



Handbook for Early Years Educators



Wibbly Wobbly Bike Programme

Background

Waterford Sports Partnership developed a balance bike programme in 2012 which has continued to be developed by Waterford Sports Partnership & Tipperary Sports Partnership. This booklet was designed through a partnership between the Tipperary Sports Partnership and Waterford Sports Partnership. The delivery of the Wibbly Wobbly Bike Programme is supported by the Tipperary and Waterford Childcare Committees. The programme is aimed at children aged 2½ to 6 years old and is the fundamental starting point for children's cycling and an excellent opportunity to promote active lifestyles at the earliest possible age.

Why Balance Bikes?

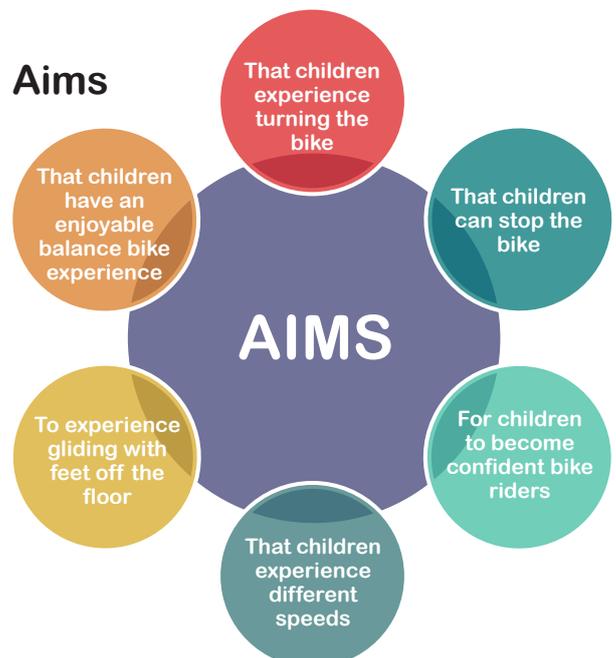
- Learn to ride a bike without using stabilisers.
- Develop gross motor skills, spatial awareness and bilateral co-ordination.
- Enhance physical literacy.
- Build confidence.

How the programme works?

- A Local Sports Partnership (LSP) staff member or tutor will deliver training to practitioners/ teachers in a childcare/school setting.
- Each childcare/school setting will be given a number of bikes and helmets.
- The bikes are loaned to the childcare/school setting for 2-6 weeks.
- An LSP or childcare committee staff member will advise groups on sourcing bikes and funding for these bikes.

Benefits

- ▲ Improve balance
- ▲ Build strength and coordination
- ▲ Encourage children to start exercising
- ▲ Safer way to start cycling
- ▲ Create confident riders without using stabilisers
- ▲ Improve skill development
- ▲ Positively enhance social development





Correctly putting on helmet



2

Fingers above the eyebrows to the bottom of the helmet.



4

Fingers to make a V shape around the bottom of the ears.



1

Finger under the strap beneath the chin.

Final check- does the helmet fit right? Instruct children to open their mouth wide...big yawn!

The helmet should pull down on the head.

Appropriate Footwear

Ensure children are wearing shoes with suitable soles and their feet are not exposed to allow them to stop safely using their feet.

Correct riding position

1. Feet on the floor.
2. Slightly bent knees.
3. Bottom firmly on the seat.
4. Hold handlebars securely.

Getting on the bike

1. Stand with the bike on their right and lean the bike towards them.
2. Instruct them to swing their leg over.
3. Allow children to practice getting on and off the bike.
4. Don't just lift children onto the bike.





Learning to balance at the start

1. Encourage children to start walking whilst remaining seated.
2. To help build confidence get them to take longer strides.
3. Balance will develop with speed.



Scooting

1. Encourage children to walk and push on ground using their feet.
2. Remind them to look where they are going, not at their feet.
3. They will need to sit up and look straight ahead.
4. It helps to have a leader ahead to look at to avoid distraction.
5. Do this many times to allow children to naturally sit on the saddle and pick up speed.

Slowing down and Stopping

1. If children want to slow down just remind them to put their feet down.
2. Shoe soles will stop a balance bike safely when they touch the ground with both feet flat on the ground, toes up, not down.
3. Encourage children to continuously practice stopping using the games and activities to follow.



Gliding

1. As the children gain confidence, try to encourage longer steps. It will be helpful to say phrases such as “push, push, and glide”.
2. Choose a very gentle slope and encourage them to lift their feet off the ground and hold them up for as long as they can.
3. Practice makes perfect, so you will need to try this again and again.



Session Games/ Activities Bank



Plan sessions using games/activities from the following bank. Each session should include a game/ activity from each of the four areas. A sample session plan can be seen on pages 6-7.

SESSION NO.	GAMES FOR INTRO TO BIKE OR WARM UP	GAMES FOR VARIOUS SPEEDS	GAMES FOR STEERING AND TURNING	END OF SESSION ACTIVITIES
1	<p>Animals/Numbers Game (without bike) In groups use different speeds and call numbers for children to get into groups. Pick any animal and mirror their movement. Add in numbers. Progression: Extend this to playing catch games e.g. Lions chasing kangaroo</p>	<p>Animals Game (with bike) Pick any animal and travel at their speed/running style e.g. Snail (slow), Mouse (small steps), Elephant (big steps), Frog (two legs together), Cheetah (as fast as you can).</p>	<p>Numbers Game (with bike) Children ride around at different speeds when leader calls a number, children get into group of this number e.g. 2's, 3's</p>	<p>Free Play Use colour cones e.g. red cones a tunnel, yellow cones/ramp cycle over them, blue cones zig zag etc.</p>
2	<p>Travel Game (without bike) Children to warm up as per numbers game. Ask children for different ways to travel i.e. Walking running, car, bike, airplane and get them to act like that form of travel. After this introduce bike.</p>	<p>Travel Game (with bike) Ask children for different ways to travel i.e. Walking running, car, bike, airplane and get them to act like that form of travel. After this introduce bike.</p>	<p>High Five Game This game promotes starting and stopping. It's best if you can do this with a small group of 4-5. Children ride toward the first person, stop and give a "High Five" then move on to the next friend. Progression: change to low five.</p>	<p>Relay Races In pairs use different techniques e.g. small steps, frog, running. Progressions: glide race when children are able and include a high five for partner to go next.</p>
3	<p>Seated Journey Narrate a story while children are on bike. The story could be about delivering a package, a jungle / forest adventure, a space race, any topic that keeps children engaged. Include movements like, holding legs up, steering, obstacles, waving at fans, etc. Make it fun & active!</p>	<p>Colour Cones Different colour cones are set out in the perimeter. Teacher to call a colour cone and children to cycle around that cone and back to the middle. Extend by calling two different colours e.g. yellow / blue or a number of colour cones e.g. 3 yellows. Progression: in and out of the cones in perimeter. Then split group in half and one half goes clockwise, other anti clockwise.</p>	<p>Zig & Zag Relay Races Same concept as relay races with children weaving in and out of cones/chalk obstacles on floor.</p>	<p>Zebra Crossing Set up 2 or 3 pedestrian's crossings. Half of the group are pedestrians and the other half of the group are cyclists. Change groups.</p>
4	<p>Simon Says Use a variety of calls such as: walk alongside bike, get on bike, small steps, two feet, big steps, shout cone colour and child cycles to that colour, stop, one hand on handle bar ,walk with bike not sitting on saddle.</p>	<p>Traffic Lights Leader faces children and they travel towards leader. Leader calls: Green go fast, Amber / Orange slow down and Red stop. Leader can hold up the coloured cones also to encourage children to look ahead.</p>	<p>Speed Challenge E.g. How many giant steps in 10 seconds, how far can you travel with 3 giant or frog steps? Use red cone and shout stop, children stop where they are and see how far they get. Progress to how far they can glide.</p>	<p>Balance Bike Testing Children can make their own free play obstacles using coloured cones and chalk. - Fig 8 time trial both ways - Speed trial over 10metres - How far can you glide after 2 metres.</p>
5	<p>Stuck in the Mud On bikes when a child is tagged they stand up off saddle and must be freed by another child with a high five. Progression: free by cycling under arm.</p>	<p>Travel/Animal/Traffic Lights Activity Recap of games previously played. Begin with car, bike, aeroplane and use red / amber / green coloured cones. Link to animal's game next and again use traffic lights.</p>	<p>Follow the Leader Early year's educator starts as leader. Children follow the leader in and out of cones around, perimeter. Progress to picking children as leaders.</p>	<p>Tour De France Races around a small course made with cones with turns included. Begin with 3 people, then 4, then extend to 6.</p>

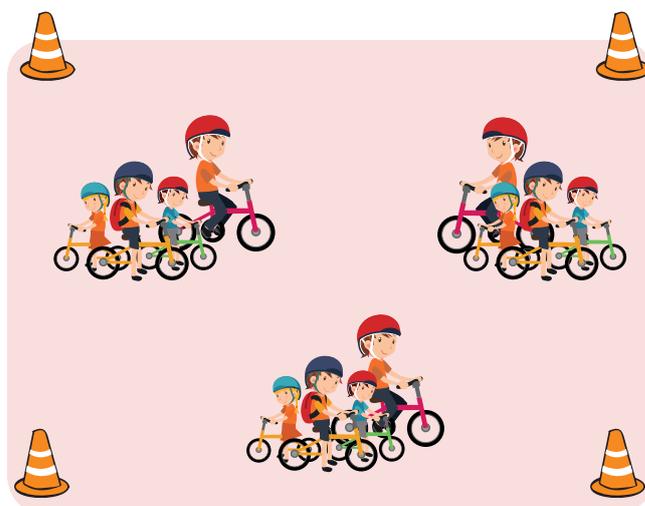


Activity - 1

Time: 5 mins

Simon Says - Simon says with leader on a bike around perimeter of square and children copy actions. Spilt group if you have additional leaders

Resources needed: Cones, whistle



Activity - 2

Time: 5 minutes with progression every 2 mins

Traffic Lights - Leader faces children and they travel towards leader.

Leader calls:

Green go fast

Amber/Orange slow down

Red stop

Progression: Leader can hold up red, orange and green coloured cones also to encourage children to look ahead.

Resources needed: Cones, whistle



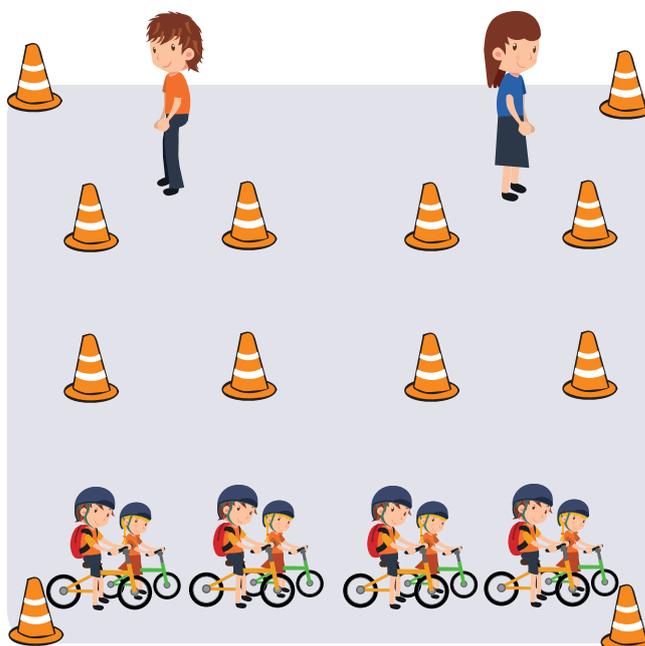
Activity - 3

Time: 8 mins

Speed Challenge - Challenge children with varied tasks at different speeds.

E.g. How many giant steps in 10 seconds, how far can you travel with 3 giant or frog steps? Use red cone and shout stop, children stop where they are and see how far they get. Progress to how far they can glide.

Resources needed: Cones, whistle





Activity - 4

Time: 5 mins

Balance Bike Testing - Simple tests to allow children to work at one time to focus on skills of balance, turning and gliding.

1. Figure 8 trial

- How many times in 20 seconds
- Change direction.

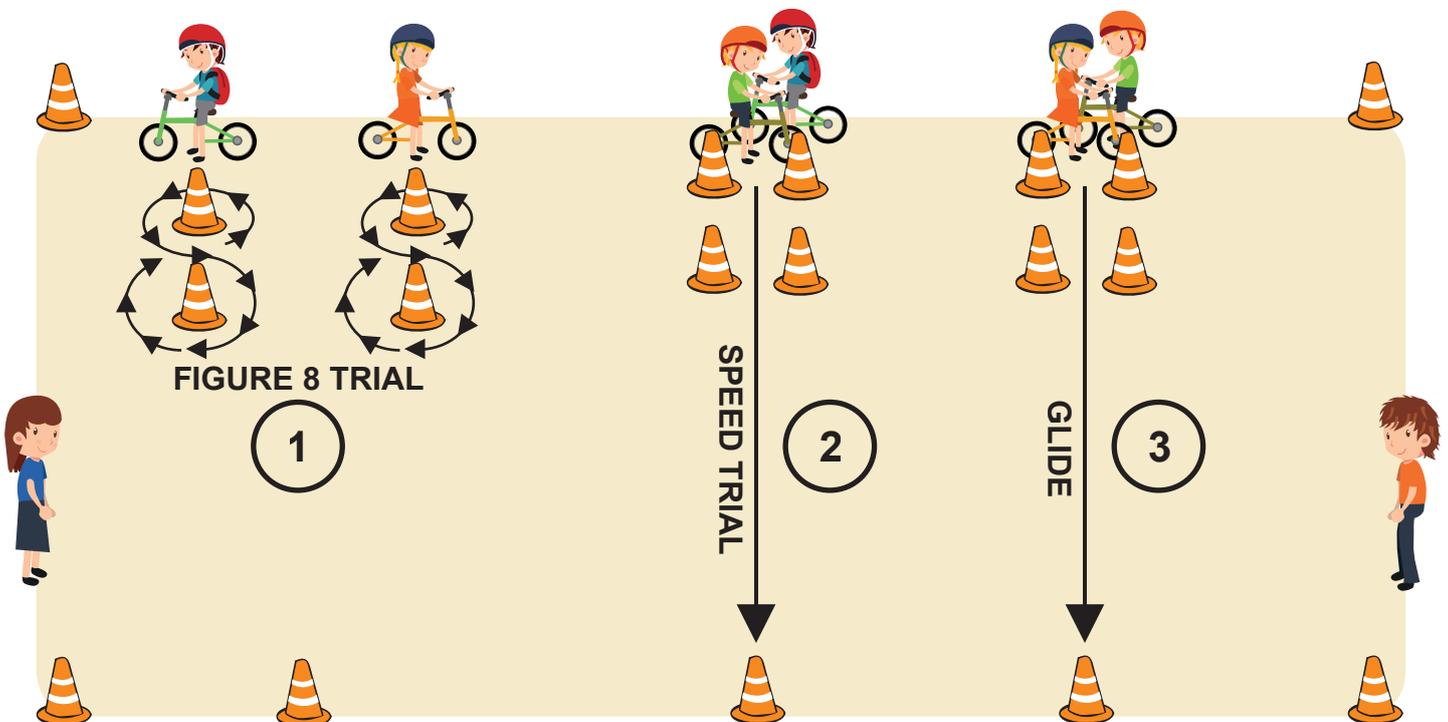
2. Speed trials over 10 metres

- Groups of 4-6 and race.

3. How far can you glide?

- Groups of 4-6 test gliding after 2 metres.

Resources needed: Cones, whistle, chalk



AT ANY POINT SHOUT STOP SO CHILD PUTS FEET ON FLOOR TO STOP

Final Message: The more the children practice the more confident riders they will be in the future. If possible allow children to spend 20-30 minutes on the balance bikes each day. Our contact details can be found at the back of this booklet if you require any further information during this time. On completion of the programme each child will receive their very own Balance Bike Drivers Licence as seen here!





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