

Driver Education

for the **VIDEO GAME** generation

INTRODUCTION

Every death and every serious injury on the roads is one too many. We need to maintain the huge effort made by many people in Scotland towards making our roads safer. Indeed, we need to take stock and see what more we can do. It is for this reason that the Scottish Government initiated this Road Safety Framework for Scotland to 2020. (Scottish Government 2009)

Speeding is a danger to all road users. Children from disadvantaged areas are at greater risk from road crashes (Scottish Government, 2008). If a road user is involved in a road traffic crash at excessive speed then it greatly increases the severity of the crash. The objective of this project was to evaluate the use of a driving simulator that had been purchased by Dumfries & Galloway Safety Camera Partnership.

Purpose / Methods

The driving simulator was taken to a number of community events in Dumfries & Galloway and was available for members of the general public to use. A questionnaire was developed and people that had used the simulator were asked to complete the questionnaire. The driving simulator was manned by operators from the Partnership and the driving simulator was seen as a way to engage with young drivers and educate them as to driving hazards and the dangers of speeding.

Results

Findings from the questionnaire strongly suggest that the driving simulator is an effective way to engage and educate drivers about road hazards and speed reduction. Recommendations were made on how it could be targeted more effectively either at specific groups and locations across the region. With 100% of people under 25 that used the Simulator learning more about road hazards.

CONCLUSIONS

The driving simulator is a very effective way to engage and educate all drivers but particularly drivers under 25 years old. Through education this is seen as an effective way to reduce road crashes and the demands that road crashes have on the health service and society. This is particularly the case in disadvantaged communities. Further research is planned for summer 2010 on using the Simulator in a more targeted way.

