ABSTRACT

This paper builds upon research presented at the RS4C Conference in 2013 which described the design and development of the F2D community road safety intervention strategy in the State of Victoria, Australia. F2D is a program using trained university undergraduates as road safety education facilitators and ambassadors to empower young people to be safer road users. Ongoing government and public concerns about young driver overrepresentation in casualty crashes in Victoria has resulted in specific legislation and education interventions. The integrated Fit to Drive (F2D) model of research, development, delivery and evaluation involves a multi stakeholder approach to road safety education for young adult road users that is local and long term.

The half day F2D workshop program for 16 year olds currently involves over 58 Local Government Areas, 220 Government, Independent and Catholic schools, 26,000 young people and has trained more than 500 university undergraduates to be road safety facilitators. F2D is part of the Government of Victoria’s Road Safety Strategy and is supported by major stakeholders in road safety education - Transport Accident Commission (TAC), Victoria Police, VicRoads, Department of Education and Training (DET), Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB), Country Fire Authority (CFA), State Emergency Services (SES), Royal Auto Club of Victoria (RACV). The program has been made available to all schools, extending the collaborative ability and potential of “F2D community networks” (local senior school groups, Technical and Further Education (TAFE), local government, universities) to address road trauma in this vulnerable population group. The F2D undergraduate peer led approach, combined with targeted community partnerships presents as a local community road safety response and community capacity building model (Verity 2007). F2D offers a potential paradigm for other communities, within the context of the “Decade of Action for Road Safety” (The United Nations 2011).

Drawing on fifteen years’ experience of developing and sustaining community partnerships to deliver road safety education in schools, this paper describes and analyses the key elements of successful community partnerships in the prevention of road trauma.
1. INTRODUCTION

Fit to Drive (F2D) is a local community and school road safety educational model, targeted at young adult drivers and passengers who, despite a falling road toll, remain significantly overrepresented in road crashes in the state of Victoria, Australia (Eldridge 2008). Licensing legislation and enforcement, as well as universal and targeted education interventions, have been introduced by the Victorian government to tackle the issue of road crashes in the state, where ‘[e]very two hours, someone is killed or hospitalised from a road crash … robbing families and friends of their loved ones and stealing healthy years of living from those who survive crippling injuries’ (State Government Victoria 2015, p.1). Despite an ongoing overall reduction, young people remain overrepresented, and the injury and death rate for indigenous youth is 5 times greater than for non-indigenous youth. The biggest killer of young drivers is speeding and around 80% of those killed are male (AIHW 2011).

The high crash risk for young people resulted in the introduction of the Graduated Licensing System in 2007 (Healy, Catchpole & Harrison 2012; VicRoads 2012) and this initiative has been complemented by further initiatives, such as the recent announcement of a “Young Driver Safety Package” within a new strategy “Towards Zero” (State Government Victoria 2015). The Fit to Drive (F2D) program, as a schools-based road safety education program targeting 16 year olds, forms a key part of the government’s road safety education strategy, which recognizes the key role played by schools in the promotion of road safety (Howat et al., 2001; Toroyan & Peden 2007).

F2D is presented as a half-day (four hour) road safety education program where Year 11 (senior school) students participate in small group discussion workshops peer led and facilitated by trained university students. The core tenet of the F2D model is that it is the choices young people make that make the difference. The F2D model’s strength is a scientific approach to curriculum design (involving research, evidence, design, development and evaluation) supported by a network of road safety partners. The philosophy of the program incorporates the understanding that young people have the capacity to change attitudes in relation to risky driving, and support them to take ownership and responsibility for their own and their peers’ safety (see Spencer & Montero 2013). Therefore a key principle of the program is the promotion of community partnerships and a youth-led approach to road safety.

Significant features of the F2D local community model are:

1. Peer Education – trained, tertiary undergraduates facilitate a half day workshop and act as road safety role models: listening to, discussing the risks, and informing young people about the facts and why they are overrepresented in road crashes.
2. Personal safety and risk minimisation – young people learn about and develop strategies to avoid dangerous situations, and rehearse what to say and do in those situations. In the F2D workshop, young people draw upon their own lived experience and context to consider “What strategies will you use to stay safe and keep your friends safe? What could you say as a passenger, in a range of risky situations when you are in the car?”
3. Empowerment - youth adult partnership. Young people develop a personal plan and enlist the support of parents and the local community to make it work. Significant adults and parents hear what they have to say and can reinforce the effect of public road safety campaigns and messages. (e.g. explaining Graduated Licensing Scheme that assists young people to deal with
the complexity of driving, encouraging buying safer cars and educating about the purpose of enforcement

4. Varied activities and modes of engagement, involving high levels of interactivity and movement, group activities, discussion and debate, along with presentations, case studies, film, elements of story and theatre. (see Table 1 for workshop program outline).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Facilitator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Welcome, purpose and rules. Film presentation</td>
<td>University undergraduate Program Leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Participate in activities of increasing complexity and distraction relating to driving (icebreaker activity, sharing safe and unsafe stories, risk continuum)</td>
<td>University undergraduate Peer facilitator</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 The ‘reality of risk’ interactive presentation</td>
<td>Victoria Police</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 A case study of young driver fatality and the impact of this on family and friends. Choices, influences, responsibilities, strategies to stay safe.</td>
<td>Emergency Services - MFB, SES, CFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Young people develop strategy to reduce risk and practice what to say and how to behave when confronted with high risk situations – scenarios.</td>
<td>University undergraduate Peer Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Developing a Personal Safety Plan that is shared with and supported by the school community (including parents and friends).</td>
<td>University undergraduate Program Leader, Peer Facilitator, School Principal and Local Council Representative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: In 2013 with the support of VicRoads, the F2D workshop program was redeveloped from CARRSQ research findings (Buckley, Reveruzzi & Watson, 2012). The findings emphasised priority road safety messages for novice drivers and particularly passengers. A Program Logic model was developed (VicRoads 2013) linking theory with desired road safety outcomes (improved attitudes, behaviour and knowledge for participants in the F2D workshop).

Table 1: The F2D Workshop Program

The constructive local community and stakeholder partnerships formed through F2D are directed towards achieving positive road safety outcomes for young people. The ‘local community networks’ comprise local secondary college groups, local government, community groups and universities. Individual local communities and schools commit to the Fit to Drive Program, philosophy and approach. The collaborative partnership approach has been the key to the growth and success of the program, leading it to develop from a local community initiative in 2002 to become, since 2014, part of Victoria’s road strategy. This paper will explore methods and elements of this partnership approach. Specifically we aim to:

- explore the methods used in building collaboration between community-based programs and key players from the public, private and scientific fields in road safety
highlight the importance of developing a shared understanding in the community and among young people of the research and evidence about the over-representation of young people in road crashes, and evidence-based prevention strategies

explore the methods for building practitioner knowledge, skill and insight required to implement the program through trained tertiary road safety ambassadors

2. KEY ELEMENTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF THE F2D PROGRAM

2.1. Central Principles: Youth Adult Partnerships; Key Role of the Local Community; Schools not just a Site for Road Safety Education but as a Link to Families and the Wider Community.

The flowchart below (see Figure 1) depicts the elements and steps in the development of the F2D program. It starts with key first principles which underpin the program, and from which the program planning and development follow.

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**Foundation Principles**

- Youth-adult partnerships
- The key role of the local community
- Schools as a link to families and the wider community not just a site for road safety education
- Universities as a key resource in road safety research, learning, social engagement

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**Actions and Steps Required to Develop and Deliver F2D**

- Network to locate road safety and F2D champions: Principals, University Professors, Mayors, Community leaders,
- Work with and manage the existing multi stakeholder road safety groups
- Understand school curriculum diversity and build upon existing local road safety education programs (encouraging them to be positive, continuous, targeted, evidence based)
- Access to the latest research and evidence
- Select and train University undergraduate facilitators
- Select and train Community Liaison Coordinators and Undergraduate Program Leaders
- Source funding, sponsorship and commitment at all levels
The first principle is the recognition of the strength of youth-adult partnerships. Very often what initiates and binds the F2D network is a common belief in the value of youth-adult partnerships and appreciation of the opportunity to work with young people to do something worthwhile. Most people involved with F2D see the program as much more than young people ‘adding value’. Being part of the F2D organisation involves adults and young people having shared goals, responsibility, respect and commitment.

The second is the key role of local community. Both in origins and philosophy the Fit to Drive program is a community-based program with not only strong links to, but - in terms of its successful introduction to a new school - dependent on, the local community. ‘Community’ in this sense refers to the geographical locality of the respective schools. Generally the school will identify itself within a community bounded by a metropolitan local government area, or a town or regional centre. The individual community members may include local school principals, mayors, councillors, magistrates, service club presidents, small and large business managers, as well as, more generally, the population of the area. Commitment to the program means embracing a researched approach to road safety education and a commitment to part of the funding.

Another dimension of ‘community’ finds its expression in the way that F2D has developed its own sense of community, distinct identity and common purpose. The F2D organisation brings together...
people with different backgrounds, organisational links and roles. Working together they provide an opportunity for a collective vision with respect to road trauma prevention. They develop a shared history with the organisation and the cooperative character of the relationships has meant that F2D has in many respects taken on the character of a ‘community of interest’ (Spinosa, Flores & Dreyfus 1997) that is bound together by a common purpose (Montero & Kelly 2016). Young people’s energy, enthusiasm and commitment to taking responsibility - and planning for - their own safety that is demonstrated at the workshops is the only other catalyst necessary for extending community support. Adults observing the F2D workshop frequently say “what can we do to sustain the momentum?” What is recognized is that there has been, in this group of young people a shift, a step towards understanding the need for a safer road culture for young drivers and passengers.

The trained university facilitators have their own youth leadership connections in universities, in social networks and sporting and church organisations, and, frequently, local government connections. There has been very little marketing of F2D; the participants share and pass on their own experiences to others. With no advertising budget per se the F2D program continues to consolidate and gain interest from new schools and new communities. The draw card is the workshop itself. We have depicted this ‘community culture of road safety’ as commencing with the affirmation of the foundational principles and continuing – and building – throughout the life of the program.

The third foundational principle incorporates recognition of the central place of schools, not just as a site for road safety education, but as a link to families and the wider community. When implementing a road safety education program there is sometimes a misconception that schools are self-contained, closed systems that are useful as receptacles for program input – providing a captive audience of young people. But this is to seriously underestimate their place within an expanding circle of community connections. In many communities the school is the institution that experiences the greatest impact when road trauma is involved. It is the institution first contacted by individuals and groups seeking to prevent further tragedy.

The final principle is the recognition of the role of universities as a key resource in road safety research, learning and social engagement and in the development of effective youth engagement strategies. From the outset F2D focussed on fostering a productive connection with the universities to ground its practice in up-to-date research in road use behaviour and road safety education, as well as community and youth engagement strategies, including the key strategy of peer education.

2.2. Actions and Processes in the Development and Delivery of F2D.

Proceeding from these foundational principles we can identify a series of actions and processes that have been implemented to build the community base of F2D and develop and deliver the program.

- Network to locate road safety and F2D champions: school principals, university academics, local government mayors and other council representatives, community leaders, key community organisation personnel.

Generally the steps taken towards community engagement involve firstly gauging the interest in the community. This involves actively prospecting for, and canvassing support – sometimes literally “knocking on doors”. Significantly it involves enlisting the support of influential individuals, local
government mayors, councilors, business owners, service club presidents, school principals, members of
the legal professional networks. The specific task is to organise a school F2D workshop and showcase it
by inviting other schools, media contacts and further community contacts to attend.

- Work with and manage the existing multi stakeholder road safety groups

The F2D approach at the local and statewide level has been to initiate and keep contact with all
stakeholders, to seek their cooperation and draw upon their experience in accessing road safety
research. F2D Inc. (the not for profit organisation established to coordinate and implement the
community program across the state) endeavoured to develop Memorandum of Understandings and
written agreements with all significant government road safety agencies. Like all not for profit
organisations, finding the time and resources to do this is a challenge, however the results are
significant and in the case of F2D these approaches have in turn led to better cooperation between
different stakeholders. Because of the close relationship with the road safety partners (Road Safety,
Police and Emergency Services) young people have access through the F2D workshop to up-to-date
information that is international, national, state and local. They have the opportunity to share the
responsibility with the stakeholders who are committed to strategies to help young people survive on
the roads. They are the same stakeholders who have developed successful policy and strategy
measures that have worked to reduce the toll in the community over many years (Spencer & Montero
2013).

Assisting local road safety communities to set their own goals requires a level of trust from scientific
and policy communities. The work done by the local community in developing and implementing the
F2D workshop has been valued by all of the major government stakeholders. At times F2D, as a
locally initiated program, has needed its own champions within those same policy and scientific
communities.

- Understand school curriculum diversity and build upon existing local road safety education
  programs (encouraging them to be positive, continuous, targeted, evidence based)

Working with schools requires an understanding of school systems and sensitivity to the expectations
that are placed on schools and the time constraints they face in delivering the curriculum. Throughout
Victoria’s school curriculum there are other specific targeted education programs and materials aimed
at influencing attitudes and behaviour by encouraging young people to become safer road and
transport users and reinforcing public campaigns (see for example Hughes & Di Pietro 2007). The
F2D program is one part of the solution for this vulnerable group and further government measures,
including a dedicated road safety education complex, assistance for disadvantaged teenagers with
obtaining driving practice and a practical safe driving program, are planned (State Government
Victoria 2015).

Good practice RSE (road safety education) provides continuous access to information, education and
engagement from an early age. In school programs in Australia there is a consensus that the “focus for
school-based driver education programs should be placed on assisting students to make informed
decisions as road users. The school’s role is to guide the development of positive road safety attitudes
and values” (NSW Dept. of Education, 2015).

- Access the latest road safety research and evidence
Fifteen years ago the local community of Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula took up the challenge of reducing the toll on young drivers and passengers and making young people safer. Often, when communities have been galvanized into action by their horror and grief at the loss of young lives to road trauma they may turn to ‘solutions’ that appear sensible and potentially effective, but are not always aligned with public campaigns and best practice. What made the F2D community distinctive was the fact that from the outset they were committed to sourcing the best scientific research evidence available locally, nationally and internationally and to seeking out a network of road safety partners both public and private to support and implement the community based, youth driven approach. The F2D model drew on existing road safety research to develop a program that was focused on attitudes and behaviour rather than driving skills. For young people of this age group the active, nonjudgmental facilitation model of F2D was an effective way of engaging with, and embracing, the high priority road safety messages informed by the research (for example, recognition of the predominance of males, the prevalence of speed, and the risks for passengers, in road crashes).

The curriculum of the F2D program also drew upon the substantial existing health and education research in the area which focused on the factors associated with the successful adoption of positive health behaviours, such as: encouraging resilience, optimistic and realistic expectations, active learning, scenario based learning and peer led approaches. All of these approaches have been linked to successful learning, self-efficacy and vocational outcomes.

- Select and train university undergraduate facilitators

In establishing the F2D program it was essential to establish early connections with the universities in order to elicit their support and initiate contact with, and recruit undergraduate tertiary students who would potentially be interested in becoming peer facilitators in the F2D workshops. The facilitators undertake an initial training program over an intensive two days and are introduced to the basic theoretical and educational background of the program, and its place in road safety education in Victoria, as well as specific training in facilitation of the program activities. The facilitators’ role is not to become road safety experts, however they need an initial understanding of the high priority messages that are relevant to 16 year olds and the vulnerability of the target group (e.g. inexperience, lifestyle and risk taking factors and using older unsafe cars) (VicRoads 2013). In the training they are introduced to the theory behind the program and the detailed F2D program logic. The university students selected are usually in their second or third year of study and generally, but certainly not exclusively, students in social sciences and human services (Youth Work, Social Work, Education, and Psychology). The facilitators are selected and trained by experienced tertiary qualified trainers who thoroughly understand the F2D program and its background. A comprehensive F2D training manual has been produced (Ariens 2010; VicRoads 2013).

- Select and train Community Liaison Officers and Undergraduate Program Leaders

The Fit to Drive Foundation engaged part time Community Liaison Officers (CLO’s) who work within communities to develop Fit to Drive partnerships and who are on the lookout for ‘community champions’ who are passionate about, or can be persuaded to make a difference to the safety and future of young people. CLO’s look for people of influence who can quickly tap into the resources in the community needed to get a F2D workshop running. As suggested the key supporters have often been local community leaders. Sometimes the champions have been touched directly by road trauma, and many times they are locals who already have an involvement in community road safety and a commitment to the safety of young people. The CLO role is therefore to network, to establish and maintain strategic partnerships with schools, stakeholders and community groups and to recruit
schools. Their role is to promote a strategic approach that includes best practice road safety education and resources.

- Source funding, sponsorship and commitment at all levels

The funding model of F2D invites local government, business, service clubs, road safety organisations, interest groups, emergency services to contribute alongside what is now a significant funding contribution from the Transport Accident Commission and the Victorian Government. The funding of F2D, because it is initiated locally (at the school level) and involves the cooperation of so many road safety education stakeholders is complex. Each individual workshop, and there is at this stage a F2D workshop most school days of the year, requires a commitment by all parties. As part of the Victorian Government Road Strategy involvement and support the potential is there to grow and strengthen the program and stringent accountability measures are required.

The TAC is also funding the evaluation of the program that commenced in 2015. This evaluation is independent and ongoing and a report on the progress to date is being prepared for early 2016 (ACRS 2014).

- Program development

The steps described above laid the foundation for the development and delivery of the workshop program, based on road safety, educational and health promotion research and practice experience. This included the design, development and evaluation stages (see Introduction, above, for outline of the program). The program, as it has evolved since its commencement, has consistently incorporated key features that aim to empower young people to tackle the issues of road safety and devise and act on their personal strategies. The short workshop description that follows attempts to capture the opportunities the near peer university undergraduates have to facilitate positive discussion and influence opinions about road safety issues with their small groups. The description helps to explain a little more of the theoretical base for the program.

The workshop begins with the honest sharing of safe and unsafe road user experiences. The student experience shifts to a need for them to know more about the reality of road risks, then again to a point of vulnerability during a case study of an actual crash where several young people were killed. At this point students experience and realise that “It could happen to me”. Students then rehearse what to say in dangerous situations and develop a personal road safety plan. They develop positive strategies to answer the question posed in the case study. “Was there a safer way home?” After the personal plan has been developed students work together to plan and present a vision for the school and wider community. They present this to the school principal and other road safety community members in the final session. Consistently the school principal or mayor’s representative is impressed by the quality of the responses and feels inspired to act. The youth-adult partnership becomes often a youth-adult contract or pledge. Adults who experience the journey of the F2D workshop come to understand the students’ experience and believe in the process that has been followed.

As noted, every workshop is a showcase for the community and at every workshop young people present their own ideas about how to be safe and how they can be supported by the community and their school. It is important to note that the ‘F2D program’ also incorporates the concept and development of a wider community program, encompassing initiatives such as community youth forums, and programs targeting and out-of-school and marginalised groups.

- Governance and management
Fit to Drive (F2D) Foundation Board Incorporated is the entity responsible for state wide strategic directions. The F2D Board provides an accountability framework for program delivery and it coordinates, builds and sustains local community resource commitment. Employees of the F2D Foundation include a Chief Executive Officer (responsible for the allocation of resources and the day to day running of the program), Local Area Coordinators, University Program Leaders and University Facilitators. Many of these appointments are part time and the community groups who support the Foundation are often voluntary. The success of the program for young people in terms of engagement, involvement and commitment to the road safety agenda depends upon the connection of schools, local government and local road safety interest groups and major partners and stakeholders (Government, Police and Emergency Services). This is the foundation for the youth-adult partnership that has the potential to support the ‘personal and community road safety plans’ developed in the F2D workshop.

- On-going facilitator selection & training

Facilitator selection & training, including ongoing monitoring and quality management, is an on-going focus of the program, with training programs conducted several times a year, depending on need. The facilitators who are chosen are mainly, but not exclusively, ‘near peer’, i.e. in their early twenties. Selection requirements for becoming a facilitator, apart from being a university undergraduate, are that they are committed (they need to be sensitive to the effects of road trauma and injury), responsible (safe road users) and eager to learn. The training, and particularly the work and on-going professional support and development in F2D, provides them with new skills. Students learn specifically about small group facilitation, how to handle challenging situations and delivering a set curriculum. Positive role modelling is a part of influencing attitudes and behaviour, and safe driving and passenger behaviour is an expectation of employees of the F2D Foundation. Facilitation skills include active listening, eye contact, movement as well as learning how to answer difficult questions and how to effectively channel unsafe material that arises in workshops. Other skills that may be acquired as part of the training and workshop experience are: working with teams, presentations and public speaking and leadership. F2D recognises university and work commitments and the undergraduates are paid for their time with the F2D Foundation. F2D Peer Facilitators usually find full time work more easily because of the skills they develop. Peer Facilitators are required to work as soon as possible after their training and to commit to working once a week if possible during school times.

As well as delivering all the workshops, the F2D Peer Facilitators are involved in ongoing training and development, and mentoring new recruits. They debrief after each workshop and with further training may become Program Leaders. Program Leaders are chosen from experienced facilitators to present the program, monitor and mentor new facilitators and are key members of the “Quality Team”. Program Leaders host, manage and debrief the facilitators at the end of the workshop.

Emergency service personnel e.g. MFB members and Police Youth Resource Officers - who complement the small group facilitation by university undergraduates, are also trained to present in the F2D year 11 workshop. They act as the source of information and authenticity. Working as a team they are involved in setting the scene, linking the activities and acting as the source of road safety facts. By participating in the training they are both contributing to the building of practitioner (facilitator) knowledge and at the same time extending on their own knowledge and capacities in relation to community based road safety education in schools, as well as core skills such as team work, facilitation skill sets and positive approaches to working with young people.
• **School workshop delivery**

Road Safety Workshops are held daily throughout the year throughout Victoria Australia. Schools in the State of Victoria can be very different in terms of curriculum, culture, site and space. They have different priorities for road safety education and often have different timetables. The steps for delivery involve contacting the schools to determine their interest. There may also be schools that contact the F2D Foundation through the website f2d.com.au directly. One of the first points of discussion with the school is their exposure to recent road trauma. Before the F2D workshop is held a strategy for providing student counselling on the day is organised. The school is asked to break the students into small groups (up to 20) prior to the commencement of the half day workshop. Staff from the school attend however do not directly participate in the program except when they are asked to support the student personal safety plan. Finding the rooms and spaces for facilitation is a challenge and the facilitators are flexible. A mixture of small and at least one large space is required to meet the needs of a cohort of students that may number 250.

• **Ongoing evaluation and review**

An evaluation and review process has been built into the program from the outset, and has included individual student feedback after every workshop and feedback from schools as well as debrief and learning sessions immediately following the workshop that have involved facilitators, presenters, and coordinators. The reflective practice embedded into the program processes has meant that the workshop and wider program has consistently evolved and adapted in response to both practice experience and current research. This commitment to the most up-to-date research and evidence has been a feature of the program throughout its history and encompassed a redevelopment of the curriculum in 2013 to incorporate a specific focus on young people as passengers.

While an external evaluation of the program conducted on behalf of TAC is currently underway, F2D has also continuously conducted an online student survey to generate information about the student reception of the program messages and behavioural change targets. Since its inception in 2013, more than 4000 students have completed the survey after the workshop (it may be completed up to a week following the workshop). Students may be encouraged by their teacher to complete the survey to provide feedback for the individual school or community. In relation to the key learnings from the program, which are about planning to avoid risky situations, what to say and how to speak up, of those surveyed, 90% of students say they will possibly use the strategies suggested to keep them safe, and 65% indicate that they will use the strategies all or most of the time. Nearly half of the students say they have discussed the program after the workshop. Of those students who discuss the program, most go home and speak with their parents about it, whilst many discuss it with their friends. The amount of students speaking to parents in the home environment provides an opportunity to reinforce safe messages and public road safety education programs.

### 3. CONCLUSION

In this paper we have described the principles and processes that have contributed to the successful establishment and growth of the F2D community model. Working towards the development of an effective road safety culture in a community has its challenges and there are barriers to success, caused
in part by a range of social, economic and cultural factors such as the cultural dominance of individualism, consumerism and speed (May, Tranter & Warn 2008). Another challenge is that very often 'everyone is an expert' in road safety. The 'common sense' view dominates even though it does not always accurately reflect reality, nor the scientific evidence that exists. Key concerns for people in the community are “How do you get young people to hear the message?” Attitudes about young drivers and passengers abound that are predominantly based on “they think they are bullet proof and are always overconfident”. However most communities do respond positively to the notion of peer education and see it as effective pedagogy. People in positions of influence frequently can see that the logic of involving young people in the process of change is a better way of achieving change. They see this as more likely to succeed as opposed to ‘telling’ young people how they should behave and what they should do. Effective F2D networks form at least in part because there is a strong belief among stakeholders and community members that adults’ telling young people that they are immature, irresponsible and overconfident compounds the problem resulting in fatalistic responses or “It won’t happen to me.”

The F2D model described here brings together people from many different backgrounds and invites them to address the overrepresentation of young drivers and passengers together. F2D extends the collaborative ability of local networks. The numbers of students, schools, local government areas undertaking the program are a measure of its success. It is this prevention approach that tapped into and further developed established networks that resonated with many other communities touched by road safety issues. In essence this process is about the engagement of community members who are actively involved through networks in the setting up of the program, in supporting the curriculum and in the training of undergraduates. Community capacity is built by channeling individual efforts into a concerted local effort to draw attention to, and tackle young driver issues in the area or region. Fit to Drive (f2d) involves community leadership, time, resources and above all individual and community commitment. It is in this context that community groups come to understand that there is a body of knowledge and research in road safety that can be analysed and acted on.

The long term success of the F2D model in Victoria suggests that in the community there is strong potential to commit to a road safety culture within a more holistic ‘ethic of care and responsibility’ (May, Tranter & Warn 2008, p. 403). A school road safety education program that is grounded in community may indeed play a vital role in achieving the requisite safety ‘culture change’ that is required in order to achieve further reductions in road trauma (Johnson 2010, Victorian Road Safety Action Plan).

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