

Community Ideas Hub Case Study



**TRANSPORT
FOR LONDON**
EVERY JOURNEY MATTERS

Safe cycle playground

Overview

A supervised 'Safe Cycle Playground' allows children aged 3 to 10 years old to have fun, while learning the rules of the road in a safe environment. This involves setting out a mini version of a road network, including replicas of items such as stop signs, give way signs, roundabouts and speed bumps.

Volunteers coach participants to ensure they understand safety rules of the road, for example when to stop. This allows children to build an understanding of how road users and pedestrians interact, and how they can stay safe. The programme focuses on the basics of how to act around roads, rather than more advanced concepts such as the 'highway code'. However, participants can build on their skills as they get older. Sessions take place in non-traffic areas, ensuring parents and carers feel comfortable and safe.

The project has an added benefit of encouraging social interaction. Parents remain present during sessions, leading to social interaction, and perhaps become a bit more interested in cycling themselves.

Each session lasts about two and a half hours, and takes an hour to set up. Sessions are run every month.

This activity can be delivered anywhere there is enough space. For example, spaces can include community centres, places of worship and school car parks. You could even combine the playground with an organised closed play road. Check you are ok to use chalk to demarcate the playground.



Target audience and engagement

- Key target audience is families and carers with children aged 3 to 10 years.
- Engagement is through schools and children's services in the area. Social media can also help to reach those who are not engaged with schools.
- Posters and flyers.

Reach

- Medium to large (20-50 beneficiaries)

Requirements

Equipment needed:

- Bikes of a suitable size (or you could ask participants to bring their own).
- Small cones or barriers.
- Chalk or tape for demarcating the play road network.
- Small ramps for speed bumps.
- Signs can be made with paint and cardboard.
- You can also make the playground more fun by adding fancy dress outfits for police officers or crossing guards (lollipop people), which the children can wear.
- Transport for taking the equipment to each session (if you are providing bikes), such as a large car or van. You may be able to hire one of from a 'street car' service, such as zipvan, or partner with a local organisation to source.

Resources needed

Project lead

- To oversee the project ensuring the playground is set up safely as required and that all equipment is returned.
- Ensure all funding criteria and documentation is met (if required).
- Run risk assessment for safeguarding, injuries and also to identify any other concerns which may affect project delivery. The Project Lead should have the requisite level of CRB and understand health and safety needs (preferably First Aid trained).

Volunteers/ project officers

- Quantity required depends on the number of participants and their ages*
- Help answer queries
- Contribute to overseeing activity and potentially fix any equipment issues

Storage space

- You will need somewhere to store equipment. This can be at a community centre, or another local business. Your council may be able to provide you with information on who to contact.

*NB: the higher the number of participants, the more volunteers/ officers you will need to keep the event safe. It is suggested that you need an adult or volunteer for every four participants if they are under 4, and 1 adult to every 8 children over 4 years of age.

Costings

Bikes of different sizes (£100 per bike)	£2000-5000
20 small traffic cones	£30
Playground chalks	£10
Paint for signs (use old boxes for cardboard)	£10
Paintbrushes	£10
Storage (per year)	£500
Van Hire (per day) (Optional)	£100
Parts for repairs (Optional)	£100
Fancy dress outfits (each) (optional)	£25

Top tips and key learnings

- Make sure the area you choose is contained – it will make it easier to marshal participants.
- Aim for a venue that is near a route of high footfall to help recruit passers-by.
- Consider wider engagement activities – social media, borough community websites or forums, posters and flyers in the local shop, café, leisure centres and train stations.
- Make sure parents and carers feel their child is safe (so they don't feel the need to be by their side all the time) – this will allow children to engage in peer-to-peer teaching, and parents and carers to engage with each other.
- Measure whether parents are more or less confident letting their children ride bikes, or whether the children say it has encouraged them to try riding bikes more. This is done by a 'hands up' survey.

Maximising local contacts

- Utilise networks to recruit participants find a space to run the playground, or even get in kind support. For example, places of worship, community centres, leisure centres, playgrounds and schools.
- Also think about how you might be able to run a volunteering aspect which can bring other benefits such as building up confidence and skills which might move them closer to employment.
- You might find that a local shop is willing to provide water and snacks, or that a local

café is happy for you to direct participants to them for toilet facilities.

- Engage with your council – they may be able to lend you equipment, help market the project and help secure a space.