



Towing a caravan can be hazardous, especially on long driving trips. The Road Safety Western Queensland Style project aims to prevent caravan rollovers like these (far left and left) by educating retirees or 'grey nomads'.

trailers in the south-west region of Queensland, and negotiations are currently underway with the University of Southern Queensland and Queensland University of Technology (QUT) about plans to produce a DVD on driving on remote and western roads.

In 2007 Sergeant Schaeffer-Steel received a Queensland Road Safety Award in the State Government Category for this program.

Held at Parliament House, the Queensland Road Safety Awards aim to recognise the work of individuals and groups who have designed programs dedicated to improving road safety, and encourage greater commitment to this cause.

The awards are an initiative of QUT's Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety, Queensland (CARRS-Q) and the RACQ, and are supported by Queensland Transport and the Queensland Police Service.

Now in its eighth year, the awards are an important means of recognising and honouring the outstanding efforts of individuals and groups who, through innovative programs and sheer hard work, have developed ways to improve safety on Queensland roads.

The 2007 awards saw another two Queensland Police officers receive recognition for road safety programs aimed at young drivers.

Sergeant Rob Duncan of Jimboomba received an award in the Schools Category on behalf of the Behaviour, Risk, Attitude, Knowledge, Education program (BRAKE), which targets novice driver safety.

BRAKE is a community-based program that focuses on enhancing young driver behaviour and decision-making skills through an interactive multimedia platform.

Participants' learning is enhanced by their active involvement in discussion and role-play, and a variety of teaching aids are used including animation, computer-based work, and short films.

Sergeant Duncan, aided by Queensland Transport, Queensland Ambulance Service, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, and local actors, created a series of three-minute films promoting the mantra 'You Drive As You Live'.

"The link between lifestyle and driving has been strongly researched and is an important topic in keeping our youth safe on the road," Sergeant Duncan said.

The program has expanded from Jimboomba to areas of the Gold Coast and has been taken on by the local community in the Lockyer Valley.

"It starts in the schools but parents or carers are equally involved in reinforcing the safe driving message," he said.

"The important thing is that by participating in the course, families and young drivers are putting road safety back on the table for frank discussion."

To date, almost 700 young drivers have participated in the BRAKE program along with a smaller number of their parents and carers, and it is expected more than 1,500 will go through the program in 2008.

"This program has been successful because it has allowed operational police the time to build relationships with the community," Sergeant Duncan said.

Also targeting young drivers is the School Based Youth Drive Alive (SBYDA) program, which won

Senior Constable Derek Nichols, a school-based police officer from Gladstone, an award in the Government Category.

SBYDA is a nine-week education course, designed to be delivered from within local communities, that addresses the needs of young people as they embark on the first phase of their driving careers as learners and novice drivers.

Specialists from government and non-government agencies come together to provide up-to-date advice on a range of road safety topics.

"Students begin with sessions run by Queensland Transport that focus on topics like the process of getting your licence, how to prove your identity when applying for your licence, and Queensland road rules," Senior Constable Nichols said.

"The program then addresses the topic of drink driving, educating students on standard drink sizes and blood alcohol levels, as this remains one of the highest contributing factors to road crashes in Central Queensland," he said.

Other topics covered include the legal and social consequences of poor driving, road rage, and personal responsibility for both passengers and drivers.

It is estimated 2,000 students aged 16 and 17 have been through the program, or an adapted version of the program, in Central Queensland.

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