



Active journeys to school

Activities for Year 5 and above, for students to explore safety in relation to active travel modes and the design of footpaths.

Health and PE curriculum links

Curriculum Level 3

A3 Safety management

- Identify risks and their causes and describe safe practices to manage these.

D2 Community resources

- Participate in communal events and describe how such events enhance the well-being of the community.

D3 Rights, responsibilities, and laws

- Research and describe current health and safety guidelines and practices in their school and take action to enhance their effectiveness.

D4 People and the environment

- Plan and implement a programme to enhance an identified social or physical aspect of their classroom or school environment.

Curriculum Level 4

A3 Safety management

- Access and use information to make and action safe choices in a range of contexts.

D2 Community resources

- Investigate and/or access a range of community resources that support well-being and evaluate the contribution made by each to the well-being of community members.

D3 Rights, responsibilities, and laws; D4 People and the environment

- Specify individual responsibilities and take collective action for the care and safety of other people in their school and in the wider community.

Glossary

Benefits: an advantage or profit gained from something.

Hazards: danger or risk.

Impact: have a strong effect on someone or something.

Traffic islands: a defined area within a roadway, which may be flush with the roadway or raised, and is somewhere vehicles can't go.

Activity 1: exploring how we get to school

Part A: introduce the topic

As a whole class group, ask the questions below and capture students' ideas on a whiteboard.

- What does road safety mean to you?
- What are some of the hazards you might come across on your journey to school? For example: uneven surfaces, overgrown trees, no safe place to cross, other cars on the road, cars driving fast, too many cars at the school gate.
- How does your height impact what you can see on your journey to school? For example: if they are a child or in a wheelchair? Can they see around parked cars easily?
- What are all the ways you could come to school instead of going by car?

Part B: explore transport options

Put the students in small groups and give them each one of the following transport topics to focus on as they answer the questions below:

- walking
- cycling
- skateboarding and scootering.

Walking

Ask students to make a list of all the reasons why they might want to walk to school.

For example: to be fit and healthy, to socialise with friends, because it's good for the environment, to lower car congestion outside the school gates.

What are the hazards you might face when you are walking to school?

For example: nowhere to cross the road safely, no footpaths, cars driving fast, dogs off leads.

What would make walking to school safer?

For example: always using pedestrian crossings, traffic islands or traffic lights, walking with others.

What safety equipment, if any, do we need?

For example: light and bright clothing for clear visibility

Cycling

Ask students to make a list of all the reasons why they might want to ride a bike to school.

For example: independence, exercise, because it's cheap on the pocket, to lower car congestion outside the school gates.

What are the hazards you might face when riding your bike to school?

For example: cars driving fast, no cycle lanes or shared pathways, not having the skills to ride bikes safely, not knowing the road rules.

What would make cycling to school safer?

For example: making it so cars can't drive or park at the school gates, lowering the speed limit around your school.

What safety equipment do we need?

For example: bike helmet, a bike in good working order, light and bright clothing, lights on your bike during winter and if riding after sunset.

Skateboarding and scootering

Ask students to make a list of all the reasons why they might want to skateboard or scooter to school.

For example: independence, exercise, because it's cheap on the pocket, to lower car congestion outside the school gates.

What are the hazards you might face when skateboarding or scootering to school?

For example: dogs off leads, nowhere to cross the road safely, no footpaths, high speed limits, cars coming out of driveways.

What would make skateboarding and scootering to school safer?

For example: getting off the skateboard or scooter when crossing roads, always using pedestrian crossings, traffic islands or traffic lights.

What safety equipment do we need?

For example: bike or scooter helmet, light and bright clothing.

Part C: feedback and reflections

Come back together as a group to share findings and compare answers, or have each group make a case for why their mode of transport is the best and present that back to the class.

After hearing each group's feedback, discuss as a class which way they think is safest to get to school – walking, cycling, skateboarding, or scootering. Discuss the reasons for this.

Then discuss which option they think is the riskiest. Explain why.

Activity 2: exploring footpaths and walkways

Design a footpath or walkway to make it easier for an identified group to walk safely.

Discuss the concept of Streets for People:

[Streets for People](#)

Identify someone from your community, for example: the elderly, pre-schoolers, parents, whānau, students, someone in a wheelchair, or someone who is visually impaired.

Think about what that person needs from a footpath so they can use it safely.

Go for a walk to explore the streets around the school as if you were that person.

Consider these questions:

- What might they like and dislike about existing footpaths or walkways that they use, or would like to use, regularly?
- What would improve their experience walking on those footpaths or walkways?
- What makes them feel unsafe when they are walking on a footpath or walkway?
- What makes them feel safe?

Plan a footpath or walkway that would help your person get around safely. Describe the footpath or walkway you are creating. Consider the following:

- What colours and textures does it have?
- How long, wide and steep is it?
- What materials will you use?
- How close is it to traffic on the road?
- Does it connect to other walkways?
- Will you include steps, seats, street art or plants?

Sketch the footpath or walkway and explain how it will make it safer for your person to get around.