



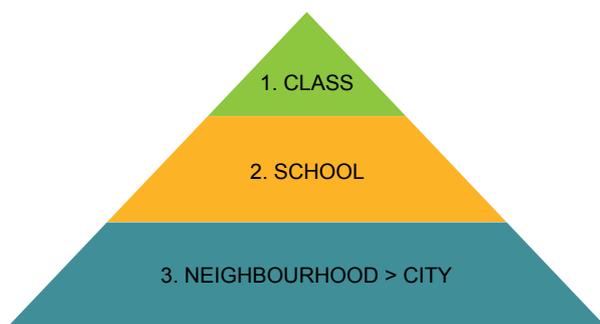
Policy factsheet 1

SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY IN THE CLASSROOM

The Traffic Snake Game (TSG) is a campaign developed to encourage walking and cycling to school, with primary school children, parents and teachers being the main target group.

The basic campaign consists of two campaign weeks where children place dots on a banner every time they walk, cycle, use public transport or carpool to school. The aim of the game is to fill the Traffic Snake banner with dots by the end of the two weeks and reach the school target.

Evidence has shown that the campaign successfully increases sustainable transport modes and reduces CO₂ emissions. To spread this good practice across Europe, the Traffic Snake Game Network was established, which currently consists of national focal points (NFP) from nineteen European countries.



This campaign provides the perfect opportunity to implement travel focused policy measures for the benefit of schools and their local communities. This factsheet focuses on what can be done in the class and in the playground.

Why?

The results of the Traffic Snake Game are more significant if teachers focus on the topic of 'sustainable mobility' in the classroom. We call this the Deluxe version of the campaign. Every participating school is encouraged to set up the 'Deluxe' version. It's also a good way to meet the requirements of the curriculum (maths, physical education, geography, history, reading and writing...etc).

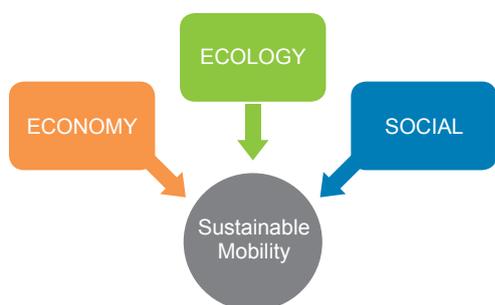
Children gain a range of fundamental road safety skills and need to learn to deploy these skills (detecting the presence of traffic, visual timing judgements, co-ordinating information from different directions etc.). Further, this also includes motoric development, maintaining concentration and developing responsiveness to changing situations. In this factsheet we will give teachers and schools an idea of how to work on sustainable mobility in the classroom.

The
**TRAFFIC SNAKE GAME
NETWORK**

The TRAFFIC SNAKE GAME NETWORK

What is sustainable mobility?

Three aspects form part of a sustainable approach to mobility: economical, ecological and social aspects. Issues to look at in this regard are: affordability, accessibility, safety, comfort, environmental impact, cultural differences etc. By dealing with these different aspects, we teach children that the impact of using sustainable (school) travel modes on e.g. the environment, air quality, congestion levels, safety and quality of life is substantial and that changing travel behaviour is important for us and for future generations. It teaches them that environmental well-being is everyone's responsibility.

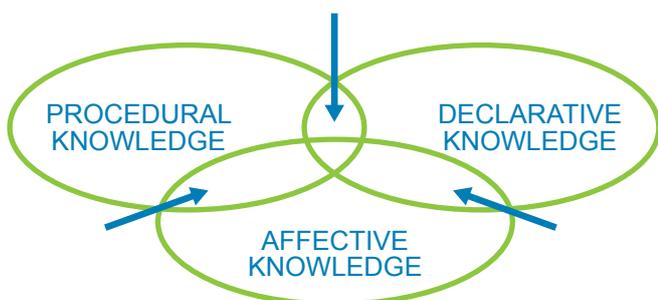


Effectively teaching sustainability

Learning consists of three different aspects:

- Procedural knowledge: Knowing for example that a green light means safe to go.
- Declarative knowledge: Knowing that a green light means safe to go, yet I must first look left, then right, and then left again ==> This is learned from environmental interaction.
- Affective knowledge: Subjective relation to real-life interactions e.g. confidence and faith in riding a bike.

Learning is the INTERACTION that takes place, the complex relationship between these three aspects. Therefore, interaction with real-life, experiences and expectations is crucial in order to obtain the right skills.



Mobility education is consciously thinking of the different modes of transport, their advantages and disadvantages. Learning by doing and learning by imitation are key! This means teachers and most of all parents, have an important role to play.

Traffic and mobility education

Try to include more than the traditional traffic education towards mobility education.

Traditional traffic education

- Focus on procedural knowledge.
- Safety education, no correlation with environment.
- To perceive children as weak traffic participants.
- To focus on safety and the prevention of accidents.
- Focuses on rules and regulations, how to adapt to the system, fear-based, attentivity.
- In class.

Contemporary mobility education

- 3 learning aspects are covered (procedural, declarative & affective knowledge)
- Safety education but also ecological topics, sustainability, autonomy, health
- To have children as active traffic participants
- Children as pedestrians and cyclists
- Child's perspective ≠ versus adult perspective
- From learning in a classroom over a safe and protected environment to learning in real life situations and in real traffic.

Walk and cycle training in three steps

Walking and cycling educational programmes and courses usually consist of two parts: a theory part and – more important – a practical part where participants practise their skills.

In the theory section, participants learn the theory of defensive cycling and staying predictable, basic traffic rules, cycling in different conditions (e.g. cold, rain, darkness), safely transporting things, as well as parking and maintaining their bike.

Once participants are well prepared, the practical element begins. A typical sequence of on-the-bike training follows a three level approach related to the surrounding area and volume of traffic:

1. Walking/cycling in safe surroundings to learn the basic skills of both (e.g. in school playgrounds or parks)
2. First walk or cycle ride on streets with low level of traffic
3. Walking/ cycling on busy streets.

The most important rule here is that children need to gain sufficient motoric cycle skills before you let them cycle on streets in real traffic. It doesn't matter what age the child is. Children need to practise regularly to build confidence, and of course when they cycle for the first time on the streets, they need to be accompanied by someone older with experience.

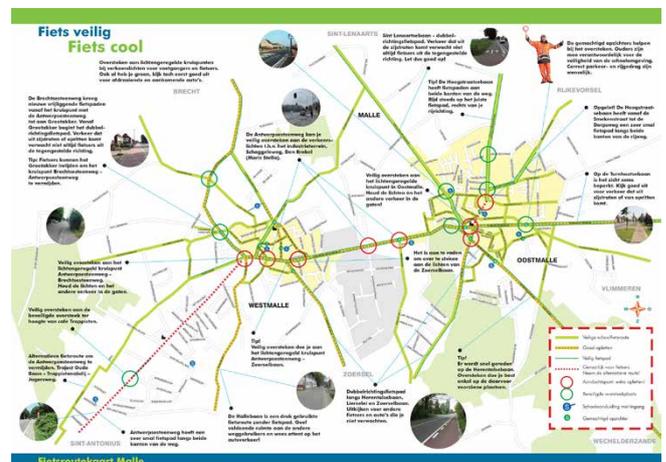


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Ideas for class activities

Research

- Analysis of the school surroundings and creation of a “city map for children”
- Analysis of the impact of traffic on health and the environment
- “Transportation – past and present”: research exercise from literature and the internet, interviews with senior citizens about their journeys to school
- Calculating the school travel footprint.



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Theory

- Lessons about traffic rules and signs
- Police teaching at school
- Lessons on blind spots
- Lessons on different travel modes and the benefits of all the different modes.



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Practice

- Organise walking and cycle training on the school playground and in the school environment (see next chapter).
- School trips together with the police. These trips help children to examine the vicinity of the school for potentially dangerous spots and teach them road safety.
- Organise a walking and/or cycling test and reward pupils with a certificate.
- Bicycle repair workshop.
- Allow children to plan a trip to a destination of their choice but only using public transport. When making the journey, encourage the children to read the timetables etc.

Creativity

- Photo story, painting and writing competition on the topic of “public transport” and/or “cycling”.
- Puppet show or theatre about mobility.
- Role playing different traffic situations.
- Exhibition of children’s drawings on the theme of sustainable mobility.
- Allow children in different groups to test which mode of transport is the fastest to a specified location e.g. to the swimming pool. Incorporating a film exercise can also make this more interesting.
- Discussion with the children on what a world with more or less cars would mean. Let them think about the economical, environmental and social impact this would have. Discuss which is a better scenario.

The issue of “Mobility and Traffic” can be integrated and dealt with in numerous subjects at school – from Biology lessons to Maths up to History and Geography. Improved environmental awareness can be achieved in a number of ways.

More information?

Download the other two TSG Policy factsheets on ‘Mobility management measures for schools’ and ‘Sustainable mobility in school neighbourhoods’ at our website. You can also have a look at the TSG Roadmap: an overall TSG policy guide that outlines the fundamentals of how the campaign can encourage a walking and cycling school policy within the school, around the school and on a city level.



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