

ROAD SAFETY PROGRAM, YOUNG PEOPLE

168. Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

Will the minister inform the House about the significant new road safety program that has been designed specifically for our State's young people?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

I thank the member for Ballajura for the question and for some notice of it, and for his ongoing interest in road safety. I recently launched a new \$2 million road safety program that is aimed specifically at the State's young people. The program is called Road Aware and will cover people from newborn to the age of 20. It is one of the most comprehensive road safety programs that has ever been launched in our State. It will encompass a pre-driver education course for young people and their parents, resource materials for schools and teachers, and assistance for parents in teaching their children about road safety.

Our aim in this activity is to create a long-term investment in road safety awareness in our State and to start changing people's attitudes towards road safety for the better. This program will build on those foundations for the future. It will encourage good road safety attitudes and behaviour that, hopefully, will translate into a lifetime of safe driving and use. The program is about educating not only young people but also parents and supporting them in becoming good role models. The program will deliver a strong road safety message to the whole community.

As part of this program, the use of baby capsules will be promoted.

Several members interjected.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I am sorry, but this is an important matter and members of the Opposition should listen. A major component of the program will be the promotion of properly fitted child restraints. We will soon establish a statewide network of accredited child-restraint fitting and checking stations. It is one thing to have a child restraint; it is another thing to ensure that it is properly fitted. A focus will also be on safety for young people particularly as pedestrians, bus passengers, vehicle occupants and the use of seatbelts. This will all be in addition to our existing road safety programs.

In our education system far more professional development will be available to teachers, new curriculum material will be developed and school road safety education committees throughout the State will receive increased support.

The Government has already introduced the final stage of the graduated driver-training program, which gives novice drivers more experience on the road, especially in the detection of hazards. The Government remains very committed to road safety. Everyone in this House should support the Road Aware program.