

'Lives at risk' near schools

Kimberley Shaw

SCHOOL safety zones are unenforceable, says the Pedestrian Council of Australia amid a scathing attack on the State Government's road safety record.

Harold Scruby, chairman of the Pedestrian Council, said young lives were at risk because school safety zones were being ignored by both motorists and government.

He has accused Roads Minister Eric Roozendaal of breaking a pre-election promise to provide 50 mobile and fixed-speed cameras in school zones.

He said Mr Roozendaal had shelved the use of mobile speed cameras in school zones to avoid criticism from radio broadcasters.

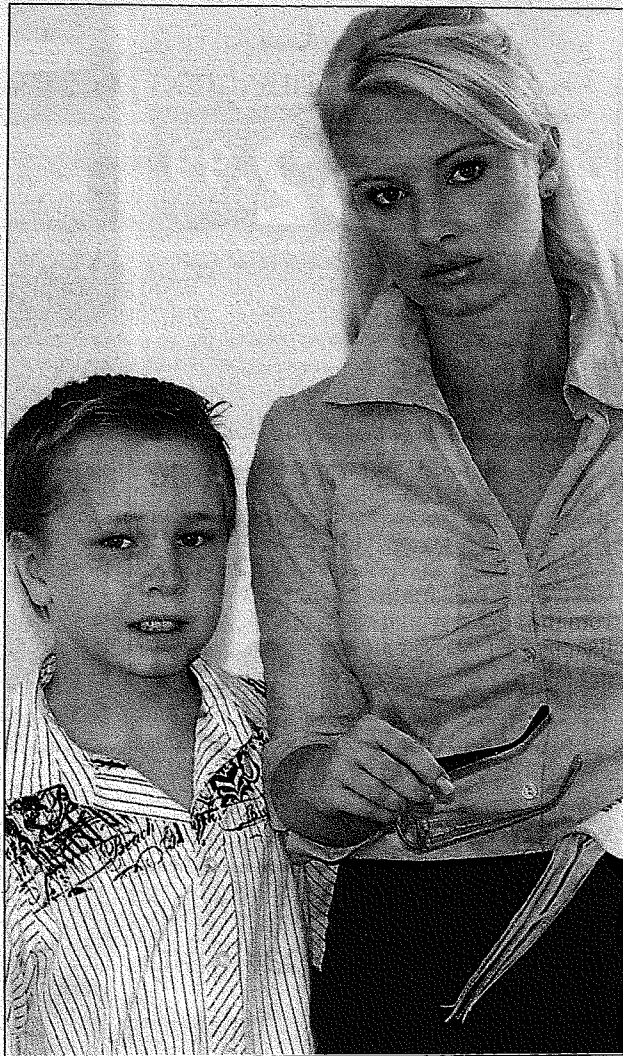
Ray Shuey, director of the Pedestrian Council, suggested communities attack the issue at local level by contacting parents and citizens groups, local councils and local MPs.

Seaforth road safety campaigner Kathryn Henderson - whose Stay Safe Rangers program successfully trialled at Balgowlah Heights Public School has been shunned by the RTA - agreed the Government was not doing enough. Adding more speed cameras was not necessarily the answer, she said.

"I don't believe children's road safety is on the agenda," she said. "It's not just a matter of hurting people in the back pocket, we need to get them to take responsibility for their behaviour behind the wheel."

There are speed cameras at Narrabeen, Pittwater Rd (northbound and southbound), North Curl Curl and Harbord Rd.

A spokesman for Mr Roozendaal said school safety zones were an "oper-



Seaforth road safety campaigner Kathryn Henderson with son Blair.

ational matter being addressed by the RTA".

The spokesman said high-visibility policing was preferable to mobile speed cameras and that the school safety alert systems and (fixed) speed cameras promised in 2006 were being rolled out as planned.

Opposition road safety spokesman Andrew Fraser said he doubted that the roll-out was being done according to plan. "There is a discrepancy between what they claim to have done and what has been done and at

what cost," he said. "We seem to get announcements that fix the headlines but not the problems."

An RTA spokesman said flashing warning systems had been installed at 116 schools, and a further 35 would be operational by mid-year. An extra 100 would be installed each year for the next three years.

Thirty-nine of the promised 50 speed cameras had been installed and the other 11 would be working by mid-year.