

# Traffic Lights or Roundabouts?

From Adam Voigt at Real Schools <https://realschools.com.au/traffic-lights-or-roundabouts/>

[A study of traffic in the US state of Indiana](#) highlighted by the World Economic Forum caught my attention recently. Effectively, they've led the charge on installing roundabouts instead of traffic lights at busy intersections.

The upshot was that, *“Overall, it has seen a 90% reduction in fatalities, 76% fewer injuries and a 30 – 40% fall in the number of accidents involving pedestrians [and]... roundabouts increase road capacity by up to 50%.”*

## What does this have to do with schools?

Let's look at the characteristics of both systems for curbing dangerous or problematic behaviour.

### With traffic lights:

- The point of control is with the authorities.
- The expectation of the participants is compliance.
- Failure to comply is punishable by the authorities via vigilant surveillance.
- The effort and responsibility to run the system and punish non-compliance sits with the authorities.
- The outcome is often high rates of harmful participant collisions and overwhelmed authorities.

### With roundabouts:

- The point of control is with the participants.
- The expectation of the participants is cooperation.
- Failure to comply is commonly dealt with by a toot (or perhaps a flipped bird) from a fellow participant.
- The effort and responsibility to install the system sits with the authority figure but the use of the system is owned by the participants.
- The outcome is lower rates of harmful participant collisions and reduced authority involvement.

### So I have two questions for you:

1. Do you want your school/classroom to be more reflective of a traffic light system or a roundabout system?
2. Is there a mismatch between that decision and your current methods for curbing problematic behaviours?