

PLAY ON PEDALS REPORT



Developed by the Play on Pedals partnership

Supported by players of



LEGACY 2014
XX COMMONWEALTH GAMES
GLASGOW

Delivered by:



Cycling Scotland





Introduction

Play on Pedals began in early 2014, aiming to give every preschool child in Glasgow the opportunity to learn to ride a bike before starting school.

The project was supported by players of People's Postcode Lottery and awarded £231,000 by the People's Postcode Trust's Dream Fund, the largest single award given by the fund at that time. The funded project ran from April 2014 until December 2016.

Play on Pedals is a partnership project between Cycling UK, Cycling Scotland, The Glasgow Bike Station and Play Scotland. It was the first of its kind in the UK, offering city-wide provision to preschool children and their families.

Play on Pedals was designed as a sustainable project to break down the barriers young people face to participating in physical activity in the city and support children and families to enjoy and gain confidence through cycling.

Glasgow is a city with large areas of multiple deprivation and recognised health inequalities. With low life expectancy levels in comparison to other UK cities and poor physical activity levels in adults and children, addressing these barriers remains integral to a healthier and happier future generation.

Play on Pedals partners recognised how cycling can provide a means of independence, an opportunity to develop new skills and a low cost way to maintain a healthy lifestyle. It has both physical and mental health benefits, is sustainable, inclusive and fun; by engaging children and young families in cycling, Play on Pedals aimed to have a transformational effect on future generations in Glasgow.

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we are cycling
The cyclists' champions UK




Cycling Scotland

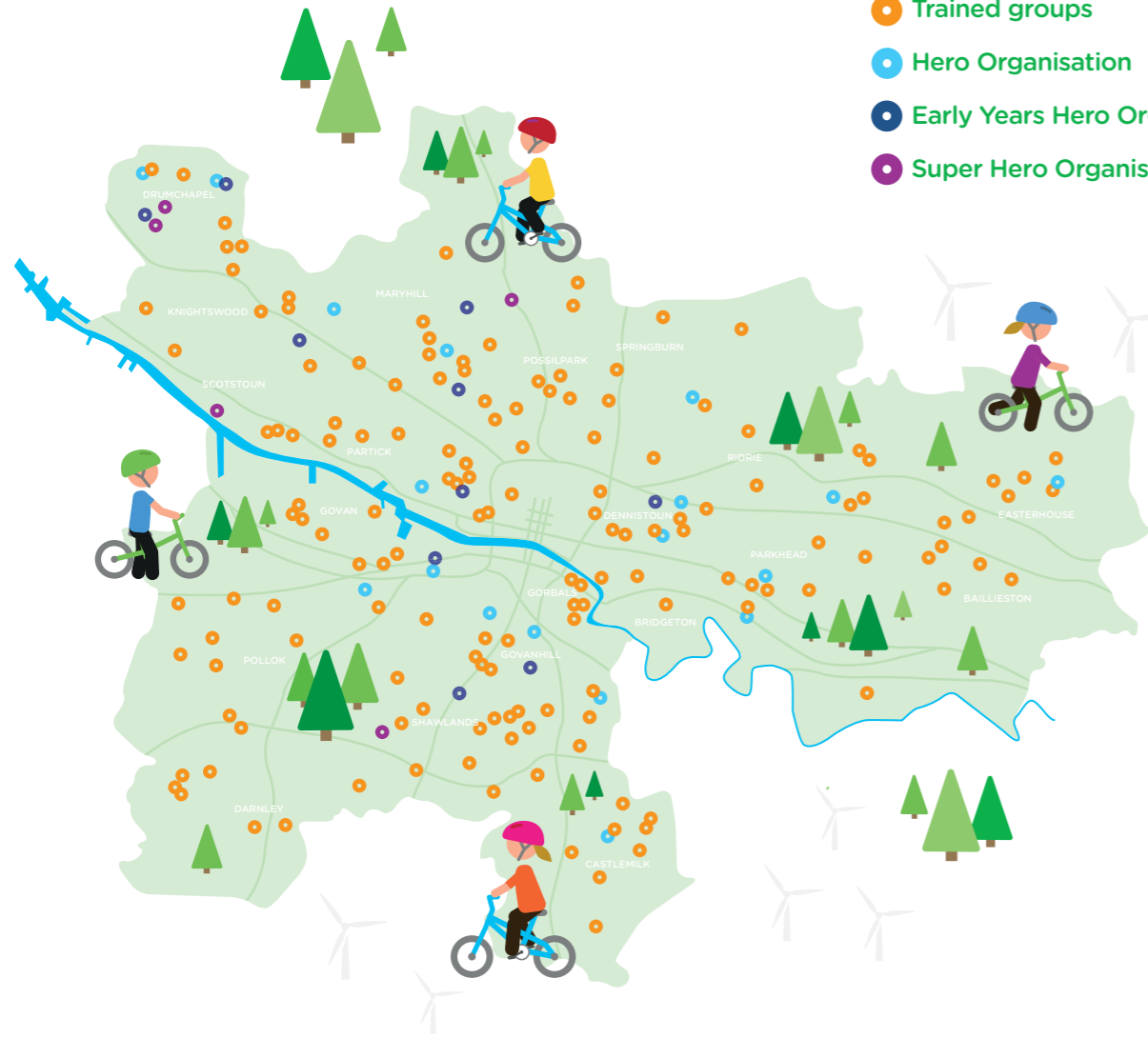


Play on Pedals launch event May 2014

Evaluation carried out by an independent evaluator over two phases from January 2015 to December 2016. Evaluation took the form of focus groups with instructors, parents, Head Teachers and Hero Organisation representatives; tick-box observational survey of child participants; online survey for participating groups; progress forms; parental feedback forms; semi-structured interviews; group interviews; early years floorbook evaluation; event evaluation; training feedback; and site visits and meetings with participating groups.

Project reach

City of Glasgow



Organisation Type:

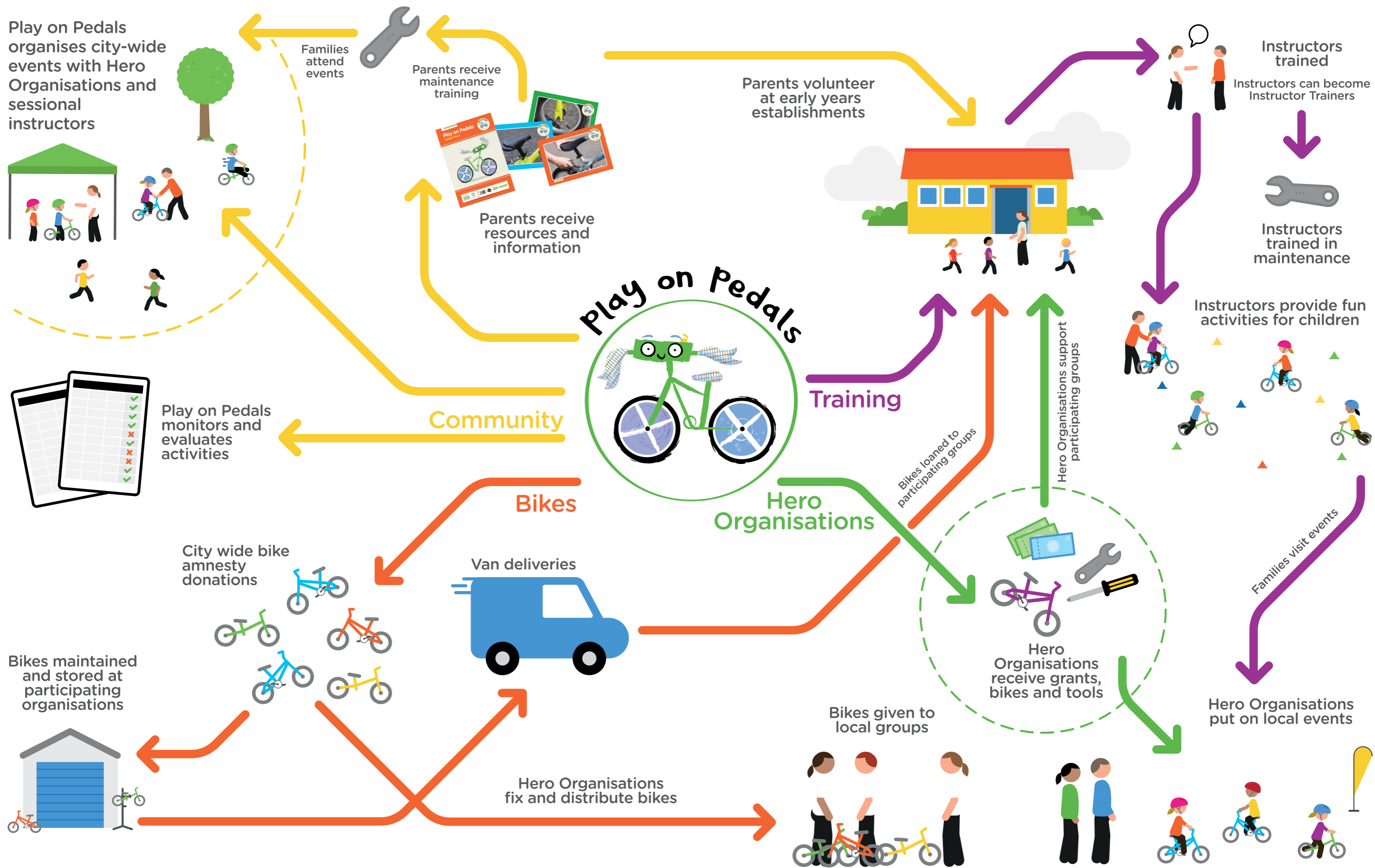
- Trained groups
- Hero Organisation
- Early Years Hero Organisation
- Super Hero Organisation

Publicity highlights

Play on Pedals achieved high levels of media publicity through various publications and awards

Supporting organisations:

How it works



Outcomes

Play on Pedals improves participants' learning habits, behaviours and health and wellbeing.

We've seen physical health benefits, including:

- Increase in physical activity
- Improved motor skills, balance, co-ordination, strength and general control
- Increase in physical activity of parents and early years practitioners involved
- *95% participants surveyed increased the amount of physical exercise they did because of Play on Pedals†*

Participants have experienced mental health/personal benefits, for example:

- Increases in confidence and self-esteem in both children and adults
- Increased sense of achievement
- Improved relationships and sociability between children, between practitioners and between children and practitioners
- Increased language and communication skills amongst children
- Enhanced family relationships
- Development of a life skill
- *80% children surveyed showed consistently strong confidence and sociability throughout the program and 17% showed an increase†*

We've seen that the programme improves behaviours that support children's learning, by:

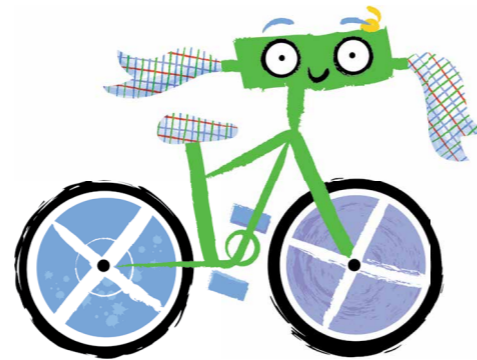
- Increasing focus, concentration, listening and perseverance
- Fostering a sense of responsibility and ownership and awareness of safety
- Working in small groups, using structured resources
- Increasing enthusiasm and interaction within the classroom
- Improving purpose and structure to practitioners' physical education delivery
- *25% of children surveyed showed an increase in attention span†*

The programme has increased healthy thinking and teaching, through:

- Supporting children's learning on healthy eating, exercise and outdoor play
- Parents gaining confidence to engage with staff on these topics
- Parents making changes at home to support their children's progress

Unintended learning and health and wellbeing outcomes for participants include:

- Positive effect on the behaviour of participants with behavioural problems
- Increased vocabulary and confidence of children with English as a second language
- Increased engagement in activities for children with additional needs and disabilities, such as autism and hearing impairments
- Natural development of a child-led team, or 'community' due to structure and group dynamic
- Learning extending to other topics such as maths and problem solving
- Instructors becoming aware of children's existing knowledge, relevant to cycling
- *61% of groups surveyed use bikes in free play - giving access to bikes every day**



Play on Pedals increases the use of physical activity and play in early years teaching practice.

We've seen instructors taking ownership of Play on Pedals to develop the basic programme through:

- Running parental engagement activities
- Purchasing additional equipment to ensure sustainability
- Committing to training extra staff members to increase delivery capacity
- *77% of those surveyed have extended the programme to reach more children than originally intended**

Early years practitioners have independently evaluated the programme as part of their own teaching work by:

- Developing their own processes of evaluating children's abilities
- Using the programme within their own Curriculum for Excellence teaching plans
- Designing their own Play on Pedals floorbook evaluation system
- *45% of nurseries surveyed online engaged with parent information sessions, 58% collected parent feedback, 20% had parent volunteers**

Instructors note use of new teaching methods and new physical learning activities, such as:

- Becoming active and using the outdoor environment for educational purposes
- Using demonstration as a teaching method across the curriculum
- Simplifying vocabulary used to give instructions
- *60% of those surveyed have delivered to 3-4 year olds, as well as the intended 4-5 age group**

Play on Pedals supports the establishment of community structures and relationships to support a long-term culture of active thinking and low-cost exercise options.

Early Years establishments and community organisations have fulfilled the role of 'Hero Organisation' as envisaged at the beginning of the project. This is evidenced by:

- Independent promotion to and engagement of their community
- Independent delivery of programme of local events, out with Play on Pedals management
- Training of staff as Instructors and Instructor Trainers
- Maintenance and rotation of bikes around local early years establishments
- Provision of free or cheap second-hand bikes to local groups
- Creative use of grant for activities

We have observed Hero Organisations and early years establishments make plans independently of Play on Pedals to continue to encourage further cycling in the community, for example by:

- Development of new initiatives that further Play on Pedals locally, such as new cycling hubs and parents' groups
- New community links, collaborative events and sharing best practice between local establishments
- New communication and support networks established between Instructors
- Funding-raising for resources and sourcing of low-cost, second-hand equipment
- Information for parents to purchase low-cost bikes
- Community leaders advocating the long-term impact of the project as means to tackle barriers in the community, especially inactive lifestyles

The project has enabled adults to become volunteers and/or Instructors and acquire skills to help develop the future of the project, through:

- Opportunities in volunteering and bike maintenance training
- Attending training as part of Continual Professional Development
- Clear professional progression, from Instructor onto Instructor Trainer and Sessional Instructor opportunities

More communities have been supported to access green space on their doorstep through Play on Pedals, for example:

- Extensive programme of events in city-wide parks and green spaces
- Street Play road closure events
- Hero Organisations providing new events in local green spaces
- Parents now discuss cycle paths and cycling maps to plan family cycling activities

Play on Pedals has attracted attention from and engaged with external stakeholders and public bodies, in the following ways:

- Recognition from Glasgow City Council as a Commonwealth Games Legacy project 2014
- Support from North Lanarkshire Early Years Team
- Collaborations with Scottish play sector organisations
- Monitoring and evaluation advice from Glasgow Centre for Population Health
- 'Can you ride a pedal bike?' question added to the national Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire for children
- City-wide engagement at large festivals including Glasgow Mela, Pedal for Scotland, Skyride and Glasgow North East Festivals
- Support and additional funding from Glasgow City HSCP Health Improvement Team
- Funding for 50 additional bikes from Glasgow Sport
- Funding from Glasgow Sport's 2016 Parklives programme
- Funding from Glasgow City Council through the Paths for Smarter Choices, Smarter Places



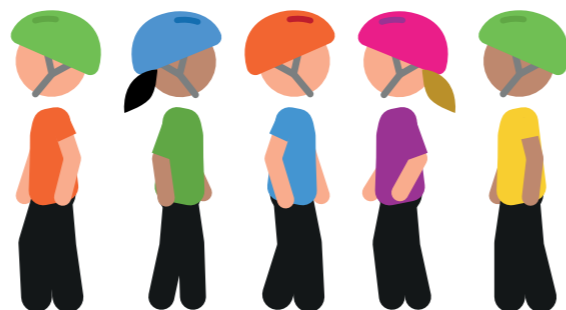
†Results from observational survey provided to all participating Early Years Practitioners, to be used as a before and after study of behaviour following delivery of Play on Pedals programme (usually 8-10 weeks of sessions, 1 or 2 sessions per week). Early Years Practitioners were asked to select 3 pupils from the group (if the group was 10 pupils or less); one considered most likely to benefit from the activity, one considered least likely to benefit from the activity and one neutral.

*Results from online survey distributed to 160 participating establishments, between August and October 2016, with 38 establishments responding.

Project impacts

Preschool children engaged

7,148



Organisations engaged:

286

Organisations with trained Instructors:

182

Local Authority early years establishments trained (99 of 113)

88%

Play on Pedals training has been awarded to:



35

 Hero Organisations & Early Years Hero Organisations funded
£500 GRANT

5

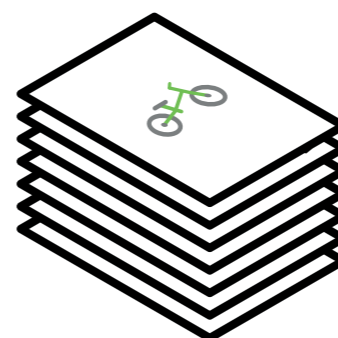
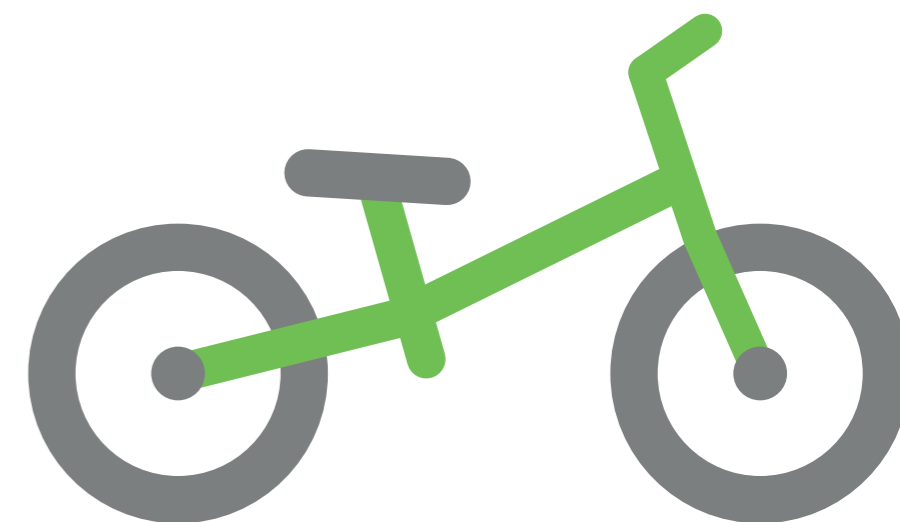
 Super Hero Organisations funded
£1,250 GRANT

550

Balance and pedal bikes distributed across city

150

Bikes donated through 2 x city wide bike amnesties



5,000

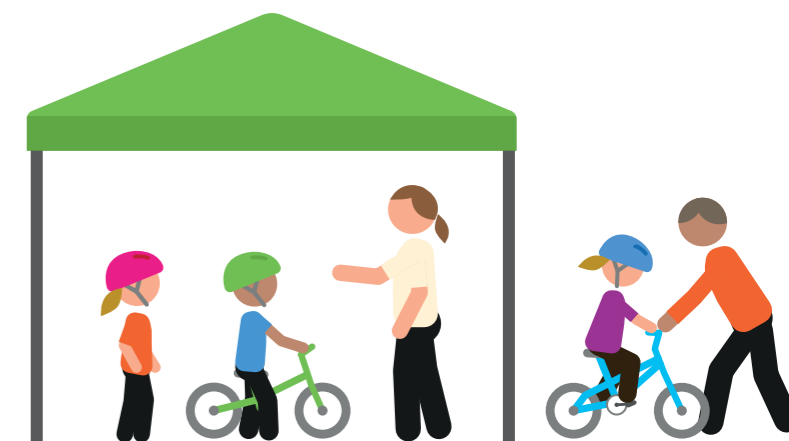
 Parent information packs distributed

Instructor training days

240

Community events delivered

- Venues:
- Public Spaces 77
(eg museums, tennis courts)
 - Parks 56
 - Streets 15
 - Indoors 50
 - Festivals/Big events 21
 - Other 21



A closer look at the project in early years settings

Overview

- Staff trained as Instructors and in maintenance, with progression onto Instructor Trainer course
- Continued access achieved through bike rotation from Hero Organisations and purchasing of new or second-hand bikes
- Floorbooks used to discuss and record learning
- Loan of five bikes to establishment for ten weeks
- Play on Pedals resources link the Scottish Government's Getting It Right For Every Child framework and the Curriculum for Excellence, combining teaching of literacy, vocabulary, maths, science, technology and health and wellbeing with cycling

Inclusion

"The children's physical and mental health has improved and we've just had loads and loads of fun. Probably the biggest benefit is a lifelong benefit because we have children who are confident on cycles. And that word confident has been a word really that the staff have used - all of the children have been able to join in, all children are included and in all of the children we've seen huge rise in their self-esteem as they've taken off on their cycles."

Headteacher

Child Development

"The children have loved the sessions, and have developed social and emotional skills as well as physical skills. I have observed friendships developing between certain children which is amazing to see."

Early Years Practitioner

"We're very aware of the fact that a child's physical and mental health and wellbeing impacts their learning... you want to allow them to wonder and allow them excitement around learning. There can be no greater an excitement than being on a bike and experiencing the freedom that it can give you."

Head Teacher

Getting Active

"Now I know how to teach it, I'm getting the youngest one on the pushbike. I just actually picked up a bike for myself last night - the first bike I've owned in years and years."

Parent Volunteer

Parental Engagement

"The programme's been fabulous, it's been accessible, people have been really accommodating. I think the bonus for me is the fact that staff and parents have been trained and you can see that there's been a rise in parents' confidence. If you're thinking about closing an attainment gap, whatever you can do to raise the self-esteem of our parents, getting them in and getting them involved in their child's education can only be for the best."

Head Teacher

Behaviour

"The children have got achievements all the time with this activity - they achieve balancing, they manage to get their feet off the floor, they achieve braking so you've got lots and lots of different steps so they can get praise all the time."

Instructor

"One child was excruciatingly shy, and the first few weeks it took her a wee while. By the end of the ten weeks, she was doing tricks, she would set off from one end, she would do zig zags and she'd be lifting her feet up and a big smile on her face; it was quite the journey for her. She was delighted with what they were doing and all the progress that she'd made."

Parent volunteer

"A wee girl who never spoke, was mute more or less for the whole year, started Play on Pedals and just blossomed."

Early Years Practitioner

- Play on Pedals has encouraged conversations about healthy eating and physical activity as well as fostering resilience, confidence and sociability in children
- Parent volunteers supported practitioners and received maintenance training

Confidence

"I had great fun doing it. I learnt a lot. It's definitely increased my confidence with bikes in general and in teaching someone to ride so that they gain lots of skills."

Parent Volunteer

"You know sometimes when you're teaching, you forget about the fun aspect because you're delivering education. But that was all done for you and it was all fun. I was enjoying it, I was on a bike out there joining the children. I hadn't been on a bike for years. So I went out and bought cycling shorts and everything."

Early Years Practitioner

Enthusiasm

"When they've got on the bike, I'm the one that's running up and down the playground, bouncing about, ecstatic and can't wait for the parents to come in. You're almost bursting at the seams for the parents to come in. That's something that I don't think I'd ever really experienced."

Early Years Practitioner

"The Play on Pedals training was fantastic; our staff came back really motivated. The children were also highly motivated and one of our children attended a funding bid event where he and a member of staff presented information to over 200 people to win funding for new bikes and helmets. We were successful and received £1,000."

Early Years Practitioner

Autism positive experience

Finlay is a boy with autism who finds participation in group activities challenging. Often he doesn't want to join in physical activities or play with other children, preferring to sit and watch. As his Instructor explains, with support and encouragement from another child, Finlay could join in Play on Pedals with his group.

Another child offered to help show Finlay how to ride the bike, holding onto his handlebars and moving him along while he moved his feet. This really helped him as she was holding him and pushing him while he was on his bike. Other children started to encourage him too saying 'well done, well done! Look you've moved!'. He was very happy and willing to try it again himself.

Whereas with an adult, Finlay had refused to do it, with another child he was willing to try. This child volunteered to help him and the other children also offered support and

encouragement by cheering for him. Finlay was delighted to be moving and a bond developed between him and the other children. Every week Finlay received support from the other child, walking beside him and supporting him. Finlay would be encouraged to try harder until he was moving on his own with the other child at his side.

Photos of this were taken to show both children's parents and Finlay's mother was stunned that he had participated, as he had refused his bike previously - she said 'Wow, I can't believe he did that'.

This peer to peer support demonstrates empathy and perseverance of both children involved as well as positive supportive group working, and how Play on Pedals can support children with additional needs.



A closer look at the community

Overview

- £500 and £1250 grants provided to organisations
- Staff trained to be Instructors and Instructor Trainers
- Gifted fleet of ten bikes and tools
- Maintained and rotated bikes around local area
- Involved families and volunteers
- Ran community events e.g. weekly learn to ride classes

Community Links

"We have connected with new parts of our local community – we now know many more young families, early years establishments, parents and volunteers. We have relationships with other local organisations, where we might host events and training sessions and we are noticing more people coming into our workshop, joining in family led-rides and other cycling events in the area. There is a real buzz around Play on Pedals."

Hero Organisation representative

"I would just like to send you a massive thank you. My family and I attended your fun day today and my son left being able to ride a bike. You have made his confidence soar and he is very proud of himself as are we."

Parent

Collaboration

"As a small organisation, the funding from Play on Pedals enabled us to deliver training, put on events, engage families and inspire parents to start cycling. In part due to our involvement with Play on Pedals, we were able to work with another cycling organisation to establish a community cycle hub, for other ages and abilities. Many of the parents now join us on led rides and support community cycling events. There is a lot of enthusiasm for cycling in our area at the moment."

Hero Organisation representative

Resource provider

"We have supported two bike amnesties within our local area, acting as a drop off point for donations and collecting bikes from other centres. We took the bikes into our workshop and fixed them, turning some into balance bikes. These were then distributed out to local groups delivering Play on Pedals to increase access to bikes in the local community."

Hero Organisation representative

Inclusion

"You have quite a wide range of cultures within this community and people with fewer English language skills and something like this is really engaging because it crosses all the boundaries, it's very inclusive ... this is something that brings people together."

Instructor

Community Involvement

"It's nice to see a lot of people using [the local Hero Organisation] to get their bikes maintained and looked at – the men in there have been really great, especially for the kids – they'll take them in and show them fixing puncture repairs so maybe the kids can teach me one day how to fix a puncture."

Parent

"We've added some partners because of Play on Pedals, just straight across the road from the nursery school there is a little bike shop that's run by the community – we now know that bike shop, the bike shop knows us and we've got fabulous partnership links with it."

Head Teacher

- Play on Pedals supports the Scottish Government's Play Strategy, the Glasgow City Council Cycling Strategy and Scottish Government's Active Scotland Outcomes Framework

Life Skill

"There will be a generational change within the community because we have children who are leaving the nursery who can cycle and that can only add to how our environment will grow"

Headteacher

"We were at the event with our three year old and you guys were brilliant. Helped tweak his bike size and setup and gave him all the encouragement he needed to get going."

Parent

"Thanks to the ladies last Saturday who helped my son's confidence to cycle alone. He's nearly been able to do it the last few weeks but once he discovered he wasn't being held he panicked and stopped. On Saturday with your support he was off himself and I'm pleased to report has been practising at home and can now ride his bike. He's very proud of himself."

Parent



Observations and recommendations

Parental engagement

- There is a strong desire for cycling events for young children and their families
- Parents are interested in advice in maintenance of existing bikes and tips for getting children cycling
- Wider dissemination of information for parents regarding how to fit a helmet, the negative impact of stabilisers and how to turn a bike into a balance bike would support parents to follow similar guidance as Play on Pedals offers



Community engagement

- Financial barriers are very real obstacles for families to buy bikes and equipment
- The lack of safe cycling infrastructure in Glasgow is a barrier for families being able to implement cycling skills for active travel and recreation
- The provision of safe spaces for preschool and family cycling is therefore essential and desirable for families to engage
- Lack of safe and secure cycling parking is a barrier to families owning and storing bikes
- Parents and grandparents not having experienced cycling can be a barrier to engagement of families



"Play on Pedals is wonderful and the joy it gives the children is great to see, they have grown in confidence. It has created a buzz about the nursery and more parents are interested in bikes. I myself now cycle to work everyday. We are also setting up a hire scheme for parents with the children's bikes. I am hoping to deliver Play on Pedals for a long time to come."

Early Years Practitioner

Inclusion in early years education

- Play on Pedals can be used as a tool for teaching a wide-range of curriculum topics in an active and outdoor environment
- Play on Pedals could be delivered as part of college teaching for student early years practitioners
- Play on Pedals should be offered to whole staff teams to enable wider application of course across the setting
- Play on Pedals motivates staff teams to think creatively and in new ways about delivery of Curriculum for Excellence
- The programme is adaptable to indoor and outdoor environments and is flexible regarding time limitations and staffing capacity
- Provision of bikes for long-term use within establishment would reduce barriers to engagement of full preschool intake

www.playonpedals.com

Play on Pedals is only possible thanks to players of People's Postcode Lottery.

Play on Pedals would like to thank North Lanarkshire Council Early Years Team for their guidance in developing resources and Glasgow Sport and Glasgow City Council for additional funding.

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