

## PARENT INFORMATION

### Social and Emotional Skill Building with Little Highway Heroes

*Little Highway Heroes* is a social and emotional skill building program in which your child will be participating. It is designed for children who are turning 4 or 5 years of age in this calendar year, and it will contribute to the 5 learning outcomes that are outlined in the Early Years Framework, these being:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators

*Little Highway Heroes* helps children to develop positive habits of social and emotional well-being through building skills – TOOLS - that will assist them to respond to situations that they encounter - not only in the classroom and the playground - but wherever they are playing, learning or interacting with others. Through incorporating these skills – TOOLS - into daily life, children will be developing their **resilience** and their ability to deal with the many circumstances that they will meet along their 'Highway.'

Your involvement in the *Little Highway Heroes* program is crucial to the successful integration of these skills into your child's life. It will help you to become familiar with the language and concepts of *Little Highway Heroes*, and facilitate its incorporation into every day family life, creating a frame of reference for practical ways to problem-solve the many little - and big - difficulties that all children and their families meet.

*Little Highway Heroes* builds the foundation for *Highway Heroes* – the follow-on social and emotional well-being program for children who are in School Years 1 to 3 and School Years 4 to 6. The children are therefore exposed to consistent concepts and language - related to their social and emotional well-being - throughout their primary school education.

#### ***Little Highway Heroes: An Outline***

*Little Highway Heroes* (and *Highway Heroes* -School Years 1-3 and 4-6) is based on the metaphor of everyone being on a journey travelling along 'The Highway of Life.' And along the way, all travellers meet the inevitable challenges and small, middle-size and big difficulties - BUMPS. In *Highway Heroes* (School Years 1-3 and 4-6) HAZARDS are also identified – being those more dangerous difficulties that have the potential to interrupt – or even sabotage - the journey along The Highway. In *Little Highway Heroes*, however, BUMPS are the only difficulties considered – although they are recognised as being little, middle-size or big. Being able to deal with BUMPS requires TOOLS – skills – and these are the focus of *Little Highway Heroes*.

*Little Highway Heroes* has 4 Highways and these are:

- The Highway (an introduction to 'The Highway' metaphor)
- The Playground (Social) Highway
- The Emotional (Feelings) Highway
- The Classroom (Learning) Highway



Each of these Highways has separate information detailing all the skills/TOOLS – and how you can help your child to practise them at home.

#### **The Lessons of *Little Highway Heroes*: An Outline**

Each of the 4 Highways has 5 lessons. All 20 *Little Highway Heroes* lessons have a theme which focuses on a situation – a BUMP - that is relevant to that particular Highway – or a number of the Highways. Usually a TOOL which is helpful in dealing with that BUMP is then introduced, and its way of functioning explained. For example, Bossyness (the Bulldozer) who causes playground BUMPS is discussed. The children are then taught a TOOL to help them to deal effectively with bossiness which is often upsetting and causes conflict.

An activity follows - in which the theme of the lesson and the TOOL is further explored through some active learning method - a role play or a sorting activity - identifying the central concept that is being taught, and providing an opportunity for the children to try out the TOOL.

This is followed by a story which brings to life the BUMP and/or the TOOL as it occurs in a relevant situation. The stories involve central characters – 4 boys and 4 girls - named Mark, Amanda, Sally, Sam, Erin, Eric, Lainie and Leo. The 4 characters are learning to deal with the BUMPS on that particular Highway using their TOOLS. There is also an additional character known as 'Sillyness The Speed Wobble', who has been known to frequent homes, playgrounds and classrooms – have you spotted Sillyness hanging around? Sillyness The Speed Wobble is referred to interchangeably as 'he' and 'she' – as it represents a behaviour that is gender 'non-selective.' These 9 characters also feature as hand puppets in the *Little Highway Heroes* kit.



Every lesson concludes with a song in which the children are encouraged to move and dance. Memorising the songs is not important; the chorus is a reasonable aim - particularly for the younger children. What is important is enjoying the rhythm and having another way of illustrating the BUMPS and their TOOLS.

Should you wish to have your own home pack of the puppets and songs to really embed these concepts into family life, they are available for purchase separately from the *Little Highway Heroes* kit. See the website: [www.bestprograms4kids.com](http://www.bestprograms4kids.com) for further details, or email Helen or Claire at: [info@bestprograms4kids.com](mailto:info@bestprograms4kids.com)