



SAFETY TIPS



► Do you feel tired? Are you yawning? Is your concentration poor? Are you slow to react? Feeling bored? Then stop the car. These are all warning signs of fatigue. Avoid fatigue-related accidents by making sure you have enough sleep and are fresh before driving, regardless of the length of your trip.

► Anything that affects your skills, mood and behaviour increases the risk of being involved in a crash. Alcohol and drugs (including some prescription medication) can impair your driving ability, so don't take the risk. If you are affected by alcohol or drugs make alternative arrangements.

► Are you paying attention? Driving is a skill that requires your full attention to safely control your vehicle and respond to events happening on the roads around you. Anything that takes your eyes or mind off the road or hands off the steering wheel, preventing you from operating your car safely, is a distraction. Some actions that cause distracted driving and lead to a crash are using a mobile phone, reaching for or moving objects inside the car, looking at an object or event outside, or eating and drinking. Keep focused at all times.

► In the event of an accident, seat belts provide drivers and passengers with protection, reducing the risk of them coming into contact with the steering wheel, dashboard, windscreen and side or roof of the car. Seat belts have proven their value in preventing severe injury in the majority of crashes so buckle up!



START YOUR ENGINE

AT SOME stage in your life, probably about the age of 16, you'll have the opportunity to learn to drive. When you are a licensed driver you will have greater independence. Driving gives you more choices and can help you achieve your goals, but your future plans can come crashing down if you are not road safety aware. Driving can be dangerous, so it's important that by the time you hit the road solo, you know exactly what you're doing.

RYDA

In venues across Australia, students are given the opportunity to participate in an important program. Aimed at senior students, the program provides those who are starting to drive or are passengers in cars driven by friends, the chance to become more aware of road safety. Run in part-

nership with Rotary clubs, the program "highlights the privilege and responsibilities of owning and driving a motor vehicle and illustrates their rights and responsibilities as passengers and pedestrians".

Local road safety experts, driving instructors, the police, survivors of road crashes and youth educators present the six-part program in one day. Topics include: stopping distances; hazards, distractions and risks; alcohol, medicines, fatigue and driving; crash survivors; police; and choosing and maintaining a safe vehicle. By giving students information about travelling safely, it is hoped that they make better choices and therefore reduce the risk of being involved in a road crash.

For information about RYDA visit www.ryda.org.au.



STOP SPEEDING

IF YOU'VE ever heard the slogan "Every K over is a killer" then you'll probably know that speed is one of the biggest challenges when it comes to road safety.

Speeding increases the risk of a crash and the severity of the crash outcome. It is a major factor in serious and fatal traffic crashes.

Tests and data show that the risk of causing or having an accident, that may result in death or injury, rise rapidly with increases in speed. It has been found that the crash risk doubled for every five kilometres per hour above 60kmh.

For example a car travelling at 65kmh is twice as likely to be involved in a crash as one travelling at 60kmh. A car travelling at 70kmh is four times more likely to crash. It's not just about driving over the speed limit.

Other factors such as reaction time (time taken to perceive danger and react to it), braking distance (the distance needed to stop), the weather, the traffic, road conditions, condition of the vehicle and driver skills and experience must be taken into consideration. One of the most effective ways to improve road safety is to slow down

FAST FACTS

► In dry conditions it takes about 38 metres to stop a car travelling at 60kmh.

► A car travelling at 80km/h needs about 58 metres to stop.

► 1.5 seconds is the reaction time of average drivers. A driver who is distracted may take three seconds to react.



WEEKLY CHALLENGE

THIS week find and cut out any stories in the newspaper about accidents on the roads that have been reported. From the newspaper article(s) see if you can identify what caused the accident, the age of those involved, where it happened and what the outcome was.

NEXT WEEK: Nice Sweet Wicked