



July 2016

After attending a Walk and Cycle Conference in Nelson at the end of 2014, Stacey Day (School Travel Planner) instigated a pilot cycle skills programme called 'Let's Get Going' to be run here in South Canterbury. This was offered to a few selected Early Childhood Centres with Craighead Kindergarten embracing the opportunity to take part.

Craighead Kindergarten is situated in central Timaru. This is an independent community kindergarten, governed by a parent committee. Families attend from surrounding suburbs, with several traveling from the wider district. All children attend morning sessions, with the oldest 20 staying on for the afternoon session. The teaching team has a strong relationship with parents and whānau who in turn are very supportive of the teaching and learning programme.

The Let's Get Going programme was developed in New Plymouth for Early Childhood Centres and primary schools interested in up-skilling children aged 3-5 years in cyclist skills. It gives young children the opportunity to learn, develop and practise fundamental skills of cycling. This enables them to gain the skills, information and motivation to progress towards riding a bike independently. This in turn increases the likelihood of retained cycling with the goal of developing a lifelong enjoyment of cycling among children and their families.

An initial workshop was held on 23 September 2015 to outline the theory and practical aspects of the programme and our expectations for the pilot. After the workshop the five module dates were set for Term One 2016.

Working alongside Senior Constable Keri Brown (NZ Police) and Stacey, Craighead Kindergarten teachers, tamariki and whānau got on board and brought their bikes or wheels to kindergarten each Friday morning for five weeks. Each week a new module focussed on bicycle safety and riding skills, plus experiences in the wider kindergarten environment that contributed to bicycle riding skills, such as an obstacle course focussing on balance, or blowing bubbles and focussing on tracking them. A wonderful example of this learning was Alex who had his trainer wheels removed after module one and by module three was riding on his own with a huge grin and saying "I can do it, I can do it!!" – priceless!!



A large focus was helmet safety, where Craighead Kindergarten organised a trip to town on the bus with tamariki to purchase helmets for the kindergarten. Feedback from teachers and whānau indicated that tamariki will now not get on their bikes or scooters without wearing their helmet, and a good number of tamariki are also able to fit their own helmets. One of the kindergarten parents did say that "It is not such a battle to wear helmets anymore - they just know that that's what you do".



Whānau were given a brief outline of what tamariki were learning each week and teachers also hosted an evening for whānau where Senior Constable Keri Brown and Stacey Day from WAVE spoke about the benefits and skills learnt from participating in the Let's Get Going programme. The final session coincided with the kindergarten's annual Wheel-a-Thon which was a great opportunity for tamariki to show their whānau what they had learnt.

A number of parents commented on the programme with one saying "We were very impressed with the 'Let's Get Going cycle skills programme. The content was delivered at a level Leo (4 years) could understand and in a way that he found interesting and exciting. A term on and each and every time we go out for a bike or scooter ride Leo checks his helmet, fits it correctly and then checks his bike or scooter is safe and ready to go! He is now proudly riding without training wheels and continues to develop a keen awareness for road safety rules. I would highly recommend the 'Let's Get Going cycle skills programme is implemented in other Early Childhood Education settings."

Lauren Rosanowski (Head Teacher/Manager) said "It was great to partner with professionals in our community – thanks to WAVE and NZ Police for supporting our important work with young children."

The Let's Get Going programme is now on the kindergarten's annual planning calendar. Teachers will complete modules and sessions with Tamariki during term 1 and term 4.

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