



TOWNSVILLE
High School
student Claire
Fallon checks
out the Leighton
Construction
sponsored road
safety initiative

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Professional tips for city's young drivers

IF you thought a fast-food drive through was just a convenient way to satisfy cravings, you'd be wrong, according to Townsville driving instructor, Heath Ward.

This unconventional instruction technique was just one of many real world driving experiences used in a tailored five-lesson plan for learner drivers at Townsville High School last week.

The lesson plan was delivered under the new 2010 Leighton Contractors Youth Drive Safe Initiative which aims to curb the road toll among young road users, the most at-risk driver group involved in almost half of the motor vehicle crashes in Townsville.

Leighton Contractors Northern Region general manager, Darren Weir, said data release by Queensland Police was more than concerning.

"Between January 1, 2005 and August 3, 2010 there were a total of 5265 traffic crashes in the Townsville Police District," he said.

"Of these crashes, 2502 involved a young driver (17-24 years), either as a driver or rider of an involved motor vehicle, and 36 were fatal crashes."

Mr Weir said young drivers are more

likely to take risks, become overconfident and get distracted.

"Through our Youth Drive Safe Initiative, our intent is to give these young learner drivers the best start with free professional driving tuition, equipping them with essential knowledge, practical skills and on-road experience before gaining their provisional licence."

Under the new initiative, 125 Townsville students from high schools in areas known to have high incidences of risky driving behaviour will also be offered Youth Drive Safe packages consisting of five hours of free, professional driving lessons.

"This year we have developed a unique five lesson plan after working closely with Townsville's Graduate School of Motoring and consulting with Department of Transport and Main Roads, RACQ and the Centre of Accident Research and Road Safety - Queensland," Mr Weir said.

By the end of the year, more than 250 young Townsville drivers will have participated in the Leighton Contractors Youth Drive Safe Initiative."