



How **safe** is my school

Teacher's guide



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The **How safe is my school** resources have been developed in partnership between Neighbourhood Watch Victoria and RACV.

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Introduction

Neighbourhood Watch Victoria believes that everybody has the right to feel safe at all times.

One proven multi-disciplinary approach to improving the safety of an area is through the application of “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design” (CPTED) – a series of principles that can be applied to residential areas, public space, retail, commercial and schools, to improve both the sense of safety of residents, users and/or students, and the actual security of the built environment.

Much of CPTED is common sense – that an area that looks cared for, is welcoming, and easy to navigate will provide people with a positive experience.

We have adapted the more formal ISO-recognised CPTED standards to a new program – **How safe is my school** – which is easy to understand and designed specifically for children to do as part of their school-based learning.

Our aim is for children to learn the simple things they can do to feel and be safer – knowledge that they can take back to their families and on through their lives.

How safe is my school resources are designed to help students and teachers to think about safety and investigate how they can make a difference in their school environment.

When thinking and talking about safety it is can be common to focus solely on people’s actions and behaviours. The [CPTED](http://www.cpted.net) (www.cpted.net) approach looks at broader issues of safety by investigating how our physical environment can impact our sense of safety. It recognises how an area is perceived and how design can enhance our sense of safety. It also explores how taking shared responsibility for maintaining a welcoming and cared for space helps to discourage negative behaviours.

There are four key principles* when looking at how spaces are designed with crime prevention and safety in mind.

- **Coming and going** looks at how we move around an area. What features such as fencing and paths help people find their way around confidently or to stop them from entering private or dangerous areas?
- **Keeping watch** assesses how we watch over an area. Is an area in full view so people can keep an eye on it easily? Are trees and bushes trimmed? Is there good lighting?
- **Showing we care** considers how we look after an area. Is the area clean and well maintained? Are broken windows and lights fixed? Rubbish bins emptied? Graffiti tagging cleaned up?
- **Having fun** explores how we use an area in positive ways. Is there play equipment? Picnic tables and benches? Sporting facilities?

* principles are based on *Designing Safe Spaces: Involving Children and Youth in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design*, 2005 National Crime Prevention Council, USA.

Victorian Curriculum links

The **How Safe Is My School** program adheres to Victoria's Child Safe Standard 9. **How safe is my school** resources are written to align with the Victorian Curriculum and based on a modified 5Es model. The resources will take primary school students on a journey to expand their safety knowledge and empower them to improve safety around their school.

Domain	Lesson	Outline
Engage	Lesson 1 Thinking about what makes a place safe	Start by engaging with students and exploring their prior knowledge about safety.
Explain	Lesson 1 Thinking about what makes a place safe	Teachers explicitly teach relevant knowledge, concepts and skills in multiple ways to connect new and existing knowledge.
Explore	Lesson 2 Exploring my school	Provide hands-on experience and give students a real-world opportunity to look at their school environment through a safety mindset.
Elaborate	Lesson 3 Taking action	Support students to plan and conduct the actions they will take to improve the safety of their school grounds.
Evaluate	Lesson 3 Taking action	Students to demonstrate their understanding of safety and place, reflect on their learning journey, and teachers collect evidence about the achievement of outcomes.



Subject	Level	Code	Content description	Elaboration	Resource
Health and PE	Levels 1 & 2	VCHPEP073	Practise strategies they can use when they need help with a task, problem or situation at home and/or at school.	Recognising photos and locations of safe places and people who can help.	Lesson 1
Geography	Levels: Foundation, 1 & 2	VCGGC060	Collect and record geographical data and information from the field and other sources.	Asking questions about features they observe in the local area and collecting and recording information using all their senses.	Lesson 2
Geography	Levels: Foundation, 1 & 2	VCGGK069	Reasons why some places are special, and some places are important to people, and how they can be looked after.	Proposing possible actions that could be taken by the student to improve an important place such as the school grounds or local park.	Lesson 3
Design and Technologies	Levels: Foundation, 1 & 2	VCDSCD018	Explore needs or opportunities for designing, and the technologies needed to realise designed solutions.	Exploring opportunities around the school for designing solutions, for example, how school play areas could be improved; how the school removes classroom waste and identifying opportunities to reduce, recycle and re-use materials; reviewing the school canteen menu to identify healthy food options and suggesting changes to promote good health.	Lesson 3
Health and PE	Levels 3 & 4	VCHPEP091	Identify and practise strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing.	Explore and practise strategies that could be used to make the home and school environment safer	Lesson 1–3
				Identifying and practising ways of behaving in the playground that ensures the safety of themselves and others.	Lesson 1–3
Health and PE	Levels 5 & 6	VCHPEP113	Explore how participation in outdoor activities supports personal and community health and wellbeing and creates connections to the natural and built environment.	Discussing how a connection to the local community, environment or special places can influence personal and community health and wellbeing.	Lesson 1–3
				Discussing how access to natural and built environments can help or hinder participation in physical activities.	Lesson 1–3

Lesson 1 | Thinking about what makes a place safe

Teacher background information

When discussing safety with students, the focus can be primarily be on the attitudes and behaviours of the students, their friends, and the people they meet. While this is very important, the **How safe is my school** resources enables students to explore how a place is designed and how this impacts their sense of safety. Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) focuses on how the physical environment can be designed or modified to make people feel safer and negative behaviours less likely to occur.

This first lesson has a range of activities to enable students to start using language around how their physical environment impacts their sense of safety. It also introduces the four CPTED principles of **Coming and going**; **Keeping watch**; **Showing we care**; and **Having fun**.

The PowerPoint presentation available from the website includes all photographs and the time-lapse park video clip mentioned in the activities. Download the presentation at bit.ly/HSIMSPresentation

Learning intentions

We are learning how to identify and describe features that make an area safe or unsafe.



Activity time

There are 4 components related to this activity

- a) Photo activity
- b) Introduction: whole class discussion with key questions
- c) Drawing activity
- d) What makes a safe place activity

a) Introduction: whole class discussion with key questions

Close your eyes and imagine a playground. It has brightly-coloured play equipment with a slide and a swing. There are benches to sit with your friends. Can you hear them talking? Next to the play equipment there are children playing with a soccer ball. The grass was cut yesterday. Can you smell the newly-cut lawn? The garden beds are full of beautiful flowers.



Thinking time

- How does this playground make you feel?
- Would you want to play there?
- Does it feel safe?

Now imagine that same playground, but the grass has grown long and brown. The garden beds are full of weeds and the flowers are dead. There are no rubbish bins, so people have just thrown rubbish on the ground. Can you smell the rotten apple? Now look at the play equipment. Some people have sprayed graffiti all over the slide and the swing is broken and missing its seat.



Thinking time

- How does this playground make you feel?
- Would you want to play there?
- Does it feel safe?



b) Photo activity

The teacher explains that this activity will be about identifying how you are feeling when looking at photos of playgrounds.

Begin with a whole class discussion/brainstorm and fill out a “See, think, wonder” table on the board.

What do you **see, think, wonder** about the photos I have displayed on the board?



(The playground photos are included in the PowerPoint presentation available from the website and in the Resources section on page 15. Download the presentation at bit.ly/HSIMSPresentation

See	Think	Wonder

Whole class discussion



Discussion time

- Which playground would you want to play in?
- Which playground would you feel safer?
- How might you feel if these were your playgrounds?
- What makes a school playground a safe place to play?

Describe what you notice in each of these photos? (Students can discuss colour, equipment type, location and landscape such as trees, sand and grass). Teacher examples or models one feeling they are having when looking at photos

In groups of 3 or pairs brainstorm/discuss *all* the feelings you have after viewing these photos (eg: happy, sad, unsure, excited, worried, scared, etc.)

c) Drawing activity

Teacher explains that this activity will be about identifying what features would generate a sense of safety in the school yard.

As a class watch the time-lapse video (this is included in the PowerPoint presentation available from the website or view the images on page 17 & 18. Download the presentation at bit.ly/HSIMSPresentation

Discuss what has happened to park over time and does its sense of safety change?



Divide the class in half.

Each student draws an imaginary school yard. Half of the class will be drawing a safe school yard and half an unsafe school yard.

Display the illustrations and discuss the features the students have chosen.



Discussion time

- Do all the safe school yards or all the unsafe school yards have features in common?
- How do the school yards make them feel?
- What could be done to increase their feelings of being in a safe space?

Students write intention statements from the discussion.

- I feel safe when ...
- I feel unsafe when ...



View the images in the [Resources](#) section on page 17 & 18.

d) What makes a safe place activity

Teacher explains that this activity will be about identifying what features would generate a sense of safety in the school yard and is in preparation to exploring their own school yard.

Teacher describes 4 CPTED principles. Students match the photos with each principle.

The photos are also included in the PowerPoint presentation available from the website and in the [Resources](#) section on page 16. Download the presentation at bit.ly/HSIMSPresentation



Coming and going – how do people move around an area.

What signs, gates, fencing, landscaping, and paths are there to welcome, and help people find their way around confidently; or to stop people from entering private or dangerous areas?



Showing we care – how do people look after an area.

Is the area clean and well maintained? Are broken windows and lights fixed? Rubbish bins emptied. Graffiti tagging cleaned up.



Keeping watch – how do people watch over an area.

Is in area in full view so people can keep an eye on it easily? Are trees and bushes trimmed? Is there good lighting?



Having fun – how do people use an area in positive ways.

Is there play equipment? Picnic tables and benches? Sporting facilities?

Lesson 2 | Exploring my school

Teacher background information

Using the knowledge developed in Lesson 1, students can put this into practice in a real-world environment – their school. Students will investigate their school environment and conduct an audit based on the CPTED principles.

CPTED principles:

- **Coming and going** looks at how we move around an area. What features such as fencing and paths help people find their way around confidently or to stop them from entering private or dangerous areas?
- **Keeping watch** assesses how we watch over an area. Is an area in full view so people can keep an eye on it easily? Are trees and bushes trimmed? Is there good lighting?
- **Showing we care** considers how we look after an area. Is the area clean and well maintained? Are broken windows and lights fixed? Rubbish bins emptied. Graffiti tagging cleaned up.
- **Having fun** explores how we use an area in positive ways. Is there play equipment? Picnic tables and benches? Sporting facilities?

When choosing an area of the school to investigate and audit, it is important to reflect on the actual usage of the grounds at your school.

- What areas are used by students and parents?
- Where do people like to congregate?
- Are there neglected spaces?
- What areas are problematic or invite dangerous behaviours?

Examples of problematic areas:

- People wearing walking tracks through lawn and garden beds instead of using pathways
- Out of bounds areas that some students/parents like to use
- Lack of signage around schools which can lead to confusion for parents and visitors
- Areas that are difficult for teachers to supervise

Learning intentions

We are learning how to examine a location to identify features that make an area safe or unsafe.



Activity time


Group size: The school environment audit can be done as a whole class or in small groups depending on level and ability.

Location: Either one space can be chosen, or a range of locations can be assessed. Try to choose areas that cover as many of the principles as possible.


Resources: Print one Audit sheet (page 19) for each group and location being audited. Download the Audit sheet at bit.ly/HSIMSAudit

Encourage students to use their senses when assessing the location and to think of both the positive and negative aspects.

Students can also take photos or video clips of the positive and negative aspects of the location.



How safe is my school



Audit sheet

Student Name: _____ Location Name _____

<p>Coming and going - Are there any signs, fences, paths or gates? Are they in good condition?</p>	<p>Keeping watch - Is it easy to see the area so teachers can supervise? Are there overgrown bushes? Are there lights and do they work?</p>
<p>Showing we care - Are there any bins, is there litter, is anything broken or smells bad? Is there graffiti or weeds?</p>	<p>Having fun - Are there any play equipment, sports areas, quiet zones or buddy/friendship seats?</p>

View the Audit Sheet in the [Resources](#) section on page 19.

Lesson 3 | Taking action

Teacher background information

The final step of the **How safe is my school** resource gives an opportunity for students to have a sense of ownership and responsibility for their environment by empowering them to make a difference.

Using the information gathered from the school audits in Lesson 2, as a class discuss the different locations and the areas that need improving.

This step can be as large or small as the class wants to make it. It can be a one-off project, or each class could adopt an area of the school grounds for which they take special responsibility.

Ideas

- As a class, decide to look after a particular area of the school grounds by gardening, re-painting lines on courts, new timber on seats, painting a mural, etc.
- Students could make a resource (video, poster, board game, etc.) that encourages safe behaviour in a certain area of the school grounds.
- Write to the school council or present at a school assembly about an area that needs improving.
- Fundraise for a new piece of play equipment.

Learning intentions

We are using our knowledge and skills about safety to make our school environment safer.



Activity time

- As a class vote on the one issue around the school, your class would like to take action to improve.
- Discuss what would solve or improve the situation.
- Determine if you can complete the activity by yourselves or if you will need external assistance (eg: parents, school council)?
- Determine if there are any costs involved? How will these funds be raised?
- Plan the action you are going to take.

Remember: the plan is to make the area safer, friendlier and more welcoming, and for the students completing the project to make a positive contribution to the school.

Teacher resources

Time lapse video	– Download the video at bit.ly/HSIMSVideo
Photo activity	– page 15
What makes a safe place activity	– page 16
Drawing activity - playground “before”	– page 17
Drawing activity - playground “after”	– page 18
My school audit sheet	– page 19



Photo activity





What makes a safe place activity



Match the principle to the picture

- 1** Showing we care – how do people look after an area.

Is the area clean and well maintained? Are broken windows and lights fixed? Rubbish bins emptied. Graffiti tagging cleaned up.

- 3** Coming and going – how do people move around an area.

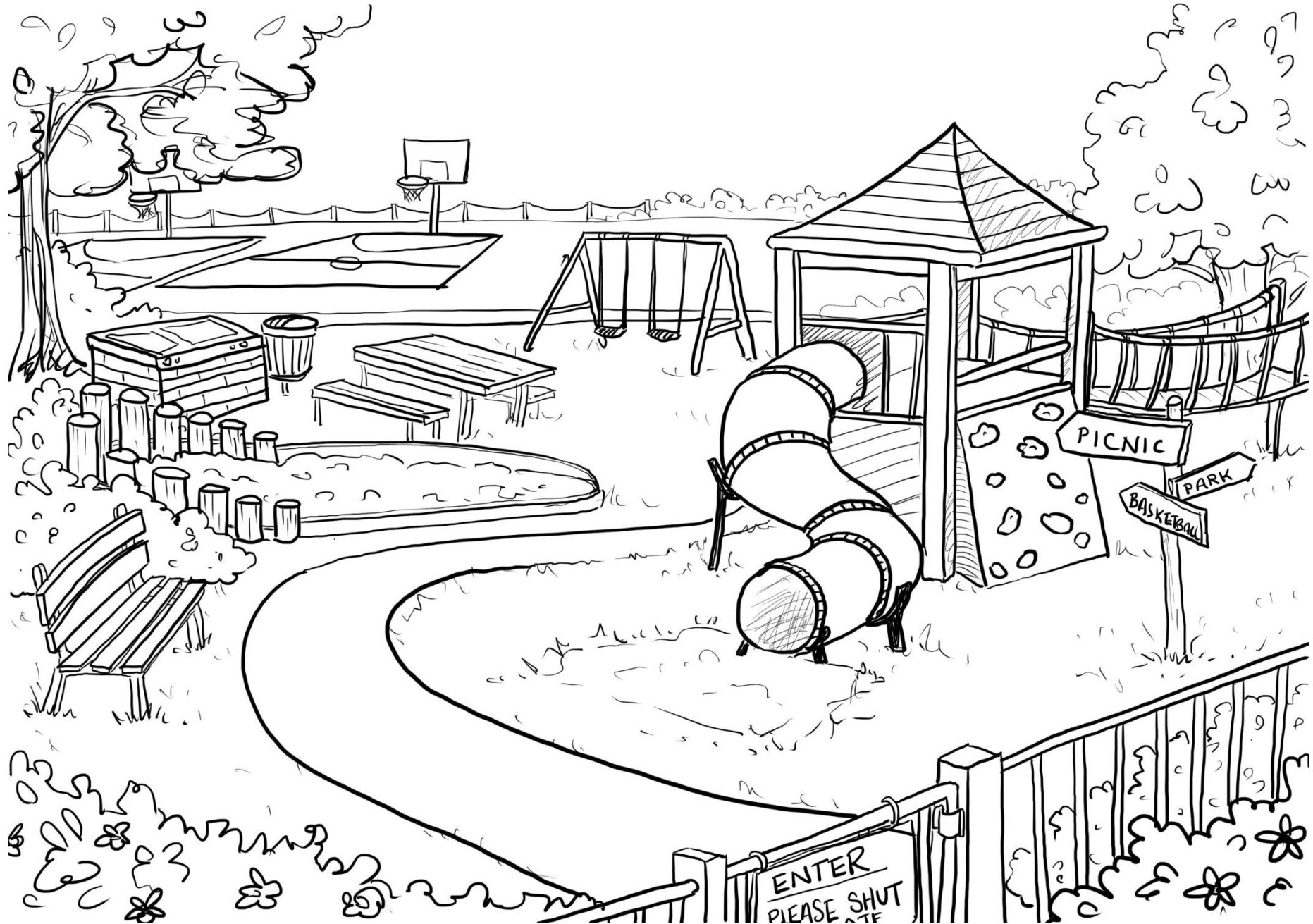
What signs, gates, fencing, landscaping, and paths are there to welcome, and help people find their way around confidently; or to stop people from entering private or dangerous areas?

- 2** Having fun – how do people use an area in positive ways.

Is there play equipment? Picnic tables and benches? Sporting facilities?

- 4** Keeping watch – how do people watch over an area.

Is in area in full view so people can keep an eye on it easily? Are trees and bushes trimmed? Is there good lighting?







Student Name: _____

Location Name _____

Coming and going - Are there any signs, fences, paths or gates? Are they in good condition?

Keeping watch - Is it easy to see the area so teachers can supervise? Are there overgrown bushes? Are there lights and do they work?

Showing we care - Are there any bins, is there litter, is anything broken or smells bad? Is there graffiti or weeds?

Having fun - Are there any play equipment, sports areas, quiet zones or buddy/friendship seats?