



## DIY RSE

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## Do it yourself road safety education

Sustainable practice in early childhood services is a way of life. Recycling, reusing, composting, minimising water, energy and food wastage and nurturing gardens are practices embedded in a quality early childhood curriculum. We increasingly replace more single purpose resources with a wide variety of open-ended materials and 'loose parts'. These daily activities and considerations create wonderful learning opportunities for children

and families and certainly make a difference to each service's footprint on the earth.

The process of creating and using your own road safety education resources provides many valuable cross-curriculum links to the arts, literacy, numeracy and technology. Children can learn more about road safety while actively engaged in creative project work together with educators and families.

### In this Gazette we explore:

- how road safety education can link with your service's commitment to environmentally responsible practice
- ideas for creating handmade road safety education resources
- how gathering and using loose parts in road safety education projects can engage children and families in learning more about the Key Road Safety Messages
- how children's sense of agency and connectedness to their community can be promoted through hands-on road safety learning experiences.



### About our latest music book:

We're delighted to include a copy of our latest *Kids and Traffic* book 'Music for Road Safety Education'! It's packed with great ideas for using music in your ongoing road safety education program for children and families. It also includes suggestions for DIY percussion instruments and other creative experiences to accompany our road safety songs. We hope you enjoy it!

**A message from Mrs Linda Hurley, teacher, music lover, inspiring advocate for Australia to become a singing nation and wife of His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd), Governor of NSW:**

*"Singing is an engaging and happy way for children from all cultural backgrounds to learn. I thank the Kids and Traffic Early Childhood Road Safety Education Program for this latest publication, which is bound to become an important and much-loved book in the lives of young children, their families, teachers and communities. Congratulations! Now let's sing!"*



# Gazette Do it yourself road safety education

## DIY instrument-making at Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children - Hunter Preschool

Educators planned experiences to combine children's love of construction, music and singing with road safety education. Educators provided a variety of reclaimed materials such as empty tins and jars and other loose parts including pop sticks, grains and lids for children to make instruments.

As they made their instruments, children explored the unique quality of sound, called 'timbre' (pr. tam-ber). They focused on how these sound qualities could enhance road safety songs. Shakers made with dried chickpeas in paper cups sounded like heavy trucks driving over a gravel road - a great accompaniment when singing 'Let's Go Driving' (see p. 20 of 'Music for Road Safety Education'). Loose parts, when used in the creation of musical instruments, offer endless opportunities for children to explore and experiment with sounds.

*When children make their own instruments they often have a sense of pride and ownership when using them. Instrument-making can also help build greater understanding about musical concepts and how instruments work – and respect for using them.*



*Ask families to collect recyclable or natural materials. Take an environmentally responsible role in contributing to a sustainable future by finding opportunities to use materials in multiple ways.*



## DIY town-making at Hilltop Childcare Centre - Merrylands

Educators from Hilltop are familiar faces at *Kids and Traffic* professional development workshops. They have a passion for consistently providing quality early childhood road safety education for children and families. A cross-curriculum approach is evident with road safety embedded in music, art, drama, literacy, numeracy and technology experiences. Safe arrivals and departures are a key focus and relating these safe behaviours to families' journeys out and about in the community is central to their program.

Although educators take children on community excursions they wanted to initiate more regular discussions about safe travel with children and families. What better way to do this than making their own mini Merrylands! Using a variety of recyclables and other loose parts, educators and children constructed the childcare centre, school, hospital, library, shops, homes and petrol, police and fire stations. They included local roads, traffic lights, pedestrian crossings and little people and vehicles in their display.



Educators invited families to a 'Road Safety Gallery Day' to showcase their comprehensive road safety education program and amazing construction project. It was a great opportunity for educators, children and families to talk about safe behaviours through role playing with the characters in their mini Merrylands.



*Asma documented the road safety projects she worked on with Kids and Traffic as Teacher Identified Professional Development (TIPD) for NESAT teacher accreditation. To find out more about how we can support TIPD, contact us.*

## DIY map-making and construction at Little Coasties Kindergarten - Green Point

As part of their commitment to sustainable practice, educators regularly ask families to bring in recyclable materials for children to use in creative play. Educators thoughtfully incorporated some of these into a long-term project focused on road safety in their local community.

Along with recyclables, families shared photos of places they travelled to in their community: library, dentist, post office, shops, churches, schools and restaurants. Children located these landmarks printed on satellite maps. They talked about familiar roads, signs and buildings and how they crossed roads safely. They also drew pictures of themselves walking safely by holding a grown-up's hand.



*Poppy finds the roundabout and road on the printed satellite map that she included in her safe travel drawing.*



Children glued their drawings, photos of local landmarks and road signs on different sized boxes and used these to make a 3D map. Children arranged their box buildings around roads, roundabouts and crossings made from black and white cardboard. Discussion focused on where particular roads, buildings and crossings were positioned using the maps as a guide. This construction experience supported problem-solving skills, cooperation and early numeracy understandings such as spatial awareness and measurement. The children's sense of connectedness to their community was evident through these creative road safety learning experiences.

Children pasted photos of themselves holding hands with a grown-up onto plastic bottles. As children moved these around town, educators asked questions such as, "What else could you hold onto to keep close to a grown-up if you can't hold their hand?" Exploring ideas together helped develop children's awareness of why safe travel practices are important and how these can prevent injuries when they're out and about in the road traffic environment.



*An animation app was used to make a short video of the children moving the bottle people around the 3D town.*

The stories we've shared demonstrate some of the ways 'loose parts' are used to engage children in creative, inexpensive and imaginative road safety experiences.

What other materials could you collect and repurpose for use in your road safety program?

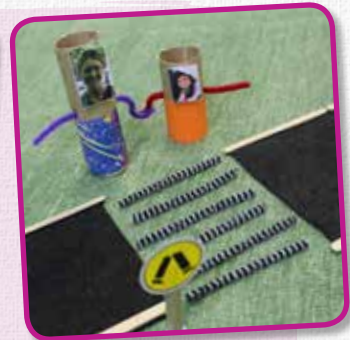
Collections of materials such as twigs, paddle pop and match sticks, rocks, glass pebbles and cardboard cylinders can create interesting resources for road safety education. Children and educators can engage in road safety learning through hands on experiences that incorporate visual arts, design and storytelling as well as numeracy concepts around counting, spatial awareness, directionality and symmetry. Collecting materials for DIY RSE projects is a good way to share Key Road Safety Messages with families – explaining intentions for use of materials, sharing the creative process and displaying children's work.



Encourage families to bring in loose parts to add to your collections.



Wooden dolly pegs, lids, corks and cardboard cylinders are great for making people and puppets. Twist pipe cleaners to show adults and children holding hands. Children can stick photos of their faces and their parent's faces to the figures 'holding hands'.



Engaging hands-on experiences can provide opportunities for educators to *Talk Traffic* with young travellers! Re-use large cardboard boxes and coloured paper to create pretend vehicles with children. Include the *Kids and Traffic* seatbelts or make your own from old black stockings to help promote the Key Passenger Safety Message 'Always Buckle up Safely'.

Food containers, can have a second life when made into pretend helmets.



Recycled and natural materials provide a different way for children to create road safety scenes. Recycled frames provide a 'canvas' for children's creations or can be used to display their artwork.

