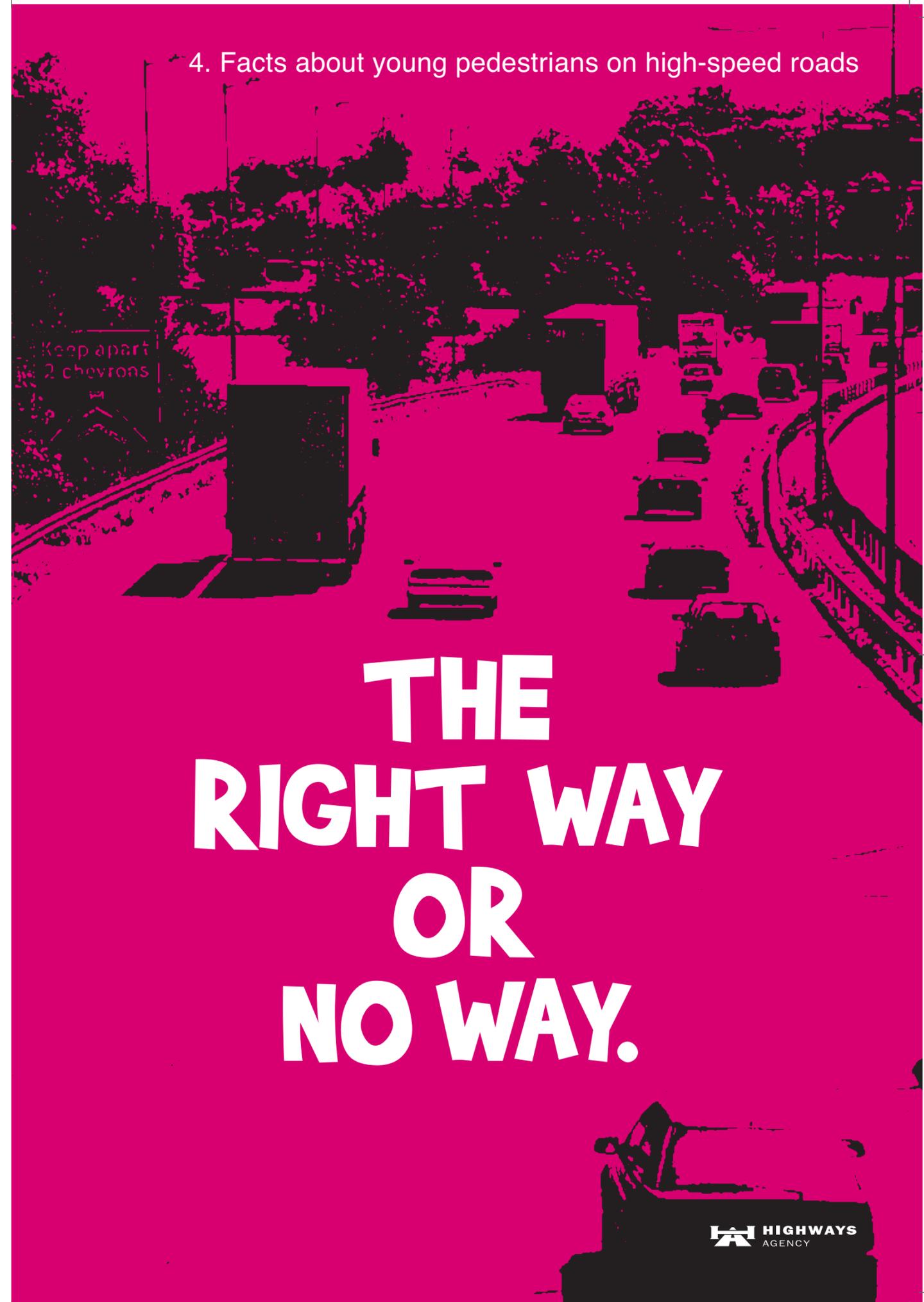


- 11% (329) of such incidents were classified as a child being involved in non malicious/non disruptive activity. The most common reasons were:
 - ◆ Riding push bikes along the hard shoulder and slip roads
 - ◆ Hitch-hiking
 - ◆ Walking along the hard shoulder or verge
 - ◆ Walking dogs
- While it is illegal for young pedestrians to be on the motorway (Rule 253 in the Highway Code) it is likely that children are unaware they are doing anything wrong.
- Children tampering with traffic management (cones and barriers) could have a detrimental effect on road worker safety and add risk to the driving public. Theft or damage of assets lead to delays in delivery of road works.

4. Facts about young pedestrians on high-speed roads



HIGH PROFILE FATALITIES

M60 4 May 2008

A 16-year-old died after being hit by a car shortly after 7pm on the M60 close to J17 after making his way home from Manchester.

M1 8 January 2008

A 14-year-old boy who was accompanied by two of his friends was killed by a car when he ran on to the M1 Northbound. The boys had climbed a fence and jumped on to the carriageway near J1 of the motorway, North London.

M56 24 October 2007

A tragic incident involving a seven-year-old and his six-year-old friend resulted in their deaths.

M60 13 October 2007

A 16-year-old died after he was hit by a vehicle while crossing M60 near J23 on Manchester's ring road.

M65 3 March 2007

A 14-year-old school pupil was hit and killed by a car after playing 'chicken' on the M65 during rush hour traffic. He was playing football with friends when he decided to scale a stone wall next to the motorway. Eyewitnesses said that he was walking out in front of cars, urging his friends to follow him. He had managed to cross both lanes of the motorway and was returning back when he stumbled and was hit by a car.

RESEARCH

Examples of incidents and fatalities on the Highways Agency road network (high-speed roads and motorways) suggest that despite reasonable engineering measures, (barriers and fences that have been put in place to restrict access) deliberate attempts to overcome them have allowed unauthorised access to motorways and high-speed roads. **This is why educating child pedestrians is crucial.**

Research undertaken by the Highways Agency in 2008 confirmed that 3103 incursions by children on Highways Agency roads have taken place between May 2007 and April 2008.

Region	Total Pedestrian	Child Pedestrian (under 16)	%Total pedestrian
North West	4890	1206	24.6
North East	2740	567	20.7
West Midlands	1989	404	20.3
East Midlands	1010	160	15.8
South East	2281	289	12.7
South West	1309	150	11.4
East	3034	327	10.7
National	17262	3103	18.0

This report made a series of recommendations and suggested that where persistent disregard for attempts to keep young people off the network exists, behavioural change through education is deemed to be the most efficient remedial action to be taken.

FACTS

- As children grow older, the risk of them being killed or seriously injured in a traffic accident while walking and playing increases.
- As children become more independent, they spend more time away from home. Most child victims live in the area where the traffic accident happened. But the older the child, the further from home the accident tends to be.
- Freedom to be outside and to visit or play with friends increases the likelihood of incidents occurring on local roads and inevitably this can spill onto the high-speed roads where large housing estates exist nearby.
- Incidents can occur due to drivers being distracted by children and not concentrating fully on their driving or drivers swerving or breaking harshly to avoid children on the carriageway. These have the potential to result in severe incidents occurring on the motorway/high-speed roads which could result in multiple deaths or serious injuries.
- 2008 saw 2 young pedestrian fatalities on the Highways Agency network. There were also 11 seriously injured and 17 recorded slightly injured young pedestrians during the same period.
- Children on motorways and high-speed roads can have resource implications for both the Highways Agency Traffic Officer Service and the Police. The vast majority of incidents will require Highways Agency Traffic Officer assistance and relatively large amounts of Highways Agency and Police resource time. This could prevent the resources being available to be deployed to other incidents or other criminal activity for the Police.
- Incidents with children are more likely to occur when the motorway or high-speed road is in close proximity to housing estates, schools and leisure centres, particularly when schools and leisure facilities are located on the opposite side of the carriageway in relation to housing estates.
- Where there are no crossing points and time can be saved some children will take risks and use the carriageway as a shortcut to get to their destination.
- 80% of incidents involving children occur on non-school days, during school holidays or after school hours. These are more likely to occur during the hours of 15:00-21:00 during warmer months:
 - ◆ 70% of the children involved are between the ages of ten and fourteen
 - ◆ 55% of the children involved are boys
 - ◆ Very few incidents occur outside the school itself
- 44% (1350) of incidents are because a child is taking part in malicious/disruptive activity. The most common reasons included:
 - ◆ Playing chicken, running across the carriageway dodging cars as part of a dare
 - ◆ Throwing objects including bricks, stones, glass and fireworks at the carriageway and vehicles from bridges or the hard shoulder
 - ◆ Crossing the carriageway as a short-cut. This has been classified as disruptive behaviour as it has an impact on other road users
 - ◆ Climbing on and hanging from bridges and gantries.