

COMMUNITY**MENU** [Home](#) [Just In](#) [News](#) [Sport](#) [Local Life](#) [Things to Do](#) [Jobs](#) [Motoring](#) [Real Estate](#) [Obituaries](#) [Classifieds](#) [ALL](#)

Kate Dodd | 21st Jun 2015 6:00 AM



Learning about road safety awareness are Fairholme College students Clara Lee, Georgia haward, Georgia Horsely and Katie Golchert. Photo Kate Dodd / The Chronicle

Kate Dodd

AFTER a horrific car crash claimed the lives of three young students in Toowoomba in 2009, Rotarian Phil Chapman felt there had to be something the community could do to keep young people safer on the roads.

He knew he couldn't prevent all crashes - but did want to improve the odds for students.

So the Rotary Youth Driver Awareness Program was brought to the Darling Downs.

That was six years ago.

Darling Downs RYDA secretary Maureen Henderson said the program, which was delivered to about 50,000 students around Australia each year, was recently run for 200 Year 11 students from The Glennie School, Fairholme College and Agnew School.

"Road trauma is the leading cause of death and injury of youth in Australia," she said.

"The 17-25 age group has the largest rate of road fatalities per head of population - this age represents 13% of the population, but 22% of all road deaths."

She said the one-day program had been developed by Road Safety Education Australia to raise driver and passenger awareness and to improve attitudes and safe choices for new drivers.

The program, held at the Toowoomba Turf Club on June 11, consisted of six interactive sessions - stopping distances; hazards, distractions and risks; plan B: alcohol, drugs and fatigue; road choices; crash survivor: and my wheels.

Toowoomba Police Sergeant Brendan Harding and Senior Constable Phil Dunster led the Road Choices session on the day.

Sergeant Harding said the session was focused on P-platers and several topics, including what characteristics good drivers and good passengers should have, were on the table for discussion.

He said the program was a good way to educate students and get the safety message across - mostly because it meant he wasn't out writing tickets to hammer it home.

For more details about the Rotary Youth Driver Awareness Program or when the next one will be visit rse.org.au/ryda or facebook.com/roadchoices.