



## Communities in Onkaparinga are taking back the streets

April 2021

### An interview with Leeza Peters Community Activation Officer - Play Streets - City of Onkaparinga

#### What is your role at City of Onkaparinga?

I am the Community Activations Officer for Play Streets. Through our community plan, we identified the importance of our communities being active and healthy. The Play Streets initiative to reclaim residential streets for neighbours of all ages to connect and play to improve health and wellbeing is a great partnership to support our strategic intent. We have developed a Play Streets guide and it is my role to step hosts through the process of holding a Play Street. This includes assisting hosts to talk with their neighbours about it, organise permits, recruit helpers, loaning sporting equipment and providing giveaways. We also provide insurance cover for the gatherings.

#### What are the benefits for the community that the Council sees from supporting Play Streets?

It's important to provide opportunities for people to meet their neighbours, spend time with friends and play safely on their local streets. This supports physical, social, mental and community wellbeing. Our work with past street gatherings has indicated neighbours are more likely to connect more regularly and to ask for help when they need it as a result of gathering on closed streets.

Growing quality connections between neighbours brings a sense of belonging, increases confidence and improves health

#### #1000PlayStreets

1000 Play Streets is a Play Australia initiative to empower communities to reclaim their quiet residential streets across Australia as places for neighbours of all ages to connect and play regularly, and to ultimately improve the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

Our vision is that children, families, neighbours, pedestrians, bike riders and motorists are given equal priority on our quiet residential streets, to share these important community spaces in a safe and respectful manner to enable all children to play outside every day.

Check out this great 1000 Play Streets event on YouTube from Campbelltown City Council who are actively involved in 1000 Play Streets:



#1000PlayStreets



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for all generations. Covid-19 had a large impact on isolation and decline in physical activity, especially in young people so this project encourages communities to reconnect and unite neighbours while having fun through unstructured play and conversation.

### What are the residents planning for the next Play Streets event?

The host, Gemma and her family, moved to the area in June 2019 seeking a ‘tree change’ and wasn’t able to meet all of her neighbours due to COVID. Staying indoors more last year Gemma thought this was a great opportunity to connect with others on her street. We will loan some sporting equipment for the day and provide some active giveaways such as frisbees and skipping ropes. We plan to capture the day through photos and video case study.

### Anything else you’d like to add Leeza?



Our first Play Street in Hackham West had an enthusiastic turnout with around 30 people of all ages and a great range of activities. Families embraced the play and some local children enjoyed the opportunity to ride their bikes, scooters and skateboards on the road without fear of cars coming. One family bought their own basketball ring onto the road for the children to play while others were surprised to receive free giveaways such as frisbees, chalk and skipping ropes and free sunscreen. One resident on the day began chatting with another working on the event and both discovered they lived on that street and had never met before. There were other connections made between children who had never met before and some children continued to play after the event at a nearby school oval.

We are proud to be working with Play Australia and found the 1000 Play Streets workshop at City of Campbelltown on 18 February very useful. This gathering provided the opportunity to network with other councils, to be inspired and address common issues such as street closure challenges.

### Play Australia would like to thank the City of Onkaparinga for their support and commitment to #1000PlayStreets

[www.onkaparingacity.com](http://www.onkaparingacity.com)



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