

Frightening new video footage highlights dangers of the railway

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Network Rail is issuing a reminder to the public warning them of the dangers of misusing level crossings and trespassing in a new safety campaign launched across Network Rail in the south of England.

Network Rail is issuing a stark warning to the public about railway safety as it publishes a hard-hitting film about a 13-year-old boy who jumped the level crossing barriers in Hounslow when they were closed.

The campaign – aimed at parents and children in particular as the schools break up for half-term – reminds people of the dangers of trespassing on the railway or misusing level crossings, whether that's from a 400-tonne train travelling at 70mph, or a deadly 750 volts shock from the electrified third rail which powers trains.

Across Network Rail's Wessex route – which serves Surrey, Berkshire, Hampshire, Dorset, Devon, Somerset, and Wiltshire – people risked their lives more than 1,500 times in the past year by trespassing

on the railway, a 2% rise on the previous year.

The film recounts the frightening story of Cristiano, 13, and highlights the brutal consequences trespass can have on victim's families, friends and railway colleagues.

Eric Woodward, Head of Safety for Network Rail's Wessex route, said: "While our railway is one of the safest in the world, it's crucial that people understand the dangers because too many people are continuing to risk their lives.

"We work really hard to educate people about the dangers present on the railway, whether obvious like a train, or hidden ones like the lethal electric current in the third rail or trackside equipment.

"The only way to avoid these dangers is to never step foot on the railway in the first place, and to follow the rules and stay alert when using level crossings.

"I'd like to commend Cristiano for bravely telling his story to deter others, and also thank the South Western Railway train driver for sharing his experience.

"I'd urge people, particularly parents over the half term when we know level crossing incidents can increase, to speak to their children, show them this film, and remind them to stay safe."

Dan O'Riordan, South Western Railway's Head of Security, said: "Trespassing on the railway is incredibly dangerous and we must do all we can to prevent further incidents. It's our hope that this video will make young people think twice before trespassing and help them understand the consequences. It can be deadly for the trespasser and life changing for those around them, including their families and our colleagues."

Photo credit: Network Rail