Kids Safer to School

KiSS Guideline

Every day a million kids go to school. How can they reach their school and home safely? Read this guideline!

This Guideline is specially made on behalf of I-ce Interface for Cycling Expertise, for the Locomotives Program

I-ce is an expertise centre with the aim to support capacity building for planning and design of cycling facilities in an urban policy context. I-ce delivers expertise to governments, expert organisations and lobby groups. I-ce facilitates the exchange of experiences and expertise and makes these applicable in a wide different context.

I-ce initiated and coordinates Locomotives, the Low Cost Mobility Initiatives Support Program. The program brings international expertise to local and national initiatives and facilitates exchange between partners in developing countries.

Meet Ruby and Rufus

We like to introduce you to Ruby and Rufus. They both go to school today. In this brochure we follow Ruby and Rufus on their way to school. They live in different countries: India, the Netherlands, South-Africa or maybe in the United States. Different kids, with different backgrounds and different problems in every day life. But every day they both experience problems going to school. How? Follow their roads!

Rufus house

6:30

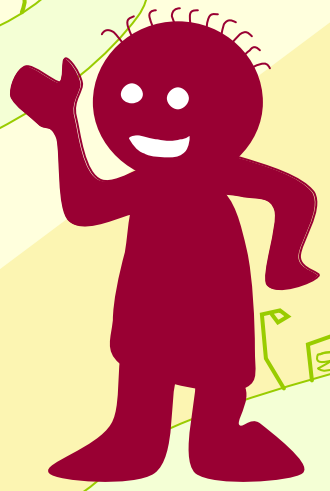
Ruby

Age: 9

Hobbies: playing the piano and watch television

Wants to become: singer or veterinary surgeon

Goes to school: by bike (by car when it's raining)



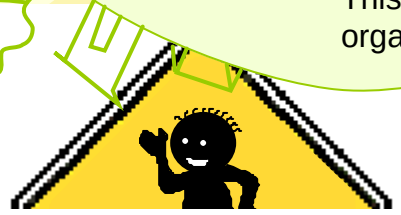
Rufus

Age: 8

Hobbies: soccer

Wants to become: soccer player or salesman

Goes to school: by foot



Ruby and Rufus represent a lot of kids all over the world. In this brochure we present the problems kids can have when they take part of daily traffic and how this effects their daily life. This brochure shows the problems and possible directions, strategies and measures to organise safer routes for kids and improve their independence.

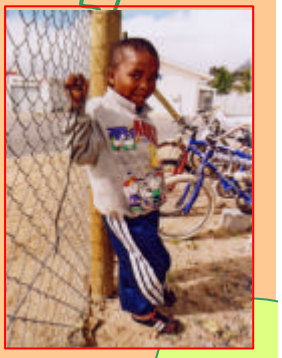
Problems for Kids

Ruby house

Our public spaces are not child-friendly: not in Calcutta, not in Cape Town and not in Castricum. A policy on safer routes to school and more space for kids is lacking. Kids experience more and more problems all over the world:

(Car)Traffic is dangerous

- Most kids go to school on foot. They have to walk miles to reach school. When kids own a bike, their parents think it's too dangerous to use it.
- School routes cross busy roads, where cars drive fast. Every day kids die because of traffic accidents. Traffic is increasing day by day.
- Parents have to accompany kids more often and longer in traffic. In developed countries cars are used to bring children to school. Therefore, kids loose their independence and freedom of movement, which inhibits their development.
- Sports and play are only allowed at adjusted locations and under supervision of grown-ups. No kids-friendly policy is developed yet.



No space for kids

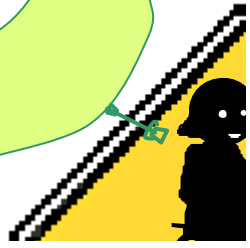
- Cities and neighbourhoods, nor rural areas are designed for kids.
- Playgrounds are sacrificed for buildings, roads and parking areas. And it's simply too dangerous to play outside the house.

Health problems

- In developed countries more and more kids suffer from obesity because of lack of movement.

And Rufus has to deal with more problems: hunger, violence, …….

Kids should have the right to move freely and to use public space

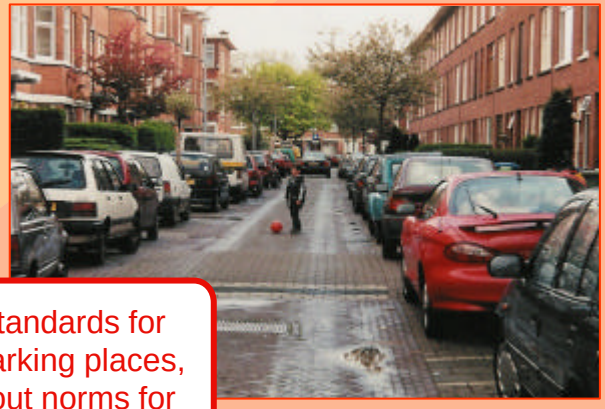


Children are no issue

Unfortunately free movement of children is often not a political issue. Their interests are forgotten when politicians or planners make decisions. Unintentional no doubt, but the consequences for children in planning policies are underestimated or simply overlooked.

In Europe schools are centralized. King-size schools seem to be more efficient, therefore the distance to schools increase. Kids have to be supervised and parents use their cars to bring their kids to school. Result: traffic chaos around the schools.

Child-friendly accessibility of schools, libraries, sports areas and playing grounds is not an issue for planners all over the world.



Cars really dominate our public spaces, driving and parked. Little space is left for kids to develop themselves physically. And yet more space is sacrificed for more buildings, roads and parking places.

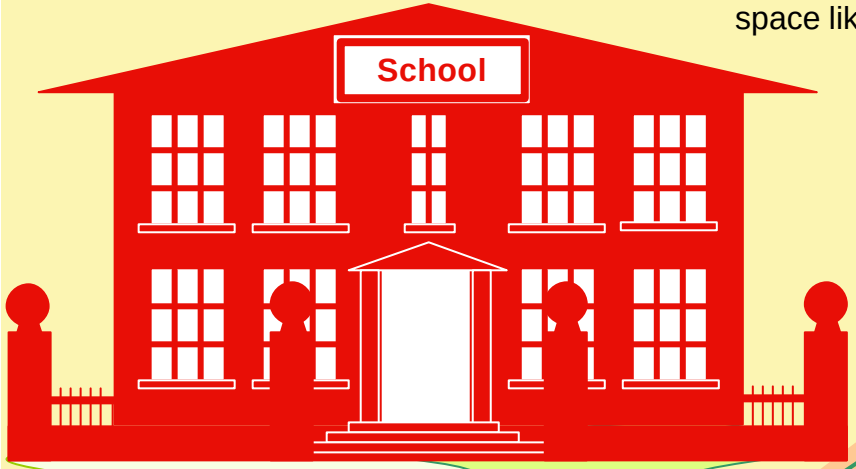
There are standards for green and parking places, but what about norms for playgrounds!

Kids make a forgotten target group in urban space.

8:00

What can we do?

Daily traffic is complex: a lot of parties are involved. The road authorities and road users both can contribute to the improvement of the position of kids in traffic. To start with paying (extra) attention to vulnerable users of public space like kids. How? Some tips and tools:



Tips and Tools:

Urban planning on several levels

- Make the demands of kids part of planning
- Plan school (and other kid-) locations carefully
- Form more and smaller school entities

Transport planning

- Create walk and cycle friendly school routes
- Introduce school zones

Education

- Educate kids, parents and other road users

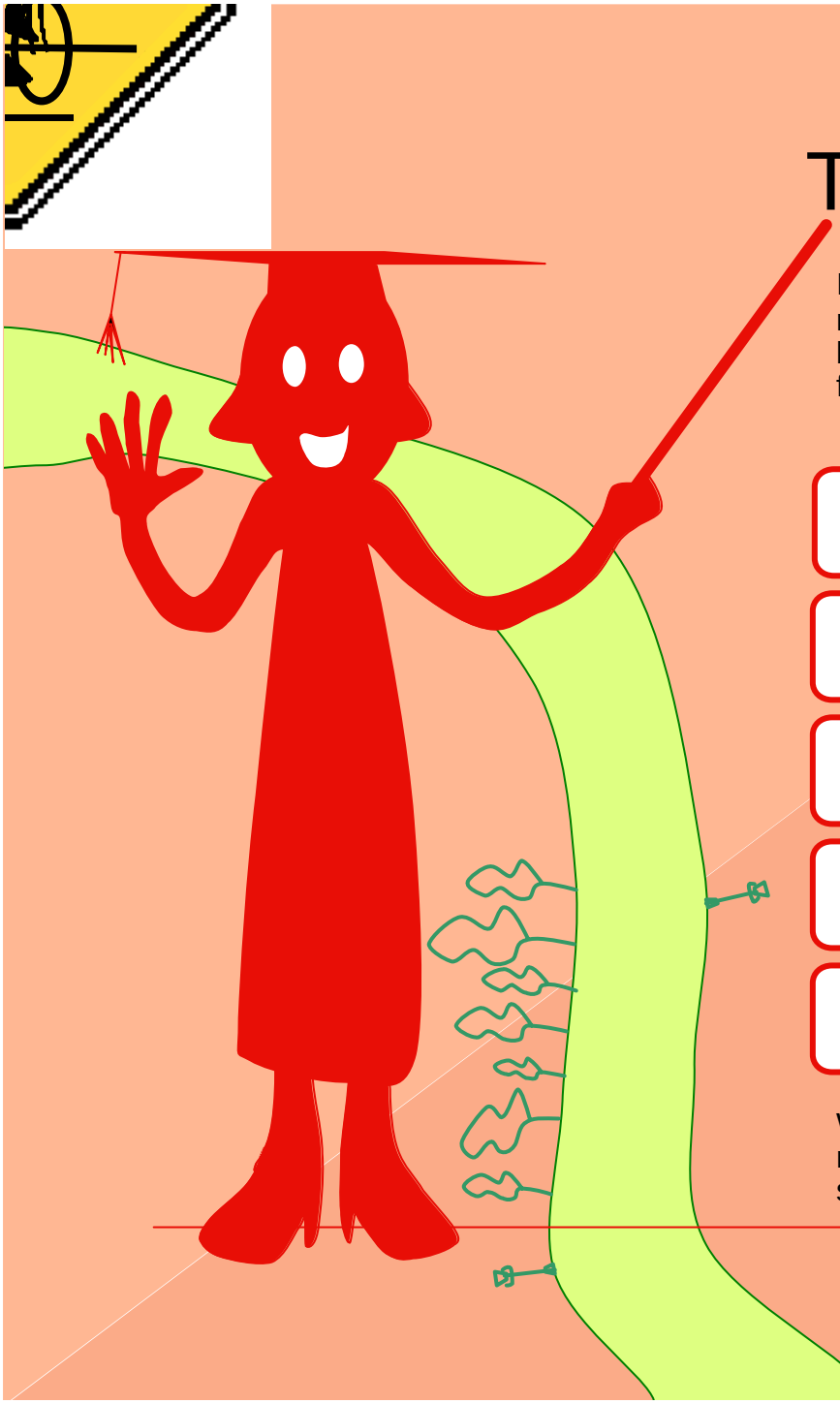
Safety program

- Introduce traffic calming and enforcement

Encouragement and social processes

- Don't forget to work together (school, local authorities, police, parents,....)


Rufus, there you are!
I drove very fast today on my new bike!
I used beautiful, fast cycle paths.
Hi Ruby, I was almost too late!
I left early this morning, it was still dark. The roads were dirty and crowded with cars. And there are no sidewalks, so I had to be very careful. As I passed the factories I saw somebody being robbed. I ran away. Just before reaching school a terrible accident happened……
A car drove through the red light and hit a cyclists. He was very badly injured and an ambulance took him to hospital.
How bad! I also saw the accident. I almost had an accident myself on that spot. I was lucky!
It's real dangerous there. Can't they make it safer?
Maybe. Let's ask our teacher. She probably knows what to do

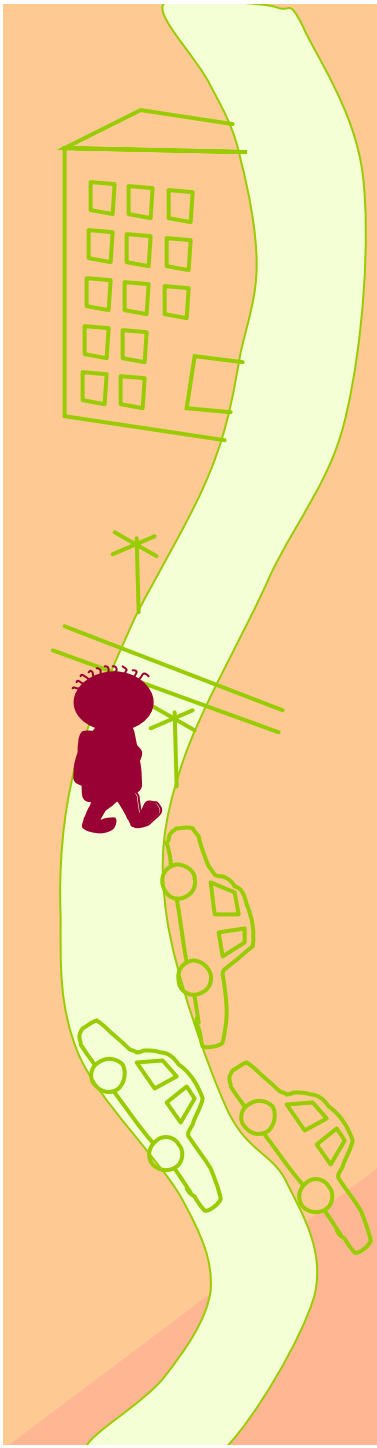


The five E’s

Improving the situation of kids in traffic means combining activities, measures and the encouragement of parties on several areas. A broad and integral approach gives the best results. Try to use the following E’s:

- Engineering
- Education
- Encouragement
- Environment
- Enforcement

While developing, planning and preparing the implementation of measures or activities, apply these kind of measures to improve the safety of our kids.



Engineering

In the field of infrastructure and traffic measures there are a lot of possibilities to improve the traffic safety for kids.

In improving traffic safety around schools the following requirements could be of help:

- ## Reduce speed

  Speeding down by car traffic can be enforced by traffic measures and road design.
  The risk for accidents reduce at lower speed; in case of an accident the impact is minor.
  Introduce 30 km. limits around schools.

- ## Realize bicycle and foot paths. Separate cars and cyclists/pedestrians

  School traffic is concentrated around schools. That leads to traffic chaos and conflicts between cars, cyclists and pedestrians. Kids can not judge the traffic situation. By separating cars from pedestrians and cyclists, dangerous situations can be avoided which results in more safety for kids.

- ## Avoid unpredictable situations. Organize car parking

  The skills and experiences of kids in daily traffic are limited: they are not experienced road users. The school environment should be simple, safe and open. This can be achieved by parking regulation (keep cars at a distance) , speed reduction and traffic circulation measures. This way kids are able to understand traffic situations and to anticipate these situations. Not bad for the other road users as well.....

Car parking regulation directly in front of the school entrance

Separate infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians near the school. Cars move on distance and biking becomes safer and faster!

Speed measures and traffic signs should reduce the speed of car traffic in front of this school.

Education

Education, not only for the children but also for their parents and other road users enhances trafic safety on school routes. It s that everyone is better informed and more aware of each other in traffic. This is a tribute to traffic safety on school routes and school environments. With more knowledge of rules and signs, and learning practical skills, kids can participate more consciously and safely in daily traffic which is good for their development, mentally as well as physically. And moreover, they can participate in daily traffic more independently.

Schools and parents can co-operate in a lot of ways:

Introduce structural education, integrated in school activities plans

Exercise cycle skills in practice on school-yards

Start with young kids: practice skills like crossing a street

Cycle education in class: discuss problems and school routes with the kids themselves.

Parents: please give (your) kids the best example: wait for green!

Stimulate parents to practice with their own kids!

Encouragement

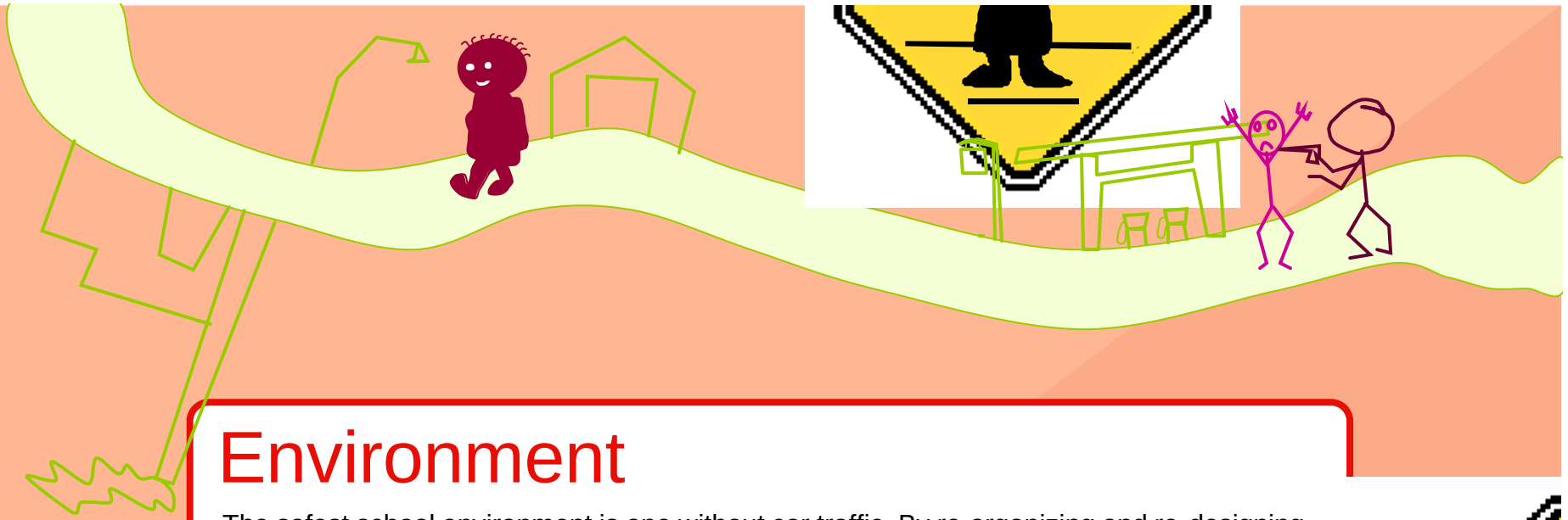
Active involvement of schools, parents, kids, residents and neighbourhoods is absolutely necessary. Key words are awareness, involvement and encouragement. Partners should understand the benefits of measures and actions. But in the end the behaviour of road users define whether it is safe (or not). Communication with partners is necessary to encourage them and to support them to contribute to more safety in traffic.

Form a traffic safety platform or workgroup with the school director, teachers, parents, residents and the police and compose an Action Plan KISS (Kids Safer to School).

Don't forget to inform and involve kids in your project: they are real experts and excellent ambassadors!

Have guts: organize a car-free school day or Traffic Action Week!

Organize an exhibition with drawings, ideas and plans of the kids and invite the press, parents and politicians.



Environment

The safest school environment is one without car traffic. By re-organizing and re-designing space around schools from the point of view of kids traffic safety can be improved strongly.

Return public space to the children

Simple and safe: no cars allowed! And it offers kids extra space to play!

Next best solution: humped zebra crossing

Some years ago: 28 car parking places, now the area is dominated by playing kids!

Safer school routes

Design safe networks for cyclists and pedestrians: give kids a safe way to go to school. Re-design streets so that kids are being separated from car traffic. Link school networks to networks with other important existing or new destinations for kids like playgrounds and sport fields.

Colourful school zone

Enforcement

Despite education or communication, police enforcement is necessary to enforce good behaviour. The police have instruments and status to correct road users.

They can support and co-operate in programs or take actions with schools and local governments, like exercizing technical survey's on school routes, instructions for safety, examinations of children's behaviour, speed controls and ticketing!

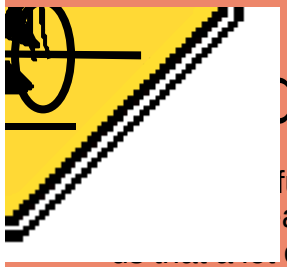
Kids and police work together in speed controls. A few days later: they repeat their controls less conspicuously. Fines are the next measure. The results are being published in school' s journals, flyers and websites.

Enforcement starts with information and making your points clear

Speed reduction measures should be combined with enforcement in school areas

Kids and police discuss with car drivers their behaviour

Traffic safety starts with a safe bike. The police can control the bikes.



ds friendly policy and design is a must!

fus and Ruby all kids want to go to school safely
asure. The number of kids that die in traffic shows
of improvements must be realized.

Would you pick up the handkerchief?

Must kids all over the world wait for active and involved politicians, city planners, transport planners to pick up the handkerchief for them to contribute to safer routes to school, safe school environments or more space to play??

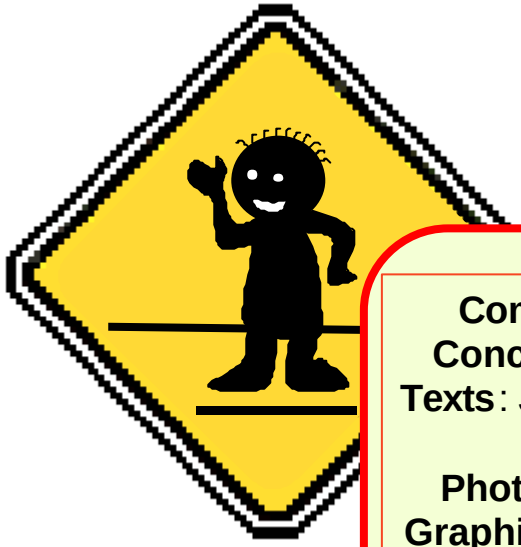
A kids-friendly design has a lot of advantages:

- Kids form the best base for people friendly design: what is good for kids, is good for every one!
- Independence in mobility leads to more education and awareness of the children and it stimulates child development
- A child friendly neighbourhood is attractive for starters and young families
- A neighbourhood with kids is a lively neighbourhood and could form a profile for housing projects
- Economic benefits: this policy will keep more wealthy people into town
- Kids friendly design gives (existing) neighbourhoods a new impulse

KiSS in seven short steps:

1. Make an issue of kids in traffic
2. Visualize the routes kids take to school
3. Analyze dangers and problems on routes to schools
4. Involve parties and work together (local authorities, school, police, parents, neighbourhood)
5. Choose priority points to start with, covering all 5 E's
6. Organise activities to realize selected measures covering all 5 E's
7. Monitor the process and results

Give all kids (guideline) KISSes: Safe routes to school and independence should be a right for children all over the world!!!!



Commissioned by: Roelof Wittink (I-ce)
Concept: Ineke Spapé (SOAB Consultants)
Texts: Jelger de Haas and Ineke Spapé (SOAB Consultants)
Photographs: I-ce and SOAB Consultants
Graphics: Jelger de Haas (SOAB Consultants)
Lay Out: Jelger de Haas (SOAB Consultants) and Maria Augusta Oriana Rodás (I-ce)
www.I-ce.info or www.soab.nl