

MEDIA RELEASE

May 1st 2008

* *For immediate release*

Southwest students urged to take road safety seriously

Students in the South West regions of the State will be urged to take road safety seriously when representatives from PBF and the RAC visit their schools.

The Paraplegic Benefit Fund (PBF) is a national not-for-profit organisation which aims to prevent permanent spinal cord injuries and enhance the lives of those already injured.

In partnership with the RAC, PBF representative Justin Lunn, who has quadriplegia, will present the award-winning **PBFPREVENTION**-road program to students in years 11 & 12 at schools throughout the region.

As part of the presentation Justin will speak to the students about his life in a wheelchair and his accident showing the students that a split second decision has the power to change your life forever.

'I always lived my life to the extreme, I knew about safety but outside of work I didn't even consider the basics,' Justin says.

"I didn't value my personal safety- everything was a bit of fun especially when I was with my friends," Justin says.

Also included in the **PBFPREVENTION**-road program is scenario-based activities, which help students identify risk-reduction strategies, and a DVD featuring other Western Australians who have been seriously injured in road crashes.

RAC Community Ed presentations and workshops cover a range of issues including learning to drive, buying a car, road safety and money management.

PBFPREVENTION-road spokesperson Hazel Hodgkins says that this partnership allows the crucial road safety message to be spread to regional areas.

"Young people aged 15-24 years are most at risk of being involved in a road crash," Ms Hodgkins said.

"It is important that as many young people as possible have access to both the **PBFPREVENTION** – road program and the RAC Community Ed programs," Ms Hodgkins said.

RAC Community Ed Manager Katrina Bell said that communicating the road safety messages to young people was an important part of the organisation's road safety strategy.

"There were 59 more road deaths on regional roads than metropolitan roads in 2007, so it is important we raise awareness of road safety in these areas," Ms Bell said.

“Young people who are taking to the road for the first time are often the most at risk and engaging them through a range of innovative presentations and seminars can help them to prepare for their time behind the wheel.” Ms Bell said.

****To arrange an interview or photo opportunity, call Cristin Plath on 9443 1777.***

For further information on PBF or the **PBFPREVENTION** – road program, visit www.pbf.asn.au or call PBF Australia on (08) 9443 1777.

For more information on the RAC Community Ed programs, visit www.rac.com.au and click on the Community link or call (08) 9436 4471.

Southwest Itinerary

Monday

Busselton Senior High School
Eaton Community College

Tuesday

Margaret River Senior High School
Georgiana Molloy Anglican School

Wednesday

MacKillop Catholic College
Manjimup Senior High School

Thursday

Kearnan Catholic College

Friday

Newton Moore Senior High School

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