

A Playful
Street

Make Your Street A Playful Street



A Simple Guide To Getting Kids
& Community Playing On The Street



Let's keep this simple; all you really need to do is open your front door & let your kids out to play!

But we understand that life can be a little more complicated sometimes & that's why you have this simple guide.



What's A Playful City?

A Playful City is Ireland's first not for profit focused on creating more playful, engaging and inclusive outdoor spaces, with and for communities.

A Playful City is working with you and communities across Ireland to bring Playful Streets to life!

What's A Playful Street?

Playful Streets are a low cost and easy way to turn streets into play spaces, by limiting access to vehicles for a few hours. At Playful Streets children and neighbours can safely play and socialise outside — just like you did when you were young.

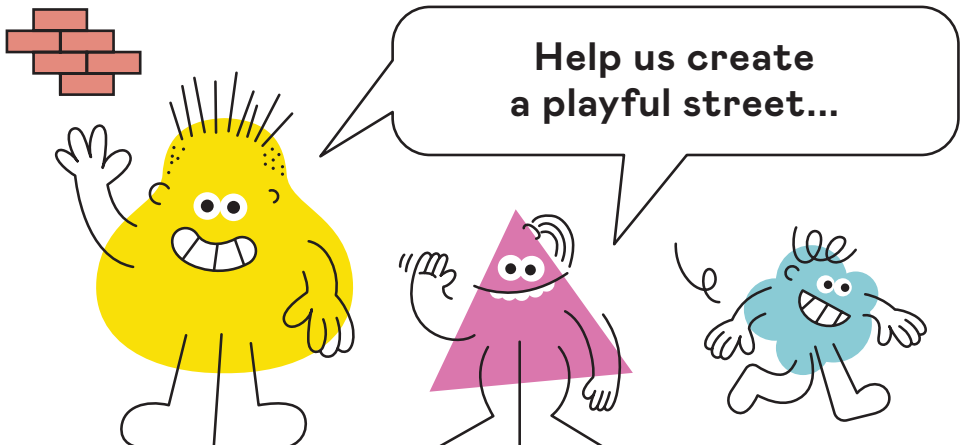
Playful Streets are meant to be simple, you'll find that using your common sense is what you'll need most.

Playful Streets are big or small occasions. They can run for a couple of hours on any day of the week. They can be one-off or regular events ... whatever works for you and your neighbours.

Why is this important?

Children in Ireland are increasingly growing up indoors and moments for communities to gather and get to know each other have become all too infrequent..

Two thirds of Irish children spend more time indoors than prisoners in maximum security prisons.



It's well documented that access to spontaneous free play is essential in developing children's physical, mental and emotional well being, the benefits of which remain throughout their lives.

On top of this, communities are becoming increasingly disconnected as they don't have the same opportunities to meet and mix as they once did.

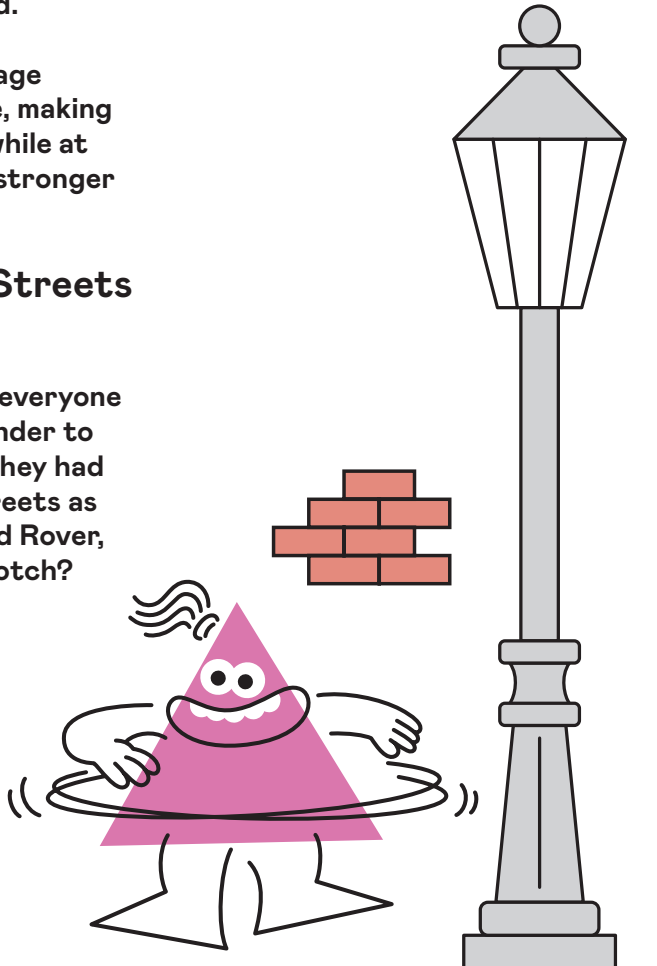
Playful Streets encourage children to play outside, making exercise fun and easy, while at the same time building stronger communities.

Who are Playful Streets for?

Playful Streets are for everyone and often act as a reminder to adults of the freedom they had to play on their own streets as children. Remember Red Rover, Tip the Can and Hopscotch?

Many children today have never heard of lots of these street games. Playful Streets allow people from all ages and backgrounds to teach children the games they used to play.

In this sense, play can bridge gaps, your street feels safer and friendlier and children are more physically active.



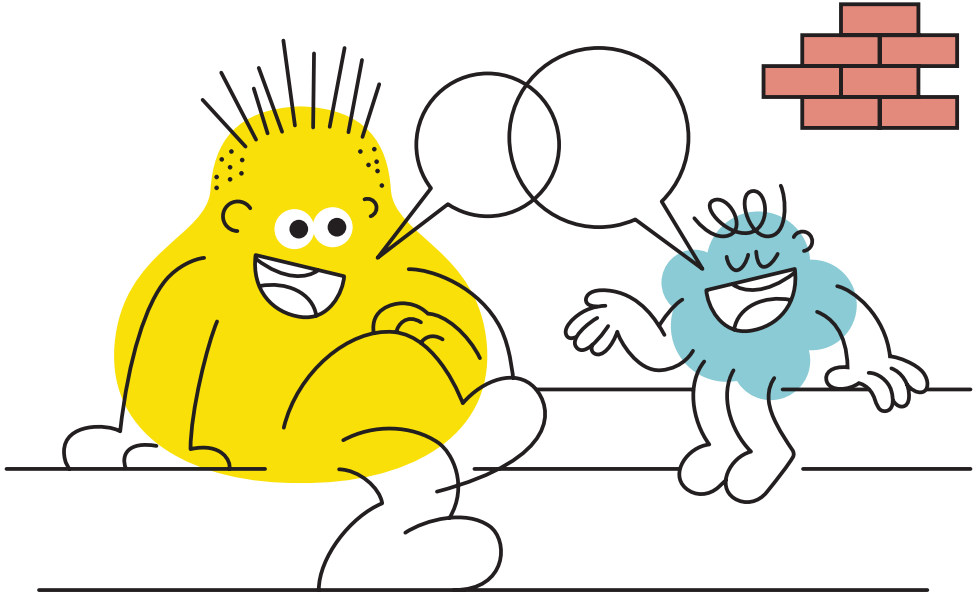
**“Getting
children off
their devices
& making
cities more
playful”**

**The Irish Times
(on the Playful Street initiative)**

A Five Step Guide



1. Get People On Board



Give yourself at least a few weeks to set up your first Playful Street. Make sure at least one other parent, neighbour or family is signed up to help out. It's always good to have a second pair of hands to help, so talk to your friends and neighbours to see who's interested.

Call into your neighbours to let them know your idea. You could set up an online message group to decide which day and time would work best. Once that's

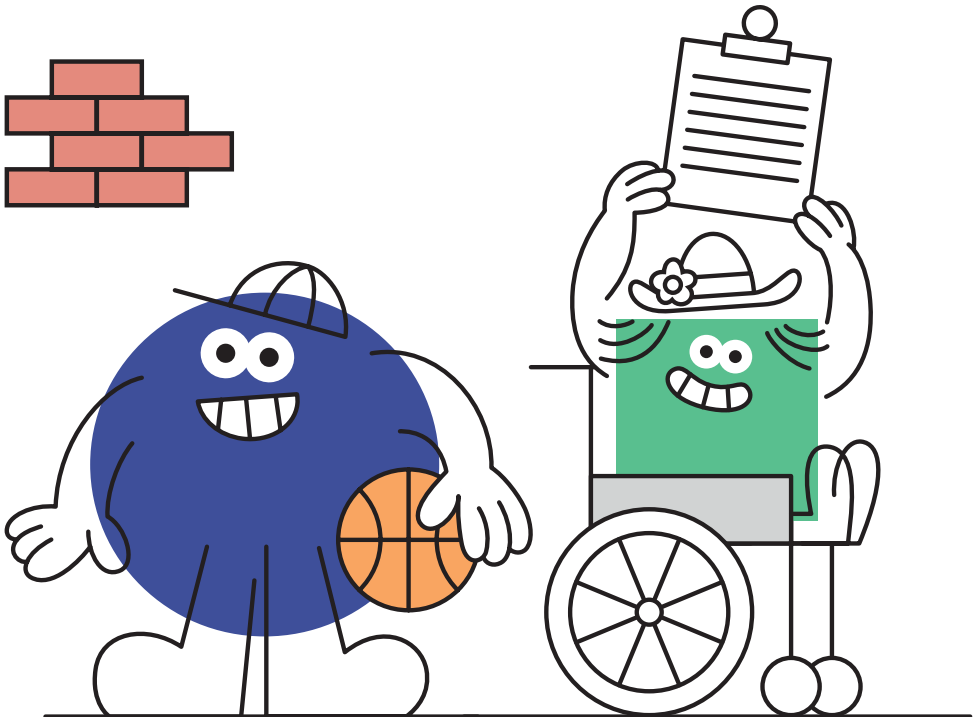
agreed, keep messages to a minimum online and set up a smaller core team to run the event.

Designate a play space on your street. Make sure the area is reasonably traffic free, with few access points and will be welcoming to everyone. If your playful street would work better off the street e.g. in a lane, on a green.. then do what works best for your community. Set your dates, confirm people's roles and move on to step 2.

2. Register your Playful Street

Register your Playful Street with our partners at changex.org and become part of the Playful Street community - you will be inspiring others to follow suit, as well as gaining access to ideas and support through communities who are already registered.

Keep up to date with A Playful City by following us on social media - and remember to share your Playful Street with us!



“The publication of the Playful Street Guide is very much to be welcomed. It will help people to create a fun space in their locality, allowing children enjoy their right to play, the right to express themselves and the right to develop their talents.”

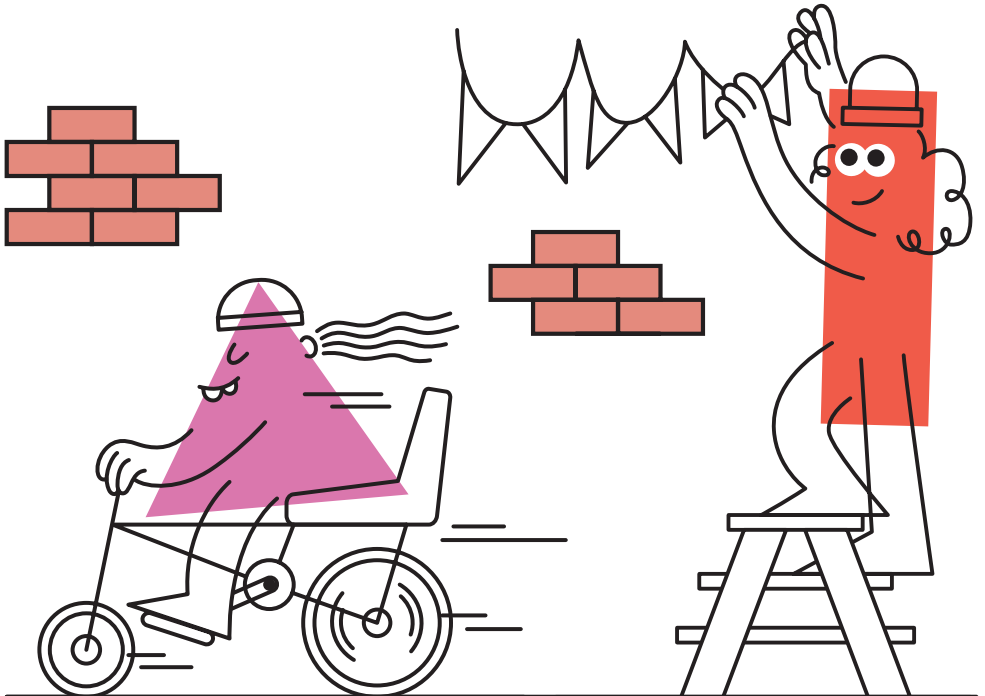
**Dr Niall Muldoon
Ombudsman for Children**

3. Opening your Street to Play

By running your Playful Street you'll be encouraging everyone to respect our streets like we would our homes and ensure everyone feels welcome. Try to generate a sense of shared responsibility for making sure the sessions are safe. Preparation is key!

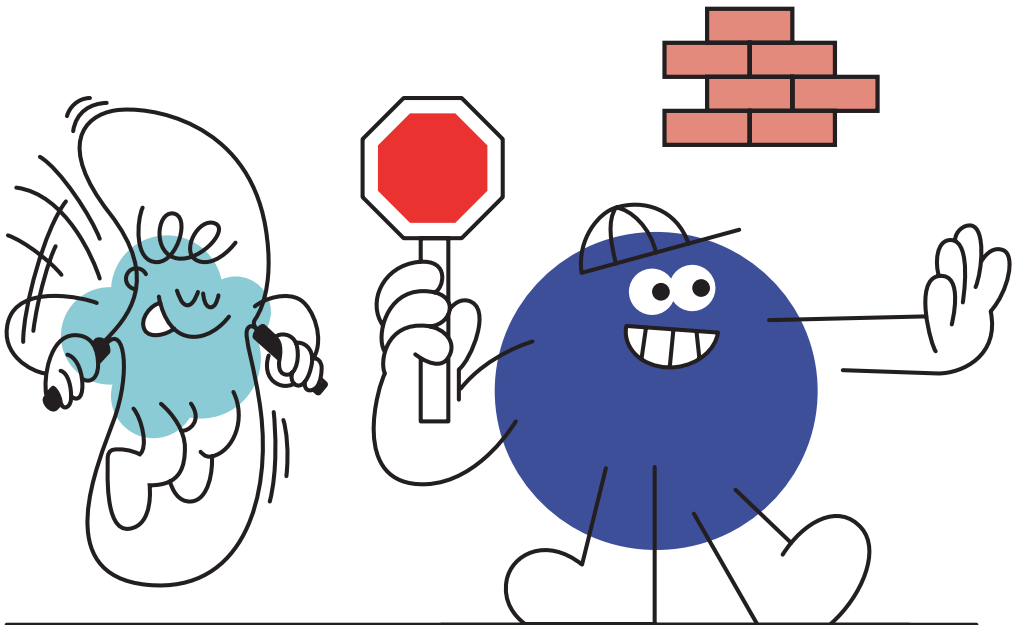
There are a number of practical ways to create a safe and fun space for children to play out on their streets:

- Some people live on quiet streets and won't share the same concerns as others in relation to moving traffic



3. Opening your Street to Play

- You can limit vehicular traffic on your street, without charge, once you have the support of your local community Garda.
- If you have already set up a residents association through your local council, you should be able to limit access to vehicles for a couple of hours with their support.
- If not, get in touch with your local council's community liaison, they will be happy to help you. Remember to talk to them well in advance.

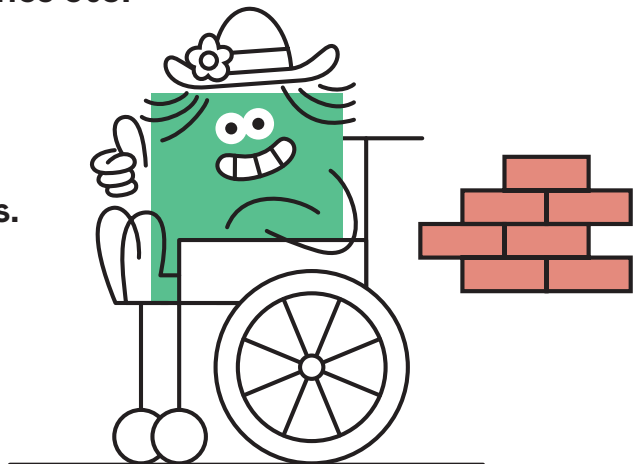


4. Tell Everyone!

Sure it'll be no craic at all if no one knows about it!

Here are some suggestions:

- Call into your neighbours to let them know about your Playful Street. Bring a flyer.
- Social media is a great way to share info and get people excited about your Playful Street.
- Let your inner artist out and design your own invitations! Encourage children to help out with this
- We all have a neighbour who knows everyone - make sure they know about your Playful Street too!
- Poster & flyer your street and all the local schools, businesses, creches etc.
- Let the kids on the street know, they'll tell their parents.



5. Play!

Some quick tips:

- Chalk is always the answer!
- Remember Tip the Can, Kerbs, Red Rover Red Rover? Show the kids the games you used to play...
- Encourage kids to bring out their bikes, balls, scooters, skipping ropes....favourite stick.
- Stand back adults and take some time for yourself, kids are the play experts.
- Hopscotch the whole way up the street!
- For children, sometimes the game is figuring out the game. Leave them at it.
- Fancy dolling the place up? - bunting!

Sure we all know there's no such thing as bad weather in Ireland, all you need is the right gear. Children LOVE the rain, the mud and puddles. Bring the rubber duckies out for a swim in a puddle, make boats with sticks. Wellies and raincoats = hours of fun!



“UNICEF welcomes the publication of the Playful Street Guide. It shows you in simple steps how to take over your streets, making your neighbourhood a fun, safe and imaginative space for children to play. By creating your own playful street, you’ll not only be fulfilling a child’s right to play, you’ll be building a stronger, more inclusive, child-friendly community.”

Vivienne Parry
UNICEF Ireland

Some more detail...

Poster & Flyer Templates

So you can spread the word about your Playful Street through social media and around the neighbourhood.

Please find more info on poster templates here:

So you can spread the word about your Playful Street through social media and around the neighbourhood. Poster and flyer templates are available when you register for free through changex.org/ie/playful-street

Photos

And while you're at it ...

Capture and share all the special moments of your Playful Street, and don't forget to share your story with us so we can help inspire others too!

Photos are a great way to look back and remember the good times, but they also help to get people excited about what you're doing and can inspire others to follow your lead.

Use your social media savvy, share your pics (remember to get permission!) and let others celebrate your day with you.

A simple video of your Playful Street will also help to encourage neighbours to get involved the next time. Be sure to share your video with us!

Stewarding

The job of the steward is very straightforward, but key in fostering a calmer and more caring environment for children to play and socialise on their streets. We have found it's best to ask people directly to steward, rather than just sending out a general request.

Let's acknowledge that children are made "vulnerable" on streets largely due to the attitudes of drivers and the environments that moving traffic creates.

Most neighbours will be happy to park off street for the duration of your Playful Street, however where necessary, stewards are responsible for supervising entry/exit points for vehicles onto the street.

Two stewards should always be positioned at points of access to vehicles. When a vehicle approaches the street they should act as follows.

Signal to the driver to stop and explain to the driver that there is a Playful Street taking place.

- Let the driver know that a steward will walk in front of the vehicle as it moves through the playful street, to ensure the safety of the children on the street.
- Remember: before allowing vehicles to exit or enter, stewards will notify children and adults to move onto the

Some more detail...

footpath as there is a vehicle coming. This is often done through whistles to alert everyone on the street.

- Once everyone is off the street. One steward will walk in front of the car until it is safely off the street.
- The other steward will stay in position at the entry/exit point.
- Once both stewards are back in position, with no other vehicles seeking access/egress...Resume play!
- Be sure to talk to all stewards afterwards, so you can make your Playful Street even better for next time!

Assessing Risks

Assessing risks involves listing any potential risks (e.g. cars leaving the street without warning) and deciding what you can do to reduce that risk.

Once you have done this, bearing in mind there is no such thing as a 'risk-free' environment, it is a good idea to weigh up the overall risk against the potential benefits of going ahead.

Insurance

Many streets don't get insurance, however we would advise you to do whatever you feel is necessary to feel covered. Here are some tips;

Get in touch with your local resident association or with like-minded community groups. They normally have insurance and, if you link in with them and see if they can get involved, they are often happy to include your event under their policy.

Set up a residents association through your local council, this will usually mean events you run will be covered under a policy of insurance held by the Council.

Ask your insurance provider if you can extend your current home insurance to an event – this is generally only a little bit extra.

A Playful Street

Playful Streets are a low cost and easy way to turn streets into play spaces.

At Playful Streets children and neighbours can safely play and socialise outside — just like you did when you were young!

Please register your Play Street on ChangeX.

www.changex.org/ie/playful-street



For more information on
A Playful City
please visit
www.aplayfulcity.com

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Fhine Gall
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