

Road Safety Measures among Adolescents and Youths

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Road safety is both a health and development issue of concern. Road traffic injuries are one of the leading causes of deaths, disabilities and hospitalizations with severe socioeconomic costs across the world and India in particular. As per the 'Road Accidents in India 2020', there were 3,66,138 unfortunate road accidents during 2020, which claimed 1,31,714 lives and caused injuries to 3,48,279 persons [1]. As per the World Health Organization, at least one out of 10 persons killed on roads across the world is from India and India positions first in the number of road accident deaths worldwide. The youth are particularly vulnerable on the world's roads, and road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death for children and young adults aged 5-29 years [2]. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MORTH) has considered road safety an issue of paramount importance. It has been taking proactive steps to address it by a technique called 4Es, Education, Engineering (of both roads and vehicles), Enforcement and Emergency care. Hence instruction and education to the adolescent and youth are of utmost importance to prevent road traffic accidents [1].

Many research studies evaluating the awareness of children, adolescents, and youths have shown less information on road traffic rules. The knowledge regarding the safety and traffic rules among the medical students in Pakistan was inadequate. The finding will help plan future accident prevention programs and emphasise the need to generate awareness among medical students through training and awareness activities [3].

Road traffic injury prevention must be incorporated into a broad range of activities, such as the development and management of road infrastructure, the provision of safer vehicles, law enforcement, mobility planning, the provision of health and hospital services, child welfare services, and urban and environmental planning [4, 5].

A study among medical students reported that wearing a helmet and following the traffic rules were not practiced and the overall knowledge and practice toward road safety was poor [6]. Another study shows that awareness is not common among people, and people are not trained to use the road [7].

WHO has taken measures to reduce road traffic injuries and deaths, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has set ambitious targets for reducing road traffic accidents. Each year, WHO recognizes the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims on the third Sunday of November [2].

WHO plays a crucial role in guiding global efforts by continuing to advocate for road safety at the highest political levels, compiling and disseminating good practices in prevention, data collection, trauma care, and raising awareness of road safety [2].

The importance of knowledge and practice of road safety measures needs to be emphasized in preventing RTAs. More awareness camps and seminars may be conducted in educational institutions regarding safety precautions on the road. Road safety rules can be incorporated into their curriculum so that students will get awareness from a young age itself. Following traffic rules are of utmost importance to prevent accidents among adolescents and youth and are a growing need of society and nation.

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