



Ideas for Play Street Hosts on how to help neighbours to connect and play on streets

A 1000 Play Streets initiative supported by:



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This is a Play Australia publication compiled by Leeza Peters & Kieran Brophy in collaboration with our South Australian Local Government & Community partners.

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- City of Onkaparinga
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- City of Playford
- City of Port Adelaide Enfield
- City of Adelaide



“73% of adults said they played on the street when they were young compared to only 24% of their kids”

Planet Ark, 2011



So what's a play street?

A **Play Street** is a temporary street closure (normally lasting 2-3 hours) enabling neighbours of all ages to reclaim their quiet residential street for connection and play. Ideally a Play Street is coordinated by local residents or community groups in partnership with Local Government.

Why do Australians love play streets?

Friendly atmosphere
Kids can play freely

Exciting
Street games

Joyful
Fun

Enjoying
Great

Get together
More laughs
Kid's excitement

Happy kids
Exercise

Some free time
Community

Knowing neighbours
New relationships

Spend time with neighbours

Play games with children

Welcome!

Our Community Connect & Play Guide aims to inspire and support you with ideas when hosting your own play street, whether you're a local resident or represent a community group.

All ideas are intended to be simple, fun and inexpensive to implement, so you can help create a memorable play street experience with your neighbours.



This guide is brought to you by Play Australia – your peak national body for play, protecting the rights of every child to get outside and play every single day.

Play Australia is proud to champion the 1000 Play Streets movement, helping Australians reclaim their quiet residential streets for neighbours of all ages to connect and play, to ultimately create stronger and healthier communities.

For more information on hosting your own community play street please visit PlayAustralia.org.au/1000-play-streets/communities



Let's Connect!

to help **Connect** your neighbours during play streets so everyone feels welcome and feels like they belong

CAUTION: Whether it is a request to "bring food" or request to "bring something else", Play Streets Hosts must be careful not to create barriers for people who are thinking about attending – for example: if a resident doesn't have the capacity to bring something, they may feel like they cannot attend.



1. Welcome officer

Having an allocated Welcome Officer as the first point of contact for neighbours, is a great way to help arrivals feel comfortable and included in the Play Street. Their job could involve (i) explaining what the Play Street is about; (ii) introducing neighbours to kick-start conversation; or (iii) pointing out activities for people to try together.



2. Name tags

Name tags are a great way to break the ice and make it easier for people to connect with each other at a Play Street. They make it easy for people to remember each other's names and start a conversation, especially for people who are meeting for the first time. Remember to supply sticky labels and textas ...this could also be another job for your Welcome Officer!



3. Tea & coffee

Providing tea and coffee can be symbolic of hospitality and welcoming. In many cultures, offering a cup of tea or coffee is a traditional way of showing hospitality and making guests feel at home. Just make sure your tea and coffee stand is located in a quiet area, away from ball games and high-energy activity.



4. Food & culture

Sharing food and culture is a great way to connect with others, learn about different traditions and create a sense of community belonging. By sharing dishes, recipes and cultural practices, individuals can introduce others to their culture, helping to grow understanding and bring people together.



5. Seating

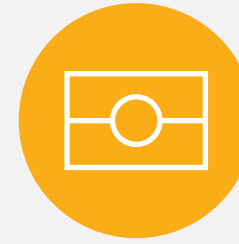
Providing seating can help create a comfortable and welcoming environment by allowing individuals to gather, relax and engage in conversation, making it easier for people to stay longer and socialise.



6. Quiet games

A quiet games area can provide a way for individuals to connect with each other in a more low-key setting, bonding over shared interests and hobbies. Why not put a range of quiet games out for people to choose from, such as cards, chess, checkers, marjong, puzzles or board games.

This can also be helpful for those children who may have sensory needs.



7. Acknowledgement of Country

An Acknowledgement of Country at any gathering is an important way to show respect and recognition to the Traditional Owners of the land. It's a terrific way to bring neighbours together at the beginning of a Play Street and grow awareness and understanding on Indigenous culture and history.

To find out more, visit Reconciliation Australia at www.reconciliation.org.au



8. Group ice breaker game

There are lots of ice breaker games out there - "Two Truths and a Lie" is a simple game to help people get to know each other better. This game involves sharing three statements about yourself, with the catch being that one is a lie, encouraging people to open up and have a bit of fun. *Did anyone spot the lie?*



9. Street project

While neighbours are gathering, take the opportunity to identify or discuss street focused projects that aim to improve the quality of life for everyone.

Projects such as creating a community garden, worm farm, pop-up library or book swap can really help to bring your community together.



10. Neighbourhood street map

Why not create your own neighbourhood street map with space on each property to place names of neighbours, so attending residents have a reference point post-Play Street to help remember each other. You could even include prompts for people to collect fun facts about their neighbours.



Let's KEEP connecting!

Play Streets are a terrific starting point to grow connections amongst neighbours well into the future. Why not consider some of these simple ideas to help neighbours to continue to connect ongoing...

- Host a morning tea for neighbours
- Go for a play together in the local park
- Set up a Facebook or WhatsApp group for your street/neighbourhood
- Arrange a games night or tournament
- Start a walking or fitness group
- Start a book club or street library
- Arrange a neighbourhood garage sale to sell or swap unwanted items
- Host a neighbourhood plant exchange or a fruit/veg swap
- Organise cooking sessions together to learn new skills and share recipes
- Join a charity walk or run to raise money for a good cause
- OR why not coordinate another Play Street – *you could even dress up for celebrations such as New Years Eve, Halloween, Christmas or just for the fun of it!*





Let's PLAY!

to **Kick-start PLAY** in your street
so all neighbours feel free to play any way they like on the street



1. Nature play

Give children the freedom to explore the environment around your street, so they can create their own play opportunities. There might be rocks, sticks, leaves, trees, flowers, grass, dirt and water to find and use in whatever way they see fit. Let their imaginations run wild!

Children may like to create potions, their own magical wands, mud pies, nature art or mini stick cubbies.



2. Water play

On a hot day, there is nothing better than running a sprinkler for children to jump through or giving them buckets to play with water.

Water pistols and water bombs are also quite popular, although don't forget that a lot of children like to play quietly with water as well, seeing how it runs through pipes or watering plants.

Don't be afraid to let children and adults get wet! Also remember to clean up any plastic water balloons after play time has finished.



3. Loose parts play

Bring out a pile of odds and ends and see what children can create. Old boxes, cardboard tubes, sheets, plastic crates, timber off-cuts and other available materials found around homes, can provide an exciting base for children to explore their creativity and imagination.



Using open-ended questions to prompt children to explore loose parts play. It can be as simple as asking: ***What can you make?***



4. Chalk

Chalk is not only inexpensive it can be used for play in so many ways and often appeals to all ages. You can create your own street art, play hopscotch, create mazes and so much more.

Try

- Writing a big welcome message at the start of the closure and the street name on the road at start of the closure
- Drawing around people's shadows and make your own chalk people
- Creating an obstacle course - with balance lines, spots for hopping, spirals for turning, a finish line and anything else you like in between.

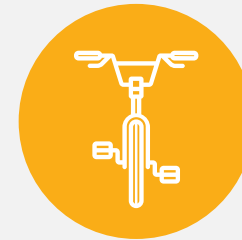


5. Skating & skateboarding

With the road being closed, it can be the perfect opportunity to get kids to bring out their skates and skateboards to improve their balance, coordination, and try some tricks in a safe environment

Try

- **A glide off:** whereby each skater is allowed to take three strides and then glide as far as possible. To spice things up, try gliding on one foot or backwards.
- **Follow the Leader:** when one person is the leader and will perform tricks that other skaters must copy as closely as possible.



6. Bikes & scooters

Getting out the bikes and scooters during the road closure is another way for children to enjoy their play. It's a perfect time for toddlers to learn to balance and ride their bikes for the first time and older kids can race each other or learn new tricks in a safe environment.

Try

- Using chalk, hoops, witches hats or other obstacles to create a course to ride around.
- Creating jumps or bumps for children to ride over. *It could be a fun neighbourhood project!*



7. Frisbee

Playing frisbee is something everyone can enjoy. It can be played with a couple of people or in a group and is a great fun for people of all ages and skill levels.



- **Hula Hoop Frisbee Throws:** Hang a hoop from a branch or have someone hold it steady and try and get the frisbee through
- **Don't hit the ground:** stand in a circle and toss the frisbee to one another and count how many times it is caught before hitting the ground
- **Frisbee bowling:** Fill up water bottles for bowling pins and try and knock them down with your frisbee.



8. Skipping rope

Skipping ropes are great for fitness, coordination, timing and fun. You can skip on your own or with friends. Skipping can be accompanied with chants, songs and rhymes and there are so many fun games to play.

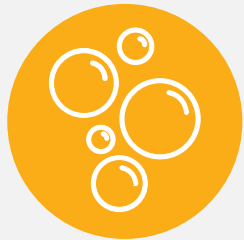


- Seeing how many times you can skip the rope without stopping
- Jumping the rope in tandem with a friend facing you
- Using a long skipping rope and have two people either end twirl the rope and have kids jump in.

Here's a well-known rhyme that sees the jumper performing a number of different actions (note- the splits are just a wide-legged jump)...

*Not last night but the night before,
 Twenty-four robbers came
 knocking at my door
 I asked them what they wanted,
 And this is what they said:
 Spanish Dancer, do the splits.
 Spanish Dancer, do the twist.
 Spanish Dancer, turn around.
 Spanish Dancer, touch the ground.
 Spanish Dancer, go out the back.
 Spanish Dancer, please come back.
 Spanish Dancer, read a book.
 Spanish Dancer, do not look.
 1, 2, 3, 4, 5...*





9. Bubbles

Blowing bubbles is a fun and magical way to liven up a Play Street gathering, by creating a sense of wonder and joy for all! Encourage children to blow bubbles, run through them or simply watch the multi-colours within.

Try

- Seeing how many bubbles can you blow in one breath
- Seeing how many bubbles you can pop
- Blowing the biggest bubble
- Catching a bubble without popping it

Making bubbles is easy!

You'll need:

- 1 cup of quality dishwashing liquid
 - 6 cups of water
 - 2 tablespoons of sugar (optional)
 - 3-4 drops of glycerine (optional)
- Mix the ingredients together well, then put into a shallow dish.
 - Create a bubble wand from a coat hanger or pipe cleaner by simply making one end into a circle.
 - *Then dip the wand into the mix and blow!*



10. Street Cricket

Cricket is a favourite national pastime played all over the country. Playing street cricket at a Play Street can be an exciting and active way to engage neighbours, bringing people of all ages together to enjoy a shared game.

What You Need:

bat, ball, stumps (any kind will do)

How to Play:

Anyway you like, just make sure everyone gets a go at batting, bowling and fielding and don't take it too seriously.

Let's PLAY some more...

There are endless ways to support play in your street, here's some more simple and fun ideas for you to consider...

- Bring hula hoops out for children and adults to try
- Host a paper aeroplane throwing contest
- Use chalk to create a ball game of 2 or 4 square
- Set up a throwing game like a ring toss or bean bag throw
- Play traditional games like Hide n Seek or Tag
- Make and fly kites together
- Organise a street treasure hunt
- Play a group game of tug of war
- Wheel out a table tennis table with bats/balls
- Try a modified sport like street basketball, soccer, badminton or volleyball

Importantly, remember to always give children freedom to choose how they would like to play on the street, with others or by themselves.

PLUS, whenever possible, take time to understand the needs of your neighbours, to help create an inclusive and accessible experience for all.



Community
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This publication supports the 1000 Play Streets movement.
For more information visit: PlayAustralia.org.au/1000-play-streets