

1. Children need to play.

It is vital for their physical and emotional development and for their social learning. It is also a human right under the UN Convention on the [Rights of the Child](#).

2. The street is a blank canvas.

It allows for truly child-led '[free](#)' play, providing important benefits over structured, organised activities in designated spaces.

3. Children like to play near home and have traditionally done so.

A 2007 poll found that 71% of adults played out on their street every day compared to only 21% of children today ([Play England](#)).

4. Children need ample space to play energetically.

Many homes do not have gardens and in cities these tend to be small. Many children can't get to parks and other open spaces easily whereas the street is instantly accessible.

5. Playing in the street increases community cohesion.

It brings neighbours of all ages together by providing a sense of common space and shared ownership. It can engender a sense of collective responsibility and thereby increase the safety of the neighbourhood.

6. Street play creates new opportunities for socialising and friendships.

These are often across age groups, or with children that go to other schools. Playing out also increases contact between children and adults, helping to build up familiarity and trust.

7. Children learn valuable skills when they play out.

They learn important social skills and they gain understanding about the world around them. They do this through dealing independently with situations as they arise.

8 Playing in the street allows for 'semi-supervised' play.

Parents can get on with housework or looking after other children in the house while allowing children to play outside. Children are far more likely to play outside every day if allowed to play near their home, rather than relying on parents to take them somewhere else, like the park.

9. The street is the "starting point for all journeys" (Tim Gill, 2007)

The ability to play independently in the street is a first step towards greater independent mobility around the neighbourhood - to visit friends, go to the park or walk to school

10. Streets constitute the vast majority of public space in the city.

To see them only as places to drive and park cars is to massively undervalue them. Streets can and should be places where people can sit, talk, read, play and walk - and even sing and dance if they want to! The only way this will happen is if we start to use them differently.