



## PRESS RELEASE

**To : All News Editors**  
**Issued : 29 May 2017**  
**Attention: News Reporters**

### **Child Protection Week: More measures required to save children on SA roads**

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To mark Child Protection Week ( May 28 to June 4) the Road Traffic Management Corporation is calling on all stakeholders to work together to build a South Africa fit for children by implementing programme to stem the tide of child road injuries and fatalities.

The RTMC urges parents to invest in child seats or restraints, municipalities to provide speed calming measures around schools and design safe play areas to reduce the number of children dying on South African roads.

An analysis of road fatalities indicates that more children aged between 0 and 14 years died as a result of road accidents in 2016 compared to 2015. A total of 1210 children in this age group died in 2016 compared to 977 in 2015.

The majority of children died as pedestrians because the road network is in many places not designed with children in consideration. A total of 765 child pedestrians died in 2016 compared to 659 who died in 2015.

Children are more susceptible to road injuries and deaths because they may live close to a road, play on a road or even walk on a road. The World Health Organisation estimates that roads account for nearly 2% of all deaths among children globally. It says road traffic injuries are the second leading cause of death among children age between 5 and 14 years old.

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Children are affected by speeding, drunk-driving, by not using safety equipment and by factors related to vehicle safety and the road environment. The road environment is constructed with consideration for adults. It is not built for use by children and when children come into contact with it they are placed at greater risk than should be the case.

The RTMC supports WHO recommendations that spaces for walking and cycling should be given priority in the design of roads to improve child safety. It also supports calls for the construction of traffic-calming measures to reduce speed and the provision of safe spaces for play and physical exercise. Play spaces should be secure and well maintained, with features that children find interesting.

The RTMC also advocates the use of appropriate child restraints that are designed to take into account the child's developmental stage. Child restraints are very effective and it has been shown that, if properly installed and used, they can:

- reduce deaths among infants by 70%
- reduce deaths among small children, aged 1–4 years, by 54%
- reduce the chances of sustaining clinically significant injuries by 59% among children aged 4–7 years

### **Issued by the Road Traffic Management Corporation**

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**Ends**