Jorhat is a mid-sized city in Assam (India) with a population of about 2.5 lakh. It is the current administrative headquarter of Jorhat district. The National Highway-37 and a railway track runs through the city. A.T. Road, Garali, Na-ali, and K.B. Road are the main arterial roads. Numerous sub-arterial, collector and local roads network the city. Being the administrative and business capital of the district, roads in the city are always busy.

Some facts related to child road safety in Jorhat city:
- Many of these schools are roadside and in heavy traffic zones
- Many drivers don’t follow speed limit in school zones
- Most children cross roads unguarded during the drop-off and pick-up times
- Parents don’t take road safety precautions like helmet and seat belt wearing
- Most schools don’t have demarcated drop-off areas as suggested by Indian Road Congress guidelines
- Basic road infrastructure in school zones (i.e. signages, walking facilities, speed calming measures, zebra crossing, parking etc) needs improvement

Government has initiated the following for road safety in Jorhat:
- Jorhat District Road Safety Committee formed
- Regular black spot analysis and mitigation are being done
- Jorhat is gradually improving the road infrastructure
- Speed limit for school zones fixed as 30 kmph
- J.B. College Road declared as pedestrian zone (6 am to 7 am)

A preliminary study in Jorhat shows that despite best efforts by the administration, 14 road crashes occurred in Jorhat city in the last three years that involved children below 18 years of age. Unfortunately, in these 14 crashes, we lost 8 children and 4 were grievously injured. The fatalities may increase with the increasing number of vehicles every year. It is high time, we should team up to offer helping hands to the District Administration, Police, Line Departments and Jorhat Municipality so that the deaths of children on road can be minimized.

"Every year 1.35 million people are killed on the roads worldwide"

"National Crime Record Bureau reported more than 400 death on Indian roads every day, out of which 43 are children"

Thus, a consortium of Department of Home and Political Affairs, Govt of Assam, Centre for Environment Education and IIT Guwahati teamed up and participated in ‘Botnar Child Road Safety Challenge’ (CRSC). The consortium won the global challenge to work for the improvement of child road safety in Jorhat city under the guidance of Global Road Safety Partnership. The challenge is funded by the Fondation Botnar, a Swiss foundation established in 2003 with the core purpose of improving the health and wellbeing of children and young people in growing secondary cities around the world. India is one of the six countries in the Botnar CRSC Challenge. The initiative has been named as ‘Safer Roads for Safer Childhood’ (SRSC).
AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF SRSC
The overall purpose of the project is to enhance road safety for citizens of Jorhat in general and for children in particular, especially around the school zones and in the route from home to school. The project targets to achieve the following:

Objective 1: To conduct a situational assessment of road safety in Jorhat city with focus on child road safety.
Objective 2: To develop and implement school road safety plans for five schools in Jorhat city to reduce injuries to children commuting to and from schools.
Objective 3: To develop Jorhat city child road safety policy recommendations (mainly regarding establishment of schools and school transport).

SOME KEY ACTIVITIES OF SRSC:
- Collect secondary data from concerned agencies
- Conduct site visits to all schools in Jorhat and prioritize 5 schools for project implementation
- Road safety audit and mobility survey of the 5 project schools
- Prepare School area Road Safety Plans (SRSP) for project schools
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- Orientation of Teachers and School Managers
- Create awareness among students, school drivers, parents
- Need based infrastructure improvement demo in upto 2 school zones
- Analyse child road safety city wide to improve future planning for safety
- Draft policy recommendations to improve road safety in Jorhat city

ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

Centre for Environment Education (CEE)
CEE was established by the then Ministry of Environment and Forests, GoI in 1984 as a Centre of Excellence. CEE is a key constituent of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Network (SUMNet India) and was one of the lead agencies in developing the Pune Cycle Plan. CEE has recently completed one Walkability Study of Major Roads of Guwahati with support from Tata Institute of Social Sciences and currently conducting another walkability study with SUMNet India. CEE has been working closely with the schools in Assam for about two decades. CEE-UNICEF-Axom SSA Mission school programme Daily Handwashing for an Ailment-free Life (DHaAL) bagged the National Social Innovation Award of NITI Aayog-MEA in 2016.

Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati (IITG)
IIT Guwahati, a premier Technical Higher Education institution in India has been continuously doing credible research in the areas of road safety, traffic flow modelling, drivers' behaviour, road safety audit, road crash analysis etc.

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SAFER ROADS FOR SAFER CHILDHOOD
- Sustainable Development Goal 3 targets: reducing road traffic fatalities by 50% by 2020
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child says: children have the right to protection from injury
- State Road Safety Policy, Assam targets: reducing road crashes by 50% by 2020