



MEDIA RELEASE

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ACT Must Do More for Young Drivers

The Youth Coalition of the ACT is today calling upon the ACT Government to review its commitment to young drivers and to the safety of all road users and consider funding programs to address the current gaps which currently exist – particularly for young people at risk.

The ACT Government should adopt strategies that aim to increase young people's driving knowledge and experience before they can drive unaccompanied. If the ACT Government is serious about combating the unacceptably high levels of accidents by young drivers it must:

1. Significantly reduce the current \$145 charge for the 'Road Ready' program as this program is offered at a highly subsidised rate through ACT High Schools
2. Provide funding for at risk young people to receive driving lessons through either a voucher system to access private driving instructor providers or by adequately funding community based youth services to deliver driving lessons.

Carrie Fowlie, Acting Director of the Youth Coalition, said "We have a situation at the moment where many at risk young people - who are from low socio-economic backgrounds or have parents with a disability or are recently arrived refugee or live away from home - are not getting the amount of driving experience they need to be safe drivers. These young people may not have family or friends who can help them to get driving experience.

"The ACT Government needs to fund the services that work with these young people to help them get driving experience, otherwise they will be driving solo with far less experience than they should. Currently, for a young person living in a youth refuge or in a family where no-one can help them learn how to drive, they would need to spend over \$6,500 to get the 120 hours of driving practice they should have before being on the road.

"The reality is that at risk young people cannot afford private driving lessons and are aren't able to get driving experience anywhere else. The ACT Government needs to be realistic and provide funding to help these young people get experience in order to reduce the instances of young drivers involved in accidents on our roads".

For further information or comment contact Carrie Fowlie on 6247 3540 or 0406-585-020