to link in with other activities taking place:

"(CTCS) Stories are good but kids soon turn off it they are not fun. Book Start and Fun First are huge in our town. You could join forces and get the singing groups involved in singing safety songs and reading stories to pre-school children." (Parent / guardian)

One respondent said that there should be wider publicity of any resource through a TV campaign:

"A TV campaign – I still remember the Tufty Club and the Green Cross Code Man and the Be Safe Be Seen campaign." (Parent / guardian)

2.7 Summary of parental response

- A quarter of the parents / guardians responding hadn't heard of the Children's Traffic Club.
- Respondents were generally positive about the existing CTCS resource. The stickers and workbooks were the most popular elements. But there were negative responses to the balloon characters and limited awareness of the website and competitions.
- There were concerns about the appropriateness of CTCS materials for the age group and the 'wordiness' of the existing resource.
- The responding parents / guardians walk outdoors with their children regularly. Respondents from deprived areas tend to walk outdoors with their children more regularly than those from other areas.
- There was a mixed pattern of children playing outdoors independently – and no clear trend by area deprivation.
- Most parents / guardians (regardless of the area they live in) take their children on a car journey more than once a week. Few respondents take their children on regular bus journeys.
- There was a strong view from parents / guardians that road safety messages should be delivered both by parental example and through teaching at nursery / playgroup / school. All respondents said that they want to be kept informed of the road safety messages being taught to their children.
- The most popular suggested elements for a new road safety resource were interesting stories, a parental guide and free reflectors.

- Parents / guardians emphasised the need for the content of the new resource to be engaging for the children, and the material should link to practical experience. Respondents said that there should be activities providing support to parents, links with other activities for children and wider publicity of the new resource.

3. Views of early years education providers

3.1 Introduction

This section considers the views expressed by early years education providers. Self-completion surveys were distributed to nursery schools, playgroups and primary schools across Scotland.

3.2 Organisations responding to the survey

A total of 295 questionnaires were completed by early years education providers. These came from providers in 28 (out of the 32) local authority areas in Scotland.

Table 3.1: Survey response by local authority – education providers

Local authority area	Number	Local authority area	Number
Angus	1	Midlothian	8
Argyll & Bute	4	Moray	10
Clackmannanshire	3	North Ayrshire	11
Dumfries & Galloway	15	North Lanarkshire	17
Dundee	8	Orkney	1
East Dunbartonshire	17	Perth & Kinross	24
East Lothian	2	Renfrewshire	17
East Renfrewshire	5	Scottish Borders	19
Edinburgh	17	Stirling	9
Falkirk	10	Shetland	7
Fife	17	South Lanarkshire	13
Glasgow	1	West Dunbartonshire	6
Highland	22	Western Isles	13
Inverclyde	11	West Lothian	7
		Total	**295**

The survey response provides good coverage of local authority areas in Scotland. Notable gaps are the limited response from Glasgow and the lack of returns from Aberdeen / Aberdeenshire. However, the spread of local authorities indicates a good sample from urban and rural locations.

Nine of the questionnaires returned from Perth and Kinross were in a different format to the rest of the survey making analysis more difficult. These are treated separately in the analysis below.

Table 3.2: Survey response by type of locality – education providers

Type of locality	Number	%
Urban	154	58
Rural	113	42
Total	**267**	**100**
No answer	*28*	-

A majority of the responding organisations (154 – 58%) were located in urban areas. A significant minority of responses came from establishments in rural areas (113 – 42%).

The Scottish population living in (accessible and remote) rural areas was 18.5% in 2006[3], meaning that rural areas are over-represented proportionally in the survey sample. This means that the views of both rural and urban respondents are strongly represented survey response.

Twenty-eight respondents (9%) did not indicate whether they were located in a rural or urban area.

Table 3.3: Survey response by type of establishment – education providers

Type of establishment	Number	%
Nursery school / Playgroup	203	70
Primary school / Pre-5 unit	86	30
Total	**289**	**100**
No answer	*6*	-

The majority of responses (203 – 70%) came from nurseries and playgroups. Just less than a third of the organisational responses (86 – 30%) came from primary schools and pre-5 units.

3.3 Views on the existing Children's Traffic Club in Scotland (CTCS)

The early years providers were asked for their views on the existing CTCS resource.

3.3.1 Awareness of the CTCS resource

The respondents were asked whether they had heard of the Children's Traffic Club in Scotland.

[3] Scottish Government, Rural Scotland Key Facts 2008

Table 3.4: Organisational awareness of CTCS

Heard of the CTCS?	Number	%
Yes	238	81
No	56	19
Total	**294**	**100**
No answer	*1*	-

The majority of the early years education providers (238 – 81%) had heard of the CTCS resource. However, nearly a fifth of respondents (56 – 19%) had not heard of the resource.

As Table 3.5 shows, there was significant difference in awareness depending on whether the response came from a nursery / playgroup or a Primary school / Pre-5s unit. Ninety-six per cent of nursery / playschool respondents had heard of the resource compared with just 45% of Pre-5 / Primary school respondents.

Table 3.5: Organisational awareness of CTCS – by establishment

	Nursery/playgroups	Pre5/Primary School
Yes	198 (96%)	40 (45%)
No	9 (4%)	47 (55%)
Total	**207**	**87**
No answer	*1*	

As Table 3.6 shows, there was no significant trend in awareness across urban and rural locations, although educational respondents were more likely to have heard of CTCS if they are in a rural location.

Table 3.6: Organisational awareness of CTCS – by locality

Heard of the CTCS?	Rural	Urban
Yes	95 (85%)	119 (77%)
No	17 (15%)	35 (23%)
Total	**112**	**154**
*No answer**	*29*	

*includes 28 that did not specify rural / urban location

3.3.2 Views on the CTCS resource

The 238 educational respondents who said that they had heard of the CTCS resource were asked for their views on the existing resource. Respondents considered ten elements of the CTCS resource and rated them between 1 (excellent) and 5 (poor).

Table 3.7: Organisational views on CTCS resource

CTCS element	1 Excellent	2	3	4	5 Poor	*Don't know*	Rating Av.*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
The Stories	10	33	**37**	10	4	*8*	2.62
The balloon characters	25	**32**	27	7	2	*7*	2.24
The child characters	11	**34**	31	5	4	*16*	2.48
The colouring book	16	**30**	24	11	7	*12*	2.56
The songs	15	**29**	25	6	4	*21*	2.42
The snap cards	17	**29**	17	4	6	*28*	2.35
The stickers	**33**	26	19	6	4	*13*	2.10
The board game	4	10	16	5	6	***59***	2.98
The website	1	13	10	1	7	***68***	2.97
The gym cards	8	13	13	3	7	***55***	2.72

*Average <3 = positive; >3 = negative

Overall, the responses were positive (with each element scoring a rating average of less than 3). The most popular elements of the resource among education providers were 'the stickers' (which 59% of respondents gave either '1' or '2') and 'the balloon characters' (which 57% gave '1' or '2'). There was also positive feedback for the snap cards, the songs and the child characters from educational respondents. There was a slightly less positive response to the colouring book and the stories in the resource – 18% and 14% gave negative ratings of '4' or '5' for these elements respectively.

There was significantly less awareness of CTCS website, the board game and the gym cards with majorities saying that they didn't know how to rate these elements. In particular, more than two-thirds of responding organisations (68%) said that they didn't know how to rate the website.

As Table 3.8 shows, there was no clear difference in views on the CTCS resource according to type of location – although Primary schools / Pre-5 units were generally more positive about the resource.

Table 3.8: Organisational views on CTCS resource – by establishment

CTCS element	Positive view (1 or 2)		Negative view (4 or 5)		Rating average*	
	Nursery/ Playgroup	Pre5/ Primary	Nursery/ Playgroup	Pre5/ Primary	Nursery/ Playgroup	Pre5/ Primary
The stories	42%	43%	14%	8%	2.66	2.40
The balloon characters	57%	57%	10%	3%	2.28	2.03
The child characters	44%	51%	8%	8%	2.53	2.20
The colouring books	45%	51%	18%	14%	2.61	2.31
The songs	46%	35%	12%	0%	2.47	2.05
The snap cards	48%	35%	9%	11%	2.34	2.43
The stickers	58%	65%	9%	10%	2.13	2.00
The board game	12%	20%	12%	3%	3.09	2.31
The website	14%	20%	10%	3%	3.09	2.36
The gym cards	22%	22%	10%	8%	2.75	2.54

*Average <3 = positive; >3 = negative

Respondents from each group expressed similar views about the stories, the balloon characters and the gym cards. Nursery/playgroups were more positive about the songs and snap cards. And Pre- 5/ Primaries were more positive about colouring books, stickers, the website and the board game.

As Table 3.9 shows, there was no clear trend in views on the CTCS resource according to location in either a rural or urban location. However, those responding from urban areas were generally more positive about each element of the resource with the exception of the website and the gym cards (where the rating average was slightly higher).

Table 3.9: Organisational views on CTCS resource – by location

CTCS element	Positive view (1 or 2)		Negative view (4 or 5)		Rating average*	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
The stories	36%	46%	16%	13%	2.75	2.55
The balloon characters	48%	62%	12%	8%	2.41	2.15
The child characters	36%	52%	6%	13%	2.58	2.45
The colouring books	45%	55%	21%	14%	2.74	2.39
The songs	37%	48%	13%	9%	2.63	2.36
The snap cards	42%	49%	13%	8%	2.46	2.32
The stickers	54%	61%	13%	9%	2.16	2.13
The board game	9%	17%	13%	9%	3.30	2.91
The website	15%	14%	7%	9%	2.85	3.15
The gym cards	21%	21%	7%	11%	2.59	2.88

*Average <3 = positive; >3 = negative

The education providers were asked for any further comments on the CTCS. A wide range of comments were made reflecting both positive and negative views on the existing resource, issues around awareness and concerns that the materials may be getting out of date. There were also some specific issues raised by respondents from organisations based in rural areas.

There were positive comments about the stories in the books and the songs:

"The songs are excellent and we use them every year as part of Road Safety Fortnight in our school, along with the stories. However, it would be much easier if the songs and stories were available in a CD format as it would save time trying to rewind and find songs/stories each day. The website is also very good. If the songs were available online to sing along to it would also be useful." (Primary school respondent)

"The children gained a lot of knowledge from the traffic club song, regarding road safety. The children also gained a lot of knowledge from the colouring pictures as they were being discussed and they loved the stickers." (Nursery respondent)

"Children always seem very interested in the activities and stories within the packs. Bright and colourful which keep them interested and focused. Also having stickers as part of a reward was a very good idea." (Nursery respondent)

However, there were also some negative comments about the appropriateness of the content, particularly the stories and the colouring in activities:

"The stories are too short to share with a group of children. They are only suitable for one to one ratio." (Nursery respondent)

"The stories are too old for Playgroup age (3-4). Not interesting. Do not hold their attention." (Playgroup respondent)

"We don't see the value in colouring in" (Nursery respondent)

"Nursery would not use colouring in activities as they are detrimental to creativity at this stage." (Nursery respondent)

Several respondents suggested that the CTCS resource was getting old and needed updating:

"The current pack we use in playgroup is very old. It would be good to get regular updated packs through our contact with the local authority." (Playgroup respondent)

"We have been using them for so long that we are a little bored with the stories, characters and balloons." (Pre-5s respondent)

One respondent commented on the need for additional support from the team responsible for developing the materials:

"These resources would be more beneficial if supported by a member of the Traffic Club doing visits and engaging with the children." (Nursery respondent)

Three respondents raised the issue of Gaelic language content and one person was concerned that the materials do not sufficiently address the rural context:

"Because we are a Gaelic group the songs (tapes) are of no use to us and the stories are the same." (Nursery / playgroup respondent)

"As a parent this was a useful resource, however we are unable to use it within the playgroup as it is an English based resource and we are a Gaelic speaking group." (Playgroup respondent)

"Not much rural coverage – e.g. farm safety / vehicles" (Nursery / playgroup respondent)

3.4 Activities and road safety practice - walking outdoors

The responding organisations were asked how often they take the children outside the establishment grounds on walks.

Table 3.10: Walking with child(ren) outside establishment – organisations

Frequency	Number	%
Daily	33	13
More than once a week	32	13
Once a week	25	10
Fortnightly	17	7
Monthly	38	15
Termly	84	33
Rarely	24	9
Total	**253**	**100**
No answer	*42**	-

*includes 9 Perth and Kinross organisations not asked this question

There were mixed responses to this question. More than a quarter of the responding organisations (65 – 26%) said that they walk with the children outside the establishment ground either daily or more than once a week. Fifty-eight per cent of organisations responding to the question said that they walk with the children outside the establishment at least once a month. A third of the respondents (84) take the children outside the grounds on a termly basis and a further 9% (24) take them out less frequently.

As Table 3.11 shows, there was some difference in practice whether a nursery / playgroup or a Primary school / Pre-5 unit.

Table 3.11: Walking with child(ren) outside grounds – by establishment

	Nursery/playgroup		Pre5/Primary	
Frequency	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Daily	30	17	3	4
More than once a week	27	15	4	5
Once a week	17	10	8	11
Fortnightly	11	6	6	8
Monthly	28	16	10	13
Termly	52	29	32	43
Rarely	13	7	11	15
Total	**178**	**100**	**75**	**100**
No answer	*21*	-	*12*	

Respondents from nurseries and playgroups take the children on walks outside the establishment grounds more often than the respondents from Primary schools / Pre-5 units

Table 3.12 shows that there was no significant difference in practice across urban and rural locations.

Table 3.12: Walking with child(ren) outside grounds – by location

	Rural		Urban	
Frequency	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Daily	9	7	7	7
More than once a week	15	12	13	13
Once a week	13	10	11	11
Fortnightly	8	6	6	6
Monthly	21	16	18	18
Termly	45	35	32	33
Rarely	17	13	11	11
Total	**128**	**100**	**98**	**100**
No answer	*22*	-	*10*	

3.5 Views on a new road safety resource

The survey asked the education providers for their views on what should be contained in a new road safety resource for early years children. The respondents were asked to rate the importance of suggested elements on a scale of 1 (vitally important) to 5 (not important at all).

Table 3.13: Organisational views on suggested content of a new resource

Suggested element	1 (Vitally important)	2	3	4	5 (Not important at all)	*Don't know*	Rating Av.*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Cross-curricular activities	**58**	25	11	3	2	*2*	1.62
Interesting stories	**69**	22	6	0	2	*1*	1.42
Stickers	**36**	24	23	10	6	*2*	2.26
An interactive website	**44**	29	16	3	5	*3*	1.92
A DVD	**41**	27	20	6	3	*4*	1.97
Songs	**46**	32	13	5	2	*1*	1.83
Board games	21	**35**	29	9	3	*2*	2.37
Big books	**51**	32	12	2	3	*0*	1.73
Planning formats	**34**	28	19	7	8	*4*	2.23
Assessment grids	24	21	**27**	11	12	*7*	2.64
Free reflectors	**56**	21	13	4	3	*3*	1.74

*Average <3 = positive; >3 = negative

The respondents were positive about the suggested content for a new resource. Each element had a 'positive' rating average of less than 3 and for all but one of the suggested elements the majority of respondents gave either '1' or '2'.

The most popular element was 'interesting stories' – 91% of education providers said that this was important (giving '1' or '2') and 69% said that it was 'vitally important'. Eight-three per cent of respondents said that establishing 'cross-curricular activities' was important and 58% said that this was 'vitally important'. Other popular elements were the inclusion of 'big books' (with 83% giving 1 or 2) and 'free reflectors' where 77% said this was important to include.

The least popular element among respondents was 'assessment grids' – 23% said that this was not important (giving '4' or '5') and 27% gave a neutral response. Although a majority were positive, there was less support for the inclusion of 'board games', 'stickers' and 'planning formats'.

Although some different options were given, there was consistency between the views of education providers and parents. Both groups felt that it was important to include interesting stories and free reflectors.

As Table 3.14 shows, there were some differences between the views of respondents from nurseries / playgroups and those from primary schools / pre-5 units.

Table 3.14: Organisational views on suggested content of a new resource – by establishment

Suggested element	Vitally important (1 or 2)		Less important (4 or 5)		Rating average*	
	Nursery/ playgroup	Pre5/ primary	Nursery/ playgroup	Pre5/ primary	Nursery/ playgroup	Pre5/ primary
Cross-curricular activities	85%	78%	5%	4%	1.61	1.63
Interesting stories	93%	86%	2%	1%	1.39	1.48
Stickers	65%	47%	12%	28%	2.11	2.63
An interactive website	70%	80%	9%	6%	1.99	1.74
A DVD	71%	64%	9%	7%	1.94	2.04
Songs	87%	59%	4%	15%	1.66	2.23
Board games	65%	36%	11%	18%	2.23	2.72
Big books	87%	73%	1%	7%	1.65	1.92
Planning formats	58%	71%	16%	13%	2.34	2.00
Assessment grids	43%	48%	23%	23%	2.68	2.54
Free reflectors	83%	65%	7%	9%	1.66	1.93

Nursery / playgroup respondents tended to be more supportive of interactive elements for the resource. These respondents were more supportive of 'interesting stories', 'songs', 'a DVD', 'board games' and 'big books' than the respondents from primary schools / pre-5 units. Nurseries / playgroups were also notably more supportive of including elements that are distributed to the children. Eighty-three per cent said that 'free reflectors' were important compared with just 65% from primary schools / pre-5 units. Sixty-five per cent of nurseries / playgroups said that 'stickers' were important compared with 47% from primary schools / pre-5 units.

Primary schools / pre-5 units were more positive than nurseries / playgroups about an 'interactive website' and more structured elements such as 'planning formats' and 'assessment grids'.

Both types of establishment were supportive of including 'cross-curricular activities' in the resource with similar ratings averages (1.61 and 1.63) for this element.

As Table 3.15 shows, there were no significant differences in views according to the rural or urban location of education providers.

Table 3.15: Organisational views on suggested content of a new resource – by location

Suggested element	Vitally important (1 or 2)		Less important (4 or 5)		Rating average*	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Cross-curricular activities	86%	87%	4%	5%	1.58	1.56
Interesting stories	91%	91%	2%	3%	1.43	1.40
Stickers	54%	60%	22%	18%	2.46	2.35
An interactive website	79%	77%	5%	6%	1.80	1.86
A DVD	65%	65%	11%	12%	2.10	2.10
Songs	77%	81%	10%	6%	1.86	1.75
Board games	54%	61%	15%	11%	2.46	2.30
Big books	82%	89%	5%	5%	1.72	1.66
Planning formats	66%	62%	12%	8%	2.11	2.21
Assessment grids	46%	40%	21%	19%	2.60	2.71
Free reflectors	74%	81%	8%	10%	1.83	1.71

The respondents were invited to make any additional comments on a proposed new resource – or make further suggestions for content. There were a wide range of comments relating to content and issues around resourcing of road safety education at early years establishments.

Some respondents made general comments about the lack of road safety materials available:

"We have tried to source children's books about road safety and found very few publishers who provide such books. Could you include an order form to enable establishments to bulk order group supplies of stickers, reflectors etc." (Nursery respondent)

"More road safety books and games needed, as there is a shortage in the market for these." (Nursery respondent)

Several respondents stated their preference for the most engaging resources including strong support for the inclusion of a CD and / or DVD. Some respondents stressed the role that an interactive website could play in the resource, including stories and songs. A couple of respondents also said that it would be beneficial to have games that the children could play on the computer. There was also strong support for the inclusion of reflectors in the resource and some respondents suggested that this be extended to include reflective vests / sashes.

Some respondents said that they would like the inclusion of puppets, materials to help with role play and wall posters / displays that children can add to support learning.

Several people said that they would like to see the inclusion of resources that could be used outdoors to simulate road safety scenarios. It was suggested that these kinds of materials could be shared by educational establishments (potentially via the local authority).

"Good quality - durable (laminated) road signs that could be attached to a pole or cone would be very useful." (Nursery respondent)

"Resource boxes which nurseries can borrow with traffic lights, zebra crossings, and high visibility waistcoats." (Nursery respondent)

A number of educational respondents stated that the resource should support parental involvement and good home links.

"Posters, booklets for giving out to parents." (Nursery respondent)

"Materials to share with parents both to inform and provide opportunities to help teach children about keeping safe." (Nursery respondent)

"Home link sheets to keep parents informed about the lessons would be helpful." (Nursery respondent)

Some respondents from rural areas emphasised the need for the resource to be relevant to the rural context (for example where country roads do not have a pavement). Several respondents also said that the resource should be produced in Gaelic.

3.6 Delivery of road safety messages

The early years education providers were asked which approaches they think would work best to teach road safety messages to young children. The respondents were given five approaches to consider.

Table 3.16: Support for approaches to delivering road safety messages

Approach	Number	%*
Going for regular walks outwith your establishment grounds	253	88
Role play opportunities	246	86
New fictional character(s)	140	49
Real life stories and settings using real children	198	69
Involving parents / carers	255	89

*Excludes 9 respondents from Perth & Kinross

The most strongly supported approaches were 'involving parents / carers' (255 – 89%) and the practical experience of 'going for regular walks outwith your establishment grounds' (253 – 88%). There was also strong support among the education providers for 'role play opportunities' (246 – 86%), again emphasising the support for experiential learning.

Although receiving less support, 'real life stories and settings using real children' was considered a good approach by 69% (198) of respondents.

There was less support from the early years education providers for the development of 'new fictional character(s)' with 140 respondents (49%) stating that this was a good approach.

Regular walks, the use of role play, and strong involvement of parents were considered the best approaches by respondents regardless of whether they worked in a nursery / playgroup or primary school / pre-5 unit. The introduction of new fictional character(s) also received the least support. Similarly, whether the establishment was located in an urban or rural area did not influence views on the best approaches to delivering road safety messages.

Respondents were asked for any other comments on best approaches to teaching road safety messages to early years children. Many comments related to the provision of practical experience through walks.

"Children will give all the right answers when talking about characters in stories but often they forget what they know when real life distracts them. Nothing beats real life practice."
(Nursery school respondent)

"For "active learning" to take place, children need real opportunities to learn from and opportunities play out these experiences." (Primary/Pre 5 Unit respondent)

Significant numbers commented that while they would like to take the children out on walks there are a number of barriers including the prohibitive resource requirements (notably staff time) and lack of suitable roads to practice on (particularly in rural settings). Many respondents said that, given these barriers, the use of role play and things like DVD showing 'real life' scenarios is important.

"Taking children for walks outwith school involves an enormous amount of teacher time in form filling, risk assessment, ensuring adult/pupil ratio for supervision. Role play situations in school are much more 'manageable'" (Primary school respondent)

"Although walks are ideal, money for extra helpers is always an issue in schools." (Primary school respondent)

"Role play and fiction are important in our area as we don't have any roundabouts, zebra crossings or traffic lights - but it's still important to raise awareness." (Primary school respondent)

The respondents also emphasised the importance of the role of parents / carers in reinforcing road safety messages.

"I think this is the most important thing in teaching Road Safety. Everything the children learn at nursery / school must be reinforced at home." (Nursery school respondent)

"Involving parents puts the theory into practice much more easily than we can." (Primary school respondent)

Some respondents emphasised a joint role for parents and education providers in developing road safety resources.

"Consultation with parents regarding the materials used for road safety would benefit both children and parents" (Nursery / Playgroup respondent)

Some of the education providers commented on the role of visits from other agencies involved with road safety to create a more memorable experience for the children – and

provide practical example. Three of the respondents stressed the role of their lollipop person.

"Visits from police etc, as these experiences are more effective and stick in a child's mind." (Nursery school respondent)

"We have an intensive road safety week (twice a year). Along with using the pack we invite people from our community to come along e.g. Crossing Patrol, Police." (Nursery school respondent)

"We have found role play supported by a visit from our local lollipop person to be very useful." (Primary/Pre 5 Unit respondent)

Several respondents emphasised the importance of a good mix of approaches and approaches that fit with the principles behind the Curriculum for Excellence.

"I think we should be looking at a multi disciplinary approach in line with the Curriculum for Excellence (we don't use worksheets in our nursery)" (Nursery school respondent)

"All [*the listed*] methods can teach children but it depends on their individual learning style, which is best at a given time. Therefore a mixture is necessary." (Nursery school respondent)

3.7 Summary of education provider response

- A fifth of responding education providers had not heard of the CTCS resource. And a majority of primary school / pre-5 units hadn't heard of the resource.
- There were positive views on the existing resource with the most popular elements being: the stickers; characters; snap cards; and songs. There were less positive views on the colouring books and stories in the resource. There was limited awareness of the CTCS website, board games and gym cards.
- Respondents raised concerns about the appropriateness of some of the CTCS materials and there was a view that the resource needs to be updated.
- There was a mixed pattern in terms of walking with the children outside the education establishment. Respondents from nurseries / playgroups tend to walk with the children more often than respondents from primary schools / pre-5 units. There was no notable difference between providers in urban and rural locations.

- The most popular suggested elements for a new road safety resource were 'interesting stories' and 'cross-curricular activities'. There was also support for the inclusion of 'big books' and 'free reflectors'. The least popular suggestion among education providers was the inclusion of 'assessment grids'.
- The education providers raised concerns about the general lack of available road safety resources. There was support for the development of more interactive resources and resources that would support role play. There was also support for materials that will aid parental involvement.
- Respondents in rural areas highlighted the need for resources to be produced in Gaelic and for more materials to involve a rural context.
- In terms of approaches to delivering road safety, there was strong support for: involving parents / carers; going for regular walks; and role play opportunities. There was less support among education providers for the development of new fictional(s).
- The education providers support experiential learning. However, several respondents identified barriers to taking children on walks and emphasised the use of role play and things like DVDs showing real life scenarios.
- Respondents stressed the need for partnership between parents / carers and education establishment in delivering road safety messages. They also noted the potential role of other relevant agencies and the importance of a clear fit with the Curriculum for Excellence.

4. Views of other stakeholders

4.1 Introduction

Road Safety Scotland consulted with a range of stakeholders to gather views on the current early years resource – the Children's Traffic Club in Scotland – and on the development of a new resource. This involved:

- eleven discussion groups with staff at early years establishments;
- four parent discussion groups;
- two discussion groups with children;
- one discussion group with childcare students; and
- consultation with two health professionals, one educational psychologist, two Road Safety Units, Bookstart Scotland, Learning Teaching Scotland and ROSPA.

In late 2008, Road Safety Scotland also issued a survey to Road Safety Units across Scotland. Nine Road Safety Units responded to this survey – with a total of 13 responses from Road Safety Officers.

4.2 Views on the Children's Traffic Club in Scotland

The consultations demonstrated that there were both strengths and weaknesses in the Children's Traffic Club in Scotland resources. Professionals working in early years highlighted key strengths in the resource, including:

- good intervals between books sent to children at home – providing a regular reminder to parents and children;
- certain parts of the resource work particularly well – including the stickers (both in the home workbooks and the nursery pack) and the gym cards (used by nurseries);
- the nursery pack contains lots of activities, the songs are good and catchy, and it is easily recognisable in its big yellow pack.

"We like the pack and use it throughout the year with the children. It has made an impact as we use it throughout the curriculum."

(Early Years Establishment)

"I like the gym cards. They have a good structure – warm up, activity, then cool down."
(Early Years Establishment)

"We have recently been using the home link cards with the stickers and they've been popular with the children." (Early Years Establishment)

Parents had mixed views. The main positive factors mentioned by parents were that children loved the idea of getting the pack in the post and liked the stickers.

"I thought it was good. It's colourful and had lots of illustrations. The kids loved the stickers." (Parent / guardian)

"He likes getting the pack in the post. He's quite excited that it's a letter for him."
(Parent / guardian)

A number of staff from Road Safety Units said that the CTCS resource worked well as it aimed to create a joint approach to teaching road safety – between early years establishments and parents. Road Safety Units also consistently felt that the resource was progressive, bright and colourful and with informative ideas for early years staff.

"The various resources provided allow the CTC to be used at any time, whether it be used at story time, in the gym, sing-alongs or just listening."
(Road Safety Unit)

A minority of Road Safety Units mentioned that there was a good mix of examples from urban and rural locations within the resource, and that it took a multicultural approach. These factors were not mentioned by any other consultees.

However, there were also concerns about the CTCS resources. The main issue identified both by parents and professionals working in early years, health and road safety was that the format was quite busy, with lots of writing, and could be difficult for children to understand.

"It might be hard for a child to understand. There's loads written on it."
(Parent / guardian)

"They just don't keep his attention, a lot of it just goes over his head."

(Parent / guardian)

"Children sometimes don't understand what the pictures are all about."

(Early Years Establishment)

Some parents mentioned that their children didn't really relate to the CTCS characters. Both parents and professionals said that there were too many characters, and that it was difficult for children to get to know them. Many also questioned how appropriate it was to use balloons as the characters, given that they don't have anything to do with road safety, are not characters that children can easily relate to, and can even be dangerous to young children.

"If you show them the Children's Traffic Club characters it doesn't mean anything to them."

(Parent / guardian)

This was confirmed by brief consultation with children, by Road Safety Scotland.

"I asked him what the CTCS books were about. 'Balloons', he said"

(Child speaking to Road Safety Scotland staff)

There were also concerns about the volume of material. Parents felt that the workbooks took quite a lot of time to work through with children, and that this could be difficult for parents with lower literacy skills or with other issues. Some felt it tried to do too much, and cover too many topics and learning outcomes.

"If parents have alcohol or drug issues they might have a lack of time and interest to do a workbook like this with their children." (Student and parent group)

Professionals working in early years and road safety also felt that the CTCS resources tried to cover too much – both through the workbooks sent to children at home, and the nursery packs. The home workbooks were seen as too wordy, with some content overcomplicated. The nursery pack also had too many different resources – some of which were rarely used.

"It contains too many things our children don't see."

(Early Years Establishment)

There were varying views on the tone. While some parents felt it was a bit authoritative, others said it 'left you to your own devices' and would appreciate more guidance. And although some professionals felt it was overcomplicated, others felt that some content could be condescending to parents. Some mentioned the difficulty of including information for parents and children within the one workbook – and felt that it may not be clear to parents which sections were for them.

The registration process was mentioned by both early years and road safety professionals as a barrier. Parents have to opt in to the CTCS, following an invitation sent to their child on or around their third birthday. Some consultees felt that this created unnecessary barriers – given that some may miss the invitation or think it is junk mail. There was concern that this process could create additional barriers for the most vulnerable families.

"The current process of registration for the CTCS takes up a lot of space and time."

(Health Professional)

Finally, both parents and professionals mentioned that the materials were beginning to feel dated. Many pointed to the need for more interactivity, and better quality learning resources for early years establishments. Some mentioned that extra CTCS materials – like puppets – were expensive.

"It was an excellent resource in its day, but over 12 years on the balloon characters are dated now."

(Road Safety Unit)

4.3 Who has responsibility for early years road safety?

The consultations identified a number of themes relating to the responsibility for early years road safety education. All consultees believed that early years establishments should have a clear and important role in promoting road safety.

"Road safety is always a part of nursery life."

(Early Years Establishment)

But there was clear recognition that road safety education had to be undertaken in partnership with parents. Some mentioned that this could be challenging, particularly where families experienced deprivation or disadvantage.

"We can make an impact but we must work alongside and involve parents."
(Early Years Establishment)

Many suggested that better linkages between parental and early years establishment road safety education could be created through sending parents materials to work through with their child, which mirror the messages taught in early years establishments. Some felt that it would be useful for materials to be covered at the same time at home and at early years establishments - for example seasonal information to link with early years establishment programmes.

Others mentioned the need to use a variety of approaches to reach and make links with different parents and children. One consultee mentioned the value of working with parent and toddler groups, as a way of building links with parents. Others suggested working in partnership with other groups and organisations that work with parents.

"We've found that through toddler groups you are more likely to get parents attending. By the time some children get to nursery their parents have returned to work or studying."
(Health Professional)

Overall, consultees felt that there was a need for an interesting and innovative approach that would give early years road safety education a higher profile.

4.5 Audience for a new resource

The current early years road safety resource targets children aged three and four. Some stakeholders suggested that there may be potential to expand this age group, offering guidance and resources from birth to three, and then from three to five (covering the transition to primary one).

However, the consultation did not reveal strong views on this and road safety professionals, as a group, did not emphasise the importance of providing road safety education in the early

formative years (0 to 3). There were no detailed comments on how road safety messages should be delivered to a younger age group.

4.6 Key messages

There was universal agreement that early years road safety education should focus on a small number of simple messages. Both parents and professionals working in road safety, early years and health felt that the ideas and messages conveyed needed to be simplified from what was in the CTCS resource. The primary focus should be on developing child awareness of keeping safe, and how this can best be achieved. Some suggested that it would be useful to focus on some very basic 'golden rules' for road safety.

"The message needs to be shorter and sharper."

(Parent / guardian)

There were some differences in views on what topics should be covered. Consultees suggested focusing on a limited number of simple and universal themes, including:

- what is traffic;
- walking on the pavement;
- recognising signs;
- finding a safe place to play;
- stopping at the kerb;
- look and listen;
- red man, green man;
- holding hands;
- wearing a seat belt; and
- using the bus or train.

Some suggested that these should be presented in a logical or chronological order. One consultee felt that the new resource should also highlight the dangers of not following safe practices. A number said that it was important that the messages related directly to children's lives – so following topics like going to nursery school, or going to the seaside.

A minority of consultees – including both road safety and early years professionals - suggested educating parents through the resource, including providing information about car seats, and warning about using i-pods and mobile phones when crossing the road.

4.7 How to convey road safety messages to children

4.7.1 Using role play and the environment

Most early years establishments believed that the best way of teaching children about road safety was through using the local environment. This could mean either using and exploring the streets around the establishment, or creating mock road environments within the playground.

"We find it's better to teach through practical activities."

(Early Years Establishment)

"...to get out and discover pavements, kerbs, different safe places to cross, holding hands..."

(Psychologist)

"You have to be doing it to make it real. If you take them out and show them how it's done, they'll remember that."

(Early Years Establishment)

"We find it difficult to go out on frequent walks due to our locale. We use our playground instead to practice road safety messages."

(Early Years Establishment)

Early years establishments felt that using the real road environment could help with linking with parents. For example, some encouraged parental involvement in walking groups to use the streets around the nursery for safe learning. Others used it as an opportunity to understand the child's perspective on road safety. For example, one establishment had worked with children to take pictures on digital cameras, to capture their own height perspective and show adults their visual restrictions in relation to road safety. This meant that early years establishments were keen to see ideas for outdoor activities, with clear links to learning outcomes and the Curriculum for Excellence.

Role play was also popular. Many early years establishments mentioned that to support them to focus on this approach it would be very valuable to have access to more role play

resources – such as street scenes, traffic signs, cars, a small level crossing, uniforms and dressing up clothes.

A small number of early years establishments mentioned that visits from road safety professionals could be a valuable way of complementing other education methods used – including visits from police services, ambulance staff, the Road Safety Unit and crossing patrols.

"Visits to the nursery by Road Safety Officers are great to reinforce learning."
(Early Years Establishment)

4.7.2 Using songs and stories

Many early years establishments pointed to the value of songs (perhaps with actions) as a way of educating children about a wide range of topics. Although many felt that these were effective, one consultee urged caution on the use of songs as an aid to remember safety messages. This consultee felt that singing songs could give a false sense of security – children may think, if I sing this song I'll be fine. Instead, maybe children should be encouraged to remember questions about safety, to ask themselves about how safe their environment is.

"In the development [of resources] we have to be explicit of the danger of teaching young children rhymes or songs to "help" as this may give some children a false sense of safety; "I'll sing this song and then I'm safe to cross the road". It would be better if the song or rhyme asked a question for children and their carers to consider, e.g. "But are we safe to cross?" (Psychologist)

There were more consistent views about the positive value of stories. Parents and professionals working in road safety, education and health all agreed that stories were an extremely valuable way of teaching children. Many felt that the best books for this age group included good quality illustrations and simple, often rhyming, text. The value of one or two very recognisable central characters that children could identify with was raised by many.

Many stakeholders pointed to the value of story books as a way of educating children about road safety at home. Parents were keen to see 'real books' – good quality, perhaps hardback, books – which were simple.

"Books would be the most accessible way to reach a lot of parents. Bedtime is one of the times of the day most might have time to sit with a book and chat – not a workbook but a proper story. It would need a good core character and a good storyline."

(Early Years Establishment)

4.8 Resource format

4.8.1 Format – learning at home

When discussing the development of a new resource for use at home, there was a strong preference from parents and professionals towards simple story books with pictures.

"It would be better as a story book that could be read as a bedtime story at night."

(Parent / guardian)

"Proper story books would be better than the Traffic Club leaflets."

(Parent / guardian)

"Books can provide an instantly accessible world for children, no matter how little they are."

(Bookstart)

Consultees emphasised that the reading age should be appropriate, and that the book should not be too wordy. One person suggested commissioning a well known children's author to write the resource. Others suggested that choices could be introduced into the storyline, so that the books are interactive. Another mentioned that since the stickers were such a popular part of the CTCS it would be useful to retain these.

There were varying views on the ideal size of the books. Many felt that the books should be small and durable (perhaps hardback). But others highlighted that children love big books, and those that have pop-up facilities.

Parents did value the CTCS approach of sending information directly to children, and providing resources on an incremental basis. Both parents and professionals agreed that it could be overwhelming to have too much information all at once, and that regular updates reminded parents and children to focus on road safety in the longer term.

But, there was some concern that by sending a series of information by post, some families (particularly those who have moved home) would miss out. One suggestion was that the first pack – perhaps a high quality book - contains most of the information required, and that subsequent (perhaps seasonal) reminders provide more of a magazine style update. This could include promotional items.

There was also demand for separate information for parents, as well as that for children. Parents were keen to get more detailed information about what they should be saying and doing with their children in relation to road safety at this age. Suggestions included a magazine, leaflet or poster specifically for parents. This could also include ideas for games and activities for parents to work through with children. Some parents felt that it would also be useful to include accident statistics, to make parents more aware of the importance of road safety. One mentioned the importance of helping parents to see things from the child's perspective. However, parents did say that if materials were posted directly to them they may think it was junk mail. It was more effective to post materials to the child.

Other formats for the resource were also suggested. Parents and other stakeholders mentioned the idea of using a DVD, CD (including stories, songs and sound effects) and / or website. A number pointed to the Cbeebies website as a useful example of a child friendly site. These formats were seen as beneficial in providing activities that children could work through without constant supervision. Some did urge caution, however, that these should be used as additional formats, rather than the only format – as not everyone has access to a CD or DVD player, or the internet. One parent mentioned that they had never used free DVDs in the past, so was not sure that this was a good idea. The idea of a number of different potential formats – offering choice – was viewed positively by many. It was felt that this would also assist with ensuring that there are resources for children of all abilities, and for children who have English as a second language.

A number of suggestions were also made relating to encouraging the children (and parents) to feel more strongly that they were part of a club. This could include a clearer identity for the club, so that children can relate to it. One consultee suggested rebranding it with a simple name – like 'The Lollipop Club'. Another suggested sending birthday cards to members, or running competitions.

4.8.2 Format - learning at early years establishments

For learning at early years establishments, stakeholders felt that a wide range of resources could be useful. The most common themes arising were that the resource:

- should link with the Curriculum for Excellence;
- should be practical and focus on experiential learning; and
- should encourage ongoing road safety activity, with progression in learning.

Most stakeholders envisaged a resource in many different formats – including stories, songs and activities in books, CDs, DVDs and online. Some early years establishments mentioned that they would appreciate resources in CD or DVD format that could be used with their SMART boards (interactive whiteboards in classrooms). Although some mentioned the benefit of learning online, others highlighted that there was no internet access in their early years classrooms, so CD or DVD format would be preferable.

> "It would be great to have a more visual and interactive resource with pictures and photographs to discuss, a CD of sounds, a big book with parts to move..."
>
> (Early Years Establishment)

Consultees felt that there was a balance to be struck between making the most of new technologies, and using traditional learning methods like well written stories.

Early years establishments were keen to see:

- simple learning activity suggestions – linked to outdoor and experiential learning;
- a guide setting out curriculum links;
- stories and catchy songs;
- a big pop up or interactive book;
- flannelgraph or fuzzy felt;
- flash cards with key messages;
- role play resources – like uniforms and street scenes;
- puppets or finger puppets;
- materials to support work with parents;
- games and jigsaws; and
- free materials – like reflectors.

A number specifically mentioned that there was no need for worksheets.

"Kids love big books – although the story has to be simple. Rhyming books are very popular." (Early Years Establishment)

"If we could have puppets it could bring the story more alive." (Early Years Establishment)

"It would be good to have parent workshop materials as part of a pack" (Early Years Establishment)

The idea of a road safety or story 'sack' was raised by many, as a great way of encouraging children to focus on a particular issue. This would include a range of activities – like stories and games. These could be used in the early years establishment, and children could take turns to take them home at night.

"A story sack given to nurseries would be ideal. Kids love them and it would be seen as being different and exciting." (Early Years Establishment)

"The children love story sacks. These provide something to share and strengthen the home-school link." (Early Years Establishment)

Many said that it would be good to have an ongoing - perhaps seasonal – focus on road safety education. Overall, many felt that the new resource needed to be fun yet meaningful. It needs to be different and special enough to interest children and encourage teachers, parents and children to use it.

"It definitely requires a 'wow' factor to motivate and stimulate interest, and ensure it really is put into practice." (Psychologist)

4.9 Design and branding

Most stakeholders saw characters as essential to encourage children to relate to the resource. Many felt that having stories and activities based on people – with child

characters – was essential. Some felt that animal characters could work, but almost all consistently said that either children or animals as characters would be vastly preferable to balloons (used in the CTCS). One suggested using a vehicle as a main character.

Creating one or two strong and recognisable characters were seen as a key way of branding the resource, and ensuring it is recognisable. Many felt that children love superheroes and interesting characters – including Peppa Pig, Charlie and Lola, The Gruffallo, Winnie the Pooh, Fireman Sam, and Dora the Explorer.

"Boys and girls like The Gruffallo, Charlie and Lola and Peppa Pig."
(Early Years Establishment)

Two consultees mentioned the potential of linking with characters from the BBC or other television programmes. One suggested using an existing character, and the other suggested encouraging the BBC to incorporate the new road safety character into some of their programmes.

"Children like characters. Could the new resource not use characters they know from TV?"
(Early Years Establishment)

Many nurseries and parents mentioned Tufty, the character ROSPA used to promote early years road safety in the 1960s to 1980s.

"We have fond memories of Tufty."
(Early Years Establishment)

One consultee suggested that with a strong character, a mascot type toy could also be introduced - to reinforce the character and identity of the club.

Overall, many emphasised the importance of bright colours and high quality design to make the resource easily recognisable to children, parents and teachers.

4.10 Equality - meeting the needs of all children

Overall, stakeholders agreed that the more visual and pictorial resources are, the more accessible they become for all children and parents. Many felt that having a range of resources would mean that children, parents and staff could select those that best suit the

needs of different children. But stakeholders did identify a number of specific groups whose needs should be considered in developing any new resource:

- children and parents who don't speak English as a first language;
- children and parents with literacy difficulties;
- children with additional support needs or specific learning needs;
- vulnerable families with chaotic lifestyles or health issues;
- disadvantaged households.

"We have some bilingual children so it would be nice if we had resources to meet their needs."

(Early Years Establishment)

For road safety education in early years establishments, most were confident that if the basic resource was good enough, the nursery would adapt it to the requirements of children with different needs.

"If the resource is good enough it can be adapted to suit the needs of individual children. We adapted our approach to teaching road safety for a child with no English language, through the use of role play."

(Early Years Establishment)

Stakeholders suggested that more time should be spent on thinking through how parents would use resources at home, and any barriers they may face.

"A CD with an audio story would be good for parents who don't have time to read with their child or have difficulty reading themselves."

(Early Years Establishment)

"Distributing DVDs relies on parents having a DVD player at home, and some of the most deprived families don't."

(NHS)

4.11 Awareness raising, promotion and support

Finally, stakeholders highlighted some important considerations in relation to raising awareness of the new resource, and supporting people to use it effectively. There was

general agreement that the resource would need to be widely publicised. Stakeholders suggested general promotion activities, including advertising on television and providing free resources – like booster seats and reflectors.

A small number of consultees highlighted that there could potentially be links with Bookstart. A series of good quality books could be made available through this scheme.

"Bookstart would be a good way of getting the new resource to the children, although we've found it a problem when the 3 and 4 year olds get books at different times. It would be better making sure all children receive something at the same time."

(Early Years Establishment)

Some consultees suggested other measures to ensure that all children received the resource. One Road Safety Unit suggested blanket mailing of resources to every three year old, rather than having an opt in stage (as there currently is with the CTCS). It was recognised that this would have cost implications. Another felt that if the opt in process was retained, it would be useful to produce a simple promotional booklet highlighting that the resources are completely free.

"We are dealing with new road users here and we must get them into using roads safely from day one. Let's take the time, and costs if need be, to get this right."

(Road Safety Unit)

Another Road Safety Unit suggested that early years establishments should have extra copies of the home pack, so that children can get this when they enrol if they haven't yet received it. One early years establishment said that they would also appreciate more than one copy of the early years establishment pack, to ensure that all classes have access to it.

"We are a big school. It would be no good having one pack. We'd need a pack for each class."

(Early Years Establishment)

Others mentioned that early years establishments could play an important role in promoting the resource, for example through promotional materials or sessions with parents.

"Posters for both the children and for parents on the notice board would be good."

(Early Years Establishment)

Finally, stakeholders felt that the introduction of a new resource should be coupled with support – both for early years staff and parents (particularly those with limited literacy skills). Road Safety Units suggested that they should train nursery and school staff to ensure that staff know how the pack should be used. One consultee suggested that the pack should be designed to be self explanatory, thereby minimising any training requirement. One consultee stated that the new resource should be evaluated after one year, and any required changes should be incorporated relatively quickly.

4.12 Examples from elsewhere

The consultation also identified a number of examples which may offer lessons on the effective development of resources for young children.

Bookstart is reaching around 95 per cent of Scottish preschool children. It works through gifting books to babies and children through health visitors and early years establishments

The Adventures of Mr Fluffy is a pre-school drug awareness and education project. A DVD was developed by PACE Theatre Company, working with West Dunbartonshire Council and Scotland Against Drugs. It is targeted at three to five year olds. Three episodes of the programme are also available online.

Kerbcraft is a practical child pedestrian safety scheme, for five to seven year olds. It is built around teaching three core skills - choosing safe places and routes; crossing safely at parked cars and crossing safely near junctions.

NHS Oral Health Programme for Pre 5s

This programme involved dedicated staff working with community groups, playgroups, toddler groups and nurseries to raise awareness of the importance of good oral health in preschool children. Links were also made with other health staff working with similar communities – including breastfeeding initiatives and the Smokefree initiative. Health visitors were encouraged to distribute oral health packs to parents. Oral health staff also exhibited at health events, which were promoted through local press, posters, leaflets and

word of mouth.

A teaching pack was produced with clear links to the Early Years curriculum. It is now being reviewed to link with the Curriculum for Excellence. Oral health staff also developed an accreditation programme for early years establishments. The establishments had to produce evidence that they were keeping oral health at the forefront of their health plans. An award ceremony was arranged for those nurseries who met the criteria. DVDs were also distributed to parents, but the impact of these is unclear. There is concern that these do not reach the most disadvantaged families.

East Ayrshire Award Scheme

In East Ayrshire, the Road Safety Unit is developing an award scheme for Early Years establishments to ensure that road safety is kept at the forefront of the curriculum. This will be implemented through a series of in-service training opportunities. These sessions will raise awareness of what should be taught to the children, what language should be used, and the road safety skills that children are likely to have.

4.13 Summary of key messages from stakeholders

The Existing CTCS Resources

- Some consultees were very positive about the existing early years road safety resources – the Children's Traffic Club in Scotland. It is seen as a good, joint approach to road safety education for parents and early years establishments. Consultees particularly liked the incremental nature of resource provision at home, the gym cards used in early years establishments, the stickers, and the range of activities provided.
- There was however general agreement that a new resource is required. The existing CTCS resources are seen as too busy, with too much writing. Many felt that the resource tried to cover too much information, and that the tone and level was not always right for the target age group. A major concern was that children did not relate to the balloon characters, partly because they are not real life characters, and partly because there are so many characters.

How Best to Provide Early Years Road Safety Education

- There was strong agreement that both early years establishments and parents have a joint responsibility for early years road safety educations. Stakeholders agreed that road safety education should happen in a co-ordinated way at home and in the classroom.
- There was some suggestion that early years road safety education could begin earlier – perhaps including resources for the birth to three age group – and extend later – covering the transition to primary school.
- There was a strong consensus that early years road safety education should focus on a small number of simple messages or basic 'golden rules'. The topics suggested varied, but included traffic; walking; playing; holding hands; crossing the road; wearing a seat belt; and using public transport.
- Stakeholders identified two ways of best conveying road safety messages to young children – using the real life environment and role play; and using stories and songs.

Developing a New Early Years Road Safety Resource

- For learning at home, stakeholders had a strong preference for simple story books. Some thought these should be provided on an incremental basis, but others felt this risked losing people through loss of interest or moving home.
- There was a clear demand for separate information for parents, explaining why road safety is important and how parents can help their children to develop their skills.
- Many felt that there was value in resources being available to parents in different formats – including DVDs, CDs or online. But many stakeholders emphasises that these should not be the only methods as many families would not have access to resources in these formats.
- For learning at early years establishments, there was agreement that a range of resources should be provided – including stories, songs, activities and props using books, CDs, DVDs and online resources. The idea of a 'story sack' was suggested by many.
- Whichever format the resource is produced in, early years establishments emphasised that it should link with the Curriculum for Excellence; be practical and focus on experiential learning; and encourage and ongoing approach to road safety.

Equality

- Early years establishments were confident that if a resource was pictorial, and designed with children with different needs in mind, they would be able to adapt it for use with most children.
- There was recognition that resources for use at home needed to meet the needs of both parents and children with additional support needs.

Design, Branding and Promotion

- All stakeholders agreed that strong and memorable characters were essential to encourage children to relate to the resource. There was a strong preference for child characters, although animals were also mentioned as a possibility.
- There was a very strong message that a new resource would need to be promoted nationally, and should also include resources to enable early years establishments to promote it to parents locally. The Road Safety Units emphasised their potential role in providing training on the resource to early years establishments.

5. Findings and 'next steps'

5.1 Introduction

This sections sets out our main findings from the consultation exercise. The findings relate primarily to: lessons learned from the existing CTCS resource; preferences on the most effective delivery of road safety messages; and views on the content, format and promotion of the new resource. We then set out some recommended 'next steps' for those developing the new resource.

5.2 The CTCS resource

There were many positive views expressed in relation to the existing resource and support for its **joint approach** to delivering road safety messages both at home and in early years educational establishments. Consultees liked the incremental way the resource is issued at home and the fact that materials are issued directly to the children.

However, there were concerns among consultees about the **appropriateness** of the materials contained in the resource. Parents, education providers and other stakeholders felt that the resource is too 'busy' or long and too 'wordy' for the age group it is aimed at. There were also concerns about the characters used in the resource and a strong view that there were too many balloon characters to be recognisable or get a clear message across.

There was a strong sense that while the CTCS was viewed as a worthwhile resource, after 13 years it has become 'dated' and **needs refreshed** in order to remain interesting.

5.3 Delivering road safety messages

Encouragingly, there was a clear message from all groups of consultees that responsibility for road safety education should be shared by parents and early years education providers. There is a strong sense that road safety education is widely viewed as being about **partnership**, with parents reinforcing messages learned at nursery / playgroup / primary school and vice versa.

Some consultees considered approaches to ensure stronger links with parents. These included materials developed specifically for parents to work through with their children that would be closely linked to the materials delivered in education establishments. It was also

suggested that there may be opportunities to establish stronger links with parents through existing groups that involve parents (including mother and toddler groups).

This clear message of a strong partnership between parents and education providers concurs with the Scottish Government's Early Years Framework[4] which states:

"The largest influences on children in the early years are their parents, with the wider family and the community often also playing a significant role. Improvements in outcomes therefore depend crucially on developing a partnership with parents and communities so that all of the influences on the child are contributing towards positive outcomes."

(Scottish Government, The Early Years Framework)

There was consensus that road safety messages need to be reinforced for early years children through **practical experience**. While it was broadly felt that this was best delivered through walks in the local area, education providers stated that there are significant barriers mainly around resourcing (including staff time). Consultees emphasised the importance of **role play** in delivering experiential learning with a message from some that better resources for role play would be welcomed. Stakeholders also stated that delivering experiential learning – through walks or role play activities – was a further opportunity for strengthening links with parent. There is potential for parents to become actively involved in delivering this type of activity.

There is a sense from early years education providers and other stakeholders that a **broad range** of approaches is essential. Consultees also stressed that the approach to delivering road safety messages must fit with the **Curriculum for Excellence**. This means a strong focus on active learning, a clear transition (and consistent messages) from pre-school establishments to early-years primary schooling, and a strong role for parents / guardians.

The consultation exercise did not reveal strong views on the appropriate age to begin delivering road safety messages, and we do not have clear findings in relation to provision to the 0-3 age group. This may be an area for further consideration given the renewed focus on 0-3 services set out by the Scottish Government in The Early Years Framework:

"The period between pregnancy and 3 years is increasingly seen as a critical period in shaping children's life chances, based on evidence of brain formation, communication and

[4] Scottish Government, The Early Years Framework, 2009
(http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/01/13095148/0)

language development, and the impact of relationships formed during this period on mental health. It is therefore also a critical opportunity to intervene to break cycles of poor outcomes." (Scottish Government, The Early Years Framework)

5.4 The new resource

The consultation has demonstrated a view that the previous CTCS resource perhaps contained too much content – with too many words and too many characters. There was consensus that a new resource should focus on a small number of **simple key messages**. Suggestions included: traffic; walking; playing; holding hands; crossing the road; wearing a seatbelt; and using public transport.

The survey showed that both parents and education providers want the new resource to include interesting stories which engage the children as well as practical items such as free reflectors. There was strong support across consultees for **songs and stories** which will capture children's imagination (although some caution that songs / rhymes should ask questions about safety rather than provide a 'false sense of security'). Consultees want to see stories which are easier for children to follow, with lots of visual and pictorial stimulus and (fewer) more identifiable characters. Some consultees wondered whether there is scope to link with **well-known characters** that children are already familiar with. There was a preference for **'proper books'** to be provided (as opposed to the existing CTCS workbooks) and a greater emphasis on messages being delivered through a 'book at bedtime' approach.

5.5 Ensuring equality

Consultees responding from rural areas emphasised the need for a new resource to consider **rural context** (such as safety on country roads) and there were calls for more **Gaelic** language materials to be available.

In terms of ensuring that children with additional support needs can access resources, education providers emphasised the importance of **adaptability** and the chance for providers to tailor resources to the needs of individual children. This means a strong focus on bright and engaging visual and pictorial materials – and designing materials which are sufficiently flexible for children with different needs. Equally, any distinct materials produced for parents need to take additional support needs into consideration.

The consultation did not reveal distinct messages from people living in more deprived neighbourhoods on preferred content for a new road safety resource (or potential reasons for low uptake of the CTCS resource). There was also little detailed evidence from the consultation on the preference of parents, and those providing education / support to, children with additional support needs. While acknowledging the importance of ensuring that the resource is highly adaptable, there may be scope for more detailed consultation with both of these groups.

5.6 Awareness and promotion

Strong promotion is essential to the success of the new resource. Stakeholders were clear that the resource should be marketed **nationally** and there should be sufficient resources (for early years establishments and others) to promote the resource to **local parents**.

Success will also depend on strong **identification** with the resource. There was a strong view that this depends on developing characters that the children can relate to. Other suggestions for building a stronger relationship between children (and parents) and the resource were regular 'add-ons' such as competitions and birthday cards.

The consultation demonstrated concerns about the **registration process** for the existing CTCS resource – and the potential to miss children where there is an 'opt-in' registration followed by incremental mailing of resources. There were a number of suggested alternative approaches including: a 'blanket' mailing of resources to 3 year olds; distribution of the resource through early years establishments for those who haven't yet received it; and establishing links with other programmes such as Bookstart. This final suggestion would bring benefits in terms of distribution and may also lead to the production of quality books if these were to be contained in the resource.

5.7 Recommended 'next steps'

We consider the following to be important 'next steps' or areas for further consideration by Road Safety Scotland (RSS) in the development of a new road safety education early years resource.

5.7.1 Designing the new resource

- **Agree the key messages** – At an early stage, and drawing on the suggestions from the consultation, RSS should agree the key messages and topics that will be the

foundation for the resource. These should be simple, easy to deliver, and relatively concise.

- **Content and characters** – In designing the content, RSS should draw on the views expressed on the existing CTCS resource and the suggestions for new content. The resource materials should be highly visual, adaptable and provide opportunities (and support) for experiential learning. RSS should consider the views expressed in relation to developing engaging and recognisable characters – and may want to explore the scope for using existing well-loved characters.
- **Enabling home links** – RSS should establish a clear strategy on how the resource will strengthen the partnership between parents / guardians and education providers. When designing the resource, RSS should consider the practicalities of:
    - home exercises which mirror messages being taught in early years establishments;
    - home exercises to be covered at the same time at home and at early years establishments (for example through seasonal programmes);
    - the distribution of 'proper books' for parents to read with children (at bedtime).

  When testing the resource, RSS should consider how practical the materials are for use at home and what further support / guidance parents need to deliver road safety messages effectively.

5.7.2 Delivery and linking with other initiatives

- **Distribution** – RSS should agree the best approach to distribution and the most universal promotion of the resource across Scotland, potentially moving away from the 'opt-in' approach seen under the CTCS. RSS should hold focused discussions with organisations such as Bookstart about opportunities for joint production of materials and distribution. Key considerations will be: meeting the needs of target groups (children, parents and education providers); ensuring uptake in areas where CTCS coverage was low (e.g. areas experiencing deprivation); and budget / resource implications.

5.7.3 Areas for further consideration

- **Children in deprived areas** – given the lack of a clear message from the consultation, RSS should consider whether any further work is required on the preferences of parents / early years establishments in deprived communities. This might include group discussions with parents in deprived areas on the design /

content of the resource, issues around any 'home use' elements, and views on the best method of distributing / publicising the resource. The views of parents / guardians living in deprived areas should be a particular focus when it comes to testing the new resource.

- **Equalities groups** – In discussion with parents and service providers working with children with additional support needs, RSS should consider whether additional materials will need to be produced. For example, this might include materials designed which take account of the sensory requirements of children and parents. RSS should also ensure that materials will be available in Gaelic – and consider whether there are any other language requirements to be considered in the production of materials.

Appendix One – Survey questionnaires