**British parents’ self-reported road safety beliefs, practices and rules**

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2. [**Zahra Tabibi**](http://injuryprevention.bmj.com/search?author1=Zahra+Tabibi&sortspec=date&submit=Submit)[2](http://injuryprevention.bmj.com/content/22/Suppl_2/A247.2.abstract#aff-2)

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**Abstract**

**Background** Children are at high risk for pedestrian deaths and injury (World Health Organisation, 2009). Parents play an important role in teaching children pedestrian skills in context. The aims of this research were to investigate parents’ self-reported beliefs, practices and road safety rules when crossing streets with their children.

**Methods** A questionnaire was administered to parents of 234 children aged 3–10 years (mean = 6.23 years, SD = 1.83). Participants were parents of children who were attending a university children’s event in a small British city. The majority of respondents were mothers. Questions were about pedestrian experiences, safety rules and risks, also who they think is best suited to teach children about road safety.

**Results** The majority (61.5%) normally walked to school on a daily basis. The age parents thought it was appropriate for boys and girls to walk to school alone was significantly lower than the appropriate age to walk to school with peers. Parents ranked themselves as the most suited to teach children about road safety in comparison to professionals such as teachers and road safety education officers. Only 3 parents said that they did not have any specific road safety rules and the majority of parents reported that they hold their child’s hand when crossing the road. The road safety rules that parents reported were similar across child age groups.

**Conclusions** Our sample of parents reported that they walk with their children frequently. Parents’ self-reported rules and behaviour did not differ with child age. The younger age at which British parents considered it appropriate for children to walk to school with peers compared to alone needs further investigation. In this respect, further research should consider comparisons of road risk and ‘stranger danger’ (abduction risk). Also, further research should focus on reasons that parents considered road safety professionals less suited to teach children about road safety than parents.