

Bassendean Street Play Project



Children's perspectives on road safety to
increase street play (Adult version)



Acknowledge country

The Valuing Children Initiative acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of this country and its waters, particularly the Whadjuk Noongar people whose boodja we meet and work on. We wish to pay respect to the Elders past, present and emerging, particularly our young people and future decision makers.

Acknowledge Children

The Valuing Children Initiative acknowledges the rights of all koolankas (children) and endorses the United Nations Conventions of the Rights of the Child.

We say to all children: that you matter and you are valued.

The Valuing Children Initiative

The Valuing Children Initiative is dedicated to changing societal attitudes so that all children and young people are valued and their needs are the first priority for every Australian. We stand up for children's rights, voices and their place in decision-making in the community as standard practice in community, government, business and the corporate sector. We do this, through advocacy, research, workshops and training, campaigning and partnerships to effect meaningful change. We collaborate with stakeholders, policymakers, and like-minded organisations to create a collective positive impact on child well-being. Despite the abundance of knowledge and resources, we continue to witness poor outcomes for children and young people due to this lack of prioritisation.

Streets Alive Project and Town of Bassendean grant funding

The Valuing Children Initiative worked in collaboration with Hello Basso and Eden Hill CAN Town Teams, thanks to grants from the Streets Alive Project and the Town of Bassendean. Streets Alive is community-led funding program delivered by [Town Team Movement](#) in partnership with [Main Roads WA](#) and the [Western Australian Local Government Association \(WALGA\)](#) for collaborative projects that improve the safety of WA local roads by making them more vibrant and people-friendly. We chose to gather the voice of children and young people for this project.

Bassendean Street Play Project

The communities of Bassendean and Eden Hill, both in the Town of Bassendean local government boundary came together to deliver two street parties and children's engagement workshops on road safety. The workshops captured children's ideas on what they think will make the streets in their local neighbourhood safe for them to play. This report is for local or state government bodies to understand the views of children and to create opportunities for children to play safely outside, on their streets and in their own community without expensive and onerous barriers to their play. This projects demonstrates to the children and the community what closing the road feels like and the safety it provides, so they feel confident to continue to play outside on their streets.

Children have a right to play!



Our communities have become car dominated, decreasing the level of ownership and 'street play' for children.

Research shows that children are playing less on our streets because of a lack of obvious safety measures coupled with driver's attitudes that they 'own' the road. This means children ride their bikes or play in our streets less resulting in increased time indoors and isolated from the local community. Play elements that invite children and are obvious to drivers can change these attitudes.

While some people already informally close their roads with makeshift barriers like bins or cones, it is not legal and cars drive straight through, creating confusion about road safety between drivers and children.

This makes it dangerous for children to play games such as soccer, cricket or basketball and have to move on and off the road to play.

In a survey for this project, Bassendean parents wanted their children to get off screens (91%) and for more outdoor space for games (76%). This aligns with the Australian Institute of Family Studies research which found that 'the majority of Australian parents (80%) believe children should spend more time outdoors (RCHNCHP, 2023).

The Bassendean community said traffic (90%), 'stranger danger' (52%) and lack of supervision from parents 40% were the greatest risks to children being able to play and socialise on neighbourhood streets.

Without clear State and Local government laws and policies, our children will continue to miss out on the time honoured joy of outdoor play, right outside their houses. This report provides the answers, directly from the children themselves to shift the balance back to safety for children to play in our streets.



United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The **UNCRC** is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history, with Australia signing on in 1990. Under article 31, children have a right to **"rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts"**.

Child Safety on our roads

Children are among our most at risk road users because they:

- Cannot see over or around parked cars, nor are they easily seen by drivers.
- Have difficulty telling which direction sounds are coming from.
- Have trouble judging the speed and distance of vehicles.
- May behave differently when they are out with other children.

**250 WA children
were injured or
killed by cars
between
2020 and 2024**

'Road Safety Commission website'

Main Roads data

The children have spoken...

VCI surveyed 81 children directly, via their parents and local schools, about what they wanted at a street party, these responses helped the Town Teams plan their parties.

Children surveyed told us they like paint balling, street art and water balloons, stalls where they could sell food and games. They want outdoor cinema, gardening, lazer tag, bumper cars, go carts, face paint, live music, dog fashion shows, face paint, scooter race, fairy lights, dancing, pot plant growing, talent show, bouncy castle, pokemon cards, toy stalls, soccer, horses for free, cricket, giant chess board, inflatable waterslide, a skatepark clinic, a swimming pool and a colour fun run.

What would you like to play with at a street party? (circle as many as you like)



Other ideas creating, crafts, carnivals, pet parade,

What should adults do to help you feel safe and be safe at a street party?

Give us the freedom to make mistakes
by ourselves, Road safety.



"Idk? Have more around to keep us safe."

"Block the roads."

"Help children who need help."

"No mean children."

"Have an enclosed area that cars can't come."

"Get a stop guard."

"To make me feel safe and let me have fun."

"Parents stay near."

"Bring their pets (on leads)."

"Guard the area, block the street for cars."

"Feel involved and helpful."

"By having a stop sign and stand in with the children."

"Supervise children and never leave a child alone without supervision."

"Put cones for cars not go there."

"No violence."

"Make sure no cars will be very close to the street."

"Ask if they are having a good time."

Thank you to St Michael's PS and all the children who filled in the survey.

The children want to party...safely

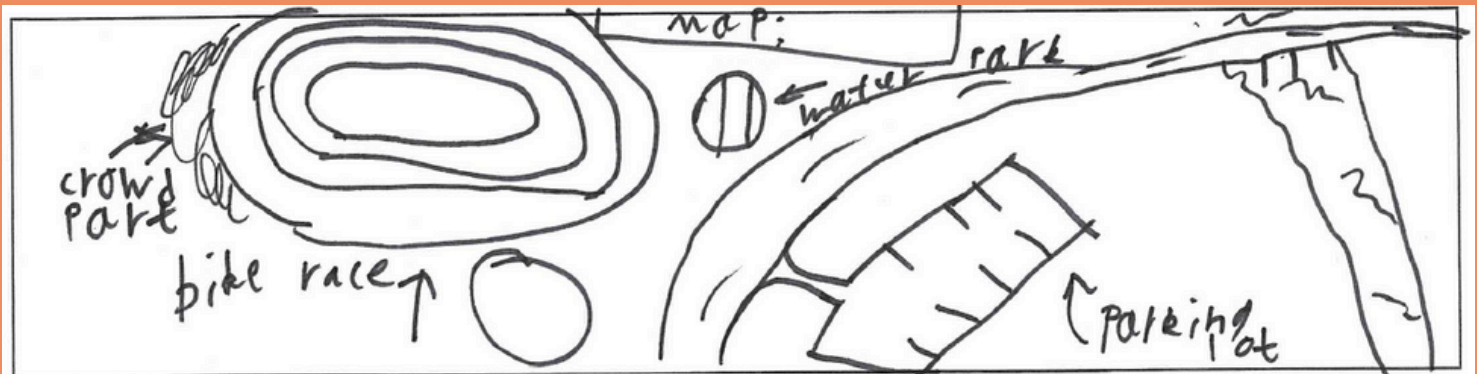
What should adults do to help you feel safe and be safe at a street party?

Block off the road.

I'm not getting run over.

Is there anything else you want to tell us? (answer in words and/or pictures)

To make this more enjoyable for kids



What should adults do to help you feel safe and be safe at a street party?

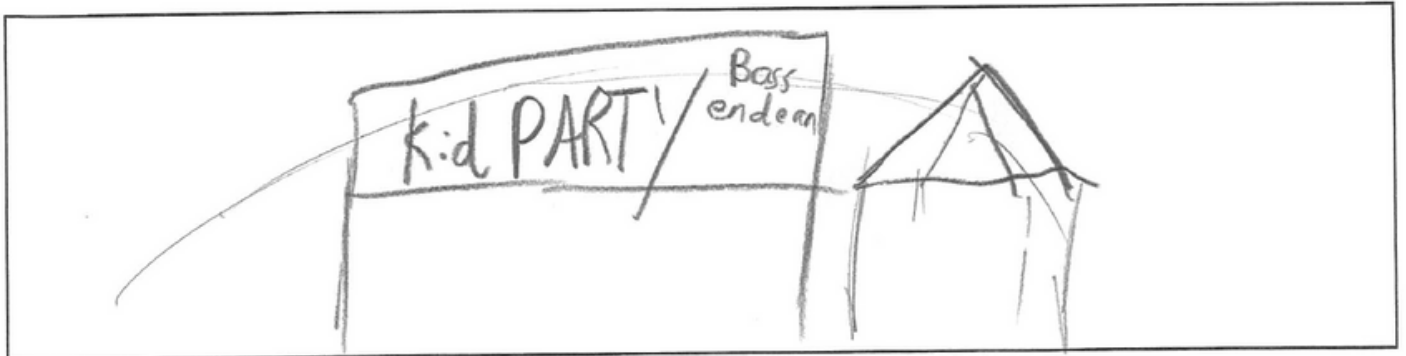
Adults to block the street for us.

Is there anything else you want to tell us? (answer in words and/or pictures)

Kids could make a club and raise money for charity

What should adults do to help you feel safe and be safe at a street party?

Make sure all the activities are safe and everyone feels safe



What adults told us....

Hello Basso surveyed 91 adults and asked about their support for street play. Respondents said less time on screens and more opportunities to connect with the community as the key reasons why they supported street play but said injury from car traffic as a major concern. (Respondents chose more than one answer).

What do you think are some of the risks of being to play/socialise on neighbourhood streets?

- ✓ 90% Injury from car traffic
- ✓ 52% Stranger danger
- ✓ 40% Lack of supervision
- ✓ 22% Minimal Risk
- ✓ 8% Falling off bike/skateboard

Why can't children just go down to their local park?

The Hello Basso survey found 86.8% of respondents said they wanted more opportunities to connect, and 47.3% said street play and parties was a deterrent for anti-social behaviour.

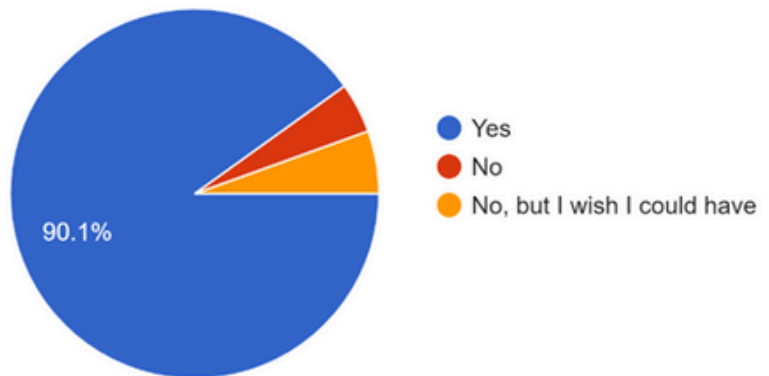
"Absolutely love street play, my kids play out the front a lot and have heaps of friends up and down the street and it is the greatest thing ever!"

"I feel that the younger generations need the type of resilience, socialisation skills and self-growth that comes from active play in their local environment."

What do you think are some of the benefits of being able to play/socialise on neighbourhood streets?

- ✓ 83% Less time on screens indoors
- ✓ 79% More opportunities to connect
- ✓ 69% More outdoor space for games
- ✓ 44% Shared supervision of children
- ✓ 43% Deterrent for anti-social behavior

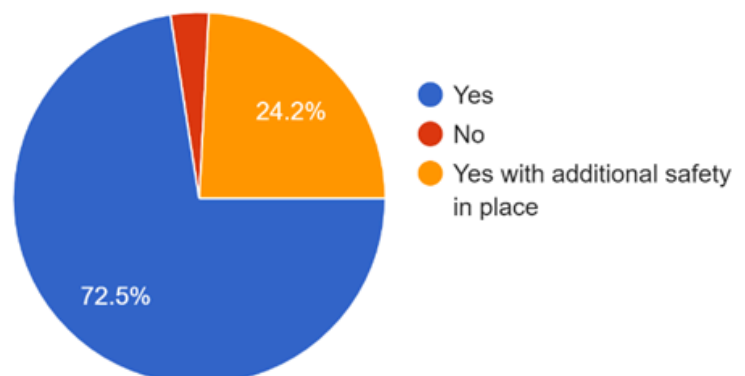
When you were a child, did you play on the neighbourhood streets?



If yes, what types of games did you play?

- ✓ 85% Bikes, skateboards
- ✓ 52% Cricket and other ball sports
- ✓ 46% Chasey
- ✓ 40% Chalk on the road
- ✓ 38% Street parties with neighbours
- ✓ 37% Hopscotch
- ✓ 21% Lemonade stand

Would you support a project to incorporate feedback from children to access neighbourhood streets in Bassendean?



Child Advisory Workshops

VCI ran two child advisory workshops with 12 children in Eden Hill and 20 children in Bassendean an hour before their street parties. Parents registered their children for the workshop online and participants were aged from 1 to 12 years old. The dates of the parties were:

10-12pm October 19, 2024

Whitfield St, Bassendean

3-6pm February 22, 2025

Watkins St, Eden Hill

Children and their parents were asked to sit in a yarning circle and everyone participated in an acknowledgement of country. We guided children and parents through a written consent process, where both children (of writing age) and their parents recorded their consent to have their ideas recorded and published. Children wore VCI-branded 'I'm a child expert, ask me!' fluorescent vests for visibility and were then asked a number of questions about road safety as a group. Parents accompanied their children during the workshop, ensuring their children were in their duty of care at all times. We all then walked around where we recorded everyone's observations by drawing or writing on a clipboard and asking questions to prompt further reflection. The group then come back together and transfer their ideas on to a large canvas.

All the child participants will be given a small voucher and gift bag to acknowledge their contribution and time.



What makes children feel safe?

Questions

- ✓ Do you play outside in your street?
- ✓ What does safety look like?
- ✓ What does safety feel like?
- ✓ What and how do you like to play outside in your street?
- ✓ What makes it safe for you to play outside in your street?
- ✓ What would make it more safe for you to play outside in your street?
- ✓ What stops you from playing outside in your street?

How do you know if something feels and looks safe?

The children who participated in the workshops all had experience in trying to work out if it was safe for them to play outside or not. They told us they are wary of cars, strangers and construction, some of the younger children spoke of needing to stay near their parents, while the older children said being around familiar people made them feel safe.

What makes it safe to play outside on your street?

When asked to share what contributes to a sense of safety for children playing outside, two dominant themes emerged:

1. **Supervision:** many children talked about having a parent with them, or in their line of sight, staying close to their own home, lots of people being around, friends also playing outside and not going to a stranger's house.
2. **Traffic:** This was by far the strongest theme, children expressed that cars driving slowly is the single most important thing that makes it safe for them to play outside.

What does safety mean?

'People aren't yelling.'

What does safety look like?

'No cars driving around, nothing unusual, more people makes me feel more safe.'

What makes it safe to play outside?

'No cars, friends outside, nothing slippery, shade.'

What stops you from playing outside?

'People speeding, people doing wheelies on their bikes, heavy rain.'

What would make it easier to play outside?

'No glass, less mosquitos, people going the speed limit, no bees and hornets and stuff.'



What the children Told Us

What do you like to play outside on your street?

The children identified a range of activities they like to play outside, while bike riding, soccer, scooter riding and skateboarding were the most popular. Other activities included; mulberry picking, gymnastics, roller blading, monkey bars, trampoline, chalk drawing, hide & seek, basketball, AFL, netball, hopscotch and cricket, with one child telling us they like to play “any sort of game with other children of all ages!”



What stops you from playing outside on your street?

The children were able to identify lots of factors that stop them from going outside, in three themes:

Traffic: Many children spoke of the experience of witnessing cars speeding on their street.

People: Some children talked about not knowing their neighbours, and being worried about “strangers”, “scary people” and “unsafe people” and people doing wheelies on their bikes.

Environment: children named big dogs, dog poo, rubbish, mosquitos, rain, bees, magpies, steep hills, lack of shade and lack of footpaths as environmental factors in their neighbourhood that stop them from playing outside.

What would make it more safe for you to play outside on your street?

The children had lots of words of wisdom for the adults in their community, in four themes:

Traffic: Almost all of the children told us loudly and clearly that they want adults to **SLOW DOWN** when driving. Some asked for lower speed limits, more signage, and more police to check for speeding. The children want drivers to give way to pedestrians and take greater care and look out for them.

Space: Some of the children said they’d like more space to move, more ovals or parks near their home, footpaths on both sides of the street and more bike paths.

Environment: Children told us they wanted more shady trees, less rubbish (including broken glass and dog poo), less mosquitos and bees.

Community: The children expressed an appreciation for their community and wanted to be able to feel like all the adults in their community were looking out for and supervising the children so that groups of children could come together.

Street Party Time: Bassendean

Both events transformed two quiet residential streets into a vibrant play space, with children running their own stalls, families gathering on front lawns, and the community coming together to support child-led change.

The Bassendean party saw hundreds of people attend, grabbing a free sausage sizzle from the men's shed, buy toys, books, drinks and food from the stalls and play on their scooters, bikes and games they brought along with them.

All the stalls were created and run by the children, selling Pokémon cards, homemade dogs biscuits, homemade jewellery, cakes, art, lemonade, second hand books, beading and clay animals and dinosaurs. They all made money, some \$80 – one child \$250! Activities included face painting, bubbles, giant games, Men's shed wood carving and pot plant making.



Street Party Time: Eden Hill

The Eden Hill party was beautifully hosted by Eden Hill CAN who ran the sausage sizzle for the community. Children made their own art including intricate dinosaur figures and sold homemade treats like honey joys and jam. Neighbours met each other for the first time and brought their chairs out. A couple mended and serviced bikes, a green strip for a cricket pitch was well used while the children played basketball all afternoon.

"I have very fond memories of street play and think it's a shame kids today are missing out."

"I like the idea that the streets can be shared with children, pedestrians, bicycles and not just cars. Cars speeding in built up areas upsets and frustrates me. Any project that can make streets safer and more people friendly gets my vote."



Safety and compliance

Traffic Management

As a requirement by the Local Government authority and Main Roads, sections of the road were closed off, and traffic management was contracted. The cost for traffic management was just under \$3000 for the two parties. The process for approval for the first party in October took five weeks.

Insurance

Town Team Hello Basso used the Town of Bassendean Not For Profit Local Community Insurance, which includes coverage for public liability, products liability for any issues with products sold or given away, and personal accident coverage for our volunteers. Eden Hill CAN also had their own liability insurance.

Working with Children Checks

VCI facilitators possess Working With Children Checks, have a solid understanding of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the UN Rights of the Child, and skills in working with children.

Police approval

We were advised to submit an events form to the Police, however when we went to pay the fee at the Kiara Police station, they had no code to receive the fee. This process still remains unknown.

Street Play Policy

From the very beginning it was not very clear what the process was to hold a formal street party in the Town of Bassendean. The staff were extremely helpful, however, a Street Play Policy adopted by Council and posted on the website about the process in Bassendean would assist.

Our call for no red tape!

Ultimately, the goal is to remove the need for expensive traffic management and provide clarity for people to have informal parties, with the use of cones or bins to block the roads and keep children safe.

A Street Play policy must insist that children have the right to play on the street and not feel unsafe because of traffic. This must include a community education program.



Who is doing Street Play?

1000 Play Streets is a movement for Australians to reclaim their quiet residential streets as places for neighbours of all ages to connect and play, to create stronger and healthier communities.

In Western Australia, three local councils have partnered with the project; City of Canning, City of South Perth and City of Vincent. A Toolkit has been developed to assist communities to hold their street party and any local government can join the movement.

With support from the Australian Government Australian Sport Commission, the Government of South Australia and La Trobe University, the movement has strong Federal Government support backed by research.

The 1000 Play Street reasoning for street play, as opposed to going to playing at a park, align with the views from the Bassendean community:

- Connect neighbours who live near one another to build social connection, feelings of belonging and improve mental wellbeing. Our streets are the obvious place to do this, as our streets are the shared community spaces in front of our homes.
- Backyards are shrinking as our density of living continues to increase, which means less space for outside play around homes.
- Not everyone has easy access to local parks and not every parent has the time or opportunity to transport their child to the local park.

Fremantle Street Party policy

The City covers a street party's traffic management and road closure, and public liability insurance costs for a four-hour event only. Community still has to apply to the council and the wait time is at least eight weeks prior to the event.

The Fremantle Street Party policy and toolkit has a few minor barriers removed but is otherwise the same in terms of State Government regulations for traffic management.



Street Play in WA (and beyond)

Play isn't just fun, it is essential for children's development. It builds confidence, strengthens friendships, and encourages independence. However, many children today don't have the same freedom to play in their neighbourhoods as previous generations did. Speeding traffic, lack of safe crossings and an attitude that driver's own the road, mean children are spending less time playing in our streets. Through street play we can empower children to play together, share their lives, connect and increase their overall wellbeing.

Article 12 of the rights of the child states that **“the child who is capable of forming his or her own views has the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.”**

This project has given children and young people a loud voice about road safety and what makes them feel safe to play in our streets. We thank every single person under the age of 18 who contributed their views.

The information in this report will be used to advocate for less red tape to hold informal street parties at little to no cost so our children and play safely in their street.

We at the Valuing Children Initiative asked and listened, now we are asking that all WA local government councils and the State Government come together and listen too, and importantly, take action.



Appendix



Bassoe Street Party Kids Survey

My name is _____ I am _____ years old

We want you to help us plan a street party in your **neighbourhood**

What activities would you like to **be at** us for you at a street party? (Circle as many as you like)

carving, games with other kids, ways to meet **neighbours**, meet adults, **play** for you to tell things

Other ideas: _____

What would you like to play with at a street party? (Circle as many as you like)

Other ideas: _____

What should adults **do** to help you feel safe and be safe at a street party?

Is there anything else you want to tell us? (write in words and/or pictures)

Please scan completed survey & e-mail it to: info@valuingchildren.com.au

What does safety feel like?

What does safety look like?

What and how do you like to play outside in your street?

What makes it safe for you to play outside in your street?

What would make it more safe for you to play outside in your street?

Do you play outside in your street?

This is the land, this is the sky, here are my friends, and here am I. I'd like to thank the traditional owners of the land we're on today, the Wadjuk Noongar people. We promise to take care of it, every single day!

CHILDREN'S CONSENT FORM

The Valuing Children Initiative would like to hear what you think and to seeking permission from you and your parents and/or guardians to take, record and use your feedback, name, age and photo.

My Name is _____

I am _____ years old

Event title and topic: Bassendean With Road Safety Workshop

The Valuing Children Initiative would like to record the information and feedback you give us and use it in research papers and public documents including media and social media. The Valuing Children Initiative will use your name and age next to your comments unless you say otherwise.

Tick each box if you agree:

☐ I have read the information, and/or it has been explained to me and I am happy to have my ideas recorded for use by the Valuing Children Initiative

☐ I understand I can tell a trusted adult that I want to finish being a part of the event at any time

☐ I give the Valuing Children Initiative permission to use my first name next to my comments

☐ I give the Valuing Children Initiative permission to use my age next to my comments

The Valuing Children Initiative will use photos and videos of participants during events to use in social media, media and other materials like newsletters and reports. The Valuing Children Initiative will use your name and age next to your photos unless you say otherwise.

Tick each box if you agree:

☐ The information has been explained to me and I am happy for my photograph to be taken and used in the way described

☐ I give the Valuing Children Initiative permission to use my first name next to my photographs

☐ I give the Valuing Children Initiative permission to use my age next to my photographs

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Witness Signature: _____

Your consent will be considered current for one year from the date you signed this form. You can withdraw your consent at any time by contacting the Valuing Children Initiative (personnel) or writing a trusted adult to do so at 0222 0244 or emailing info@valuingchildren.com.au

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

I have assessed my child to complete the consent form and give permission for my child to participate in this project. I also understand that:

☐ My child will be discussing their ideas and they could be used by the VCI for reports, research and VCI publications.

☐ My child's ☐ first name ☐ age can be used next to their comments.

☐ My child's ☐ first name ☐ age can be used next to their comments, reports and any VCI publications.

☐ My child's ☐ first name ☐ age can be used next to their photos.

Your name: _____

Your child's name: _____ and age: _____

Relationship to child: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

We would like to send you the finished outcome of this project so you can share your child. Please provide us with an email and/or postal address to send you the information.

Email: _____

Postal address: _____

Your consent will be considered current for one year from the date you signed this form. You can withdraw your consent at any time by contacting the Valuing Children Initiative (personnel) or writing a trusted adult to do so at 0222 0244 or emailing info@valuingchildren.com.au



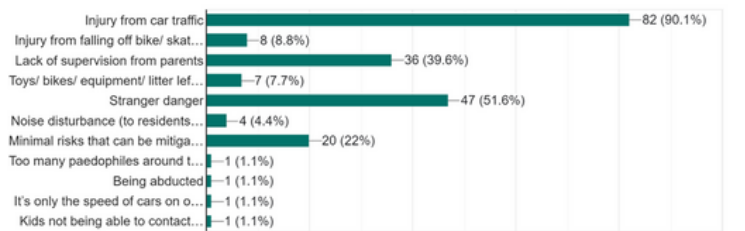
EVENT TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN

Community Street Alive Project

Whitfields Street, Bassendean
19/10/2024
&
Mickleton Terrace, Bassendean
03/11/2024

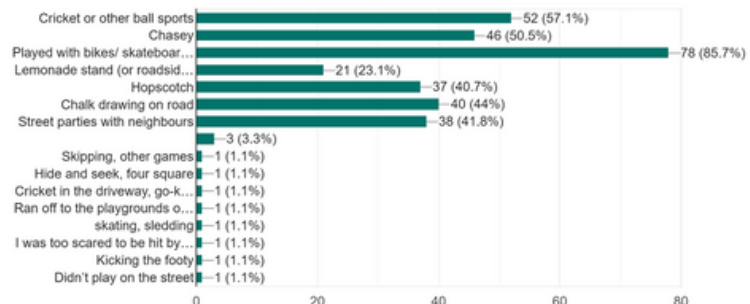
What do you think are some of the risks of being able to play/ socialise on neighbourhood streets?
 (You can choose more than one option)

91 responses



If yes, what types of games did you play? (You can choose more than one option)

91 responses



References and resources
<https://www.marley.com.au/national/western-australia/cars-injure-hundreds-of-wa-children-here-s-a-plan-to-put-that-trend-in-reverse-20250304-p5lgds.html>

For infants, toddlers and preschoolers (birth to 5 years) | Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care

Improving the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children

<https://www.playaustralia.org.au/1000-play-streets>

https://www.playaustralia.org.au/sites/default/files/1000_Play_Streets_Toolkit-FINAL.pdf

<https://www.fremantle.wa.gov.au/street-party>

<https://www.fremantle.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Street%20party%20planning%20kit.pdf>



The Valuing Children Initiative is a project of the not-for-profit organisation, [Centrecare](#).

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