

# Project Zebra: Tamariki crossing at the zebra crossing

**Project Zebra was developed by WAVE School Travel Plan Coordinator Jane Sullivan, in collaboration with partners SC Road Safety, Timaru District Council, Timaru Police and Auckland Transport.**

The need for the project was identified in 2019 through school travel surveys with Highfield School whānau and later from discussions with Timaru South School. Driver speeds and raising awareness of driver responsibility – such as stopping for pedestrians waiting – were key drivers, plus students needed to learn the Kerb drill (STOP, LOOK, LISTEN) and learn to be responsible for their own safety when crossing on a zebra crossing.

“Whānau walking to school with tamariki sets them up for the day and is also an opportunity to connect and be active together” Jane Sullivan said.

The goal of Project Zebra is to promote safer speed and behaviour of drivers as they approach pedestrian crossings as well as student awareness of the crossing and perceptions of their own safety while walking, says South Canterbury Road Safety Coordinator Lucy Mehrtens.

Project Zebra is a great initiative to engage with school staff, students, families, and other road users to start conversations about the importance of safe travel behaviour.

As a community we all have a responsibility in ensuring the active journey (walk, scoot, bike) to school is safe for our Tamariki and rangatahi.

“The message we are reinforcing to the tamariki is stop look and listen. If our tamariki are doing the basics right, then it reduces harm” says Deb Quested – Senior Community Constable New Zealand Police.

Lucy Mehrtens said tamariki have been very good but hopes the message around zebra crossings also reaches drivers.

“One thing we are really trying to teach kids is the stop part of stop look listen. A lot of them see the car slowing and want cross but we are teaching them to wait until the car has come to a complete stop before crossing at a zebra crossing,” she said.

“A lot of motorists are doing the right thing by stopping at zebra crossings especially around schools. To keep our tamariki and rangitahi safe drivers need to slow down around schools when it is drop off and pick up time.”



*Representatives from Project Zebra organisations walking across a school zebra crossing – led by National Party MP-Elect for Rangitata James Meager dressed as mascot Zephyr the Zebra. Source: Timaru District Council.*

Contact Jane Sullivan at Te Mana Ora | Community and Public Health for more information (jane.sullivan@cdhb.health.nz or 03 687 2626).

[Find out more about Project Zebra on the Waka Kotahi | NZ Transport Agency website.](https://www.nzta.govt.nz/transport-safety/zebra-crossings/)

**Te Whatu Ora**  
Health New Zealand

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