

A NOTE TO TEACHERS

About the story

Although the story gives messages about safety in play it has deeper messages particularly about taking responsibility, and understanding how others feel, both essential life skills. Also important are gender issues. Karim lacks respect for his sister and she gently but firmly, shows why she deserves it.

Activities.

Try: 1. Drama outside with the playground marked out as the cricket field as the road.

2. Road surveys related to driver safety [linked with graph making in maths.]

3. Telling the story from Ali's point of view.

4. Discussion .. How can we keep our younger brothers and sisters safe ? How good are we at doing this?

Story line by participants at a workshop in the Institute of Education and Development in Karachi February 2006. Edited by Hugh Hawes for this publication

CRICKET LAND



*...and why
playing too
near the road
could make you
OUT for life.*

CRICKET LAND

There were three children in the Malhar family, one girl, Fouzia, who was eleven and two boys, Karim and Ali who were nine and seven. Fouzia did her best to look after her brothers and keep them safe, but Karim often got into trouble. His head was just stuffed full of cricket. He knew all the batsmen and all the scores and all the matches and all the runs. At school his favourite subject was Maths and he could work out batting and bowling averages faster than the teacher. But when he was thinking about cricket he went deaf to anything else. He just didn't hear you. His mind was far away in some stadium scoring a hundred in a test match *He was in cricket land*

And on Sunday morning that was where he was, *in cricket land*. He missed his breakfast and ran outside. He was going to play with his friends on a piece of open ground not far from his house. The ground was between two big roads

“Now you beginning to think straight,” said Fouzia. “And , no, I will not tell Mummy and Daddy. You and I will go wash Ali's leg and and have a long talk with him”

And they went inside.

They rushed towards Ali. At the last minute he had jumped back off the road holding the cricket ball. He had hurt his leg. He was crying. He was shaking like a leaf...
BUT HE WAS ALIVE.

"I remember the number of the lorry," cried Fouzia." I have written it down. I will tell the police. The lorry was driving too fast. The brakes did not work well".

So everyone went home. Karim was very, very quiet. After a little while he said "Fouzia are you going to tell my Mummy and Daddy? "

Fouzia was also very quiet.

Then she said, "Tell them what?"

"That I didn't listen to you," said Karim.

"And what else," said Fouzia.

"That I did not mind about Karim standing there too near the road."

"And what else" said Fouzia.

Karim thought a long time. Then he said very, very quietly. "I just thought of myself. Ali wanted to play so badly. He ran onto the road because he wanted to show me. I should help him play, not laugh at him."

Lorries sped along these roads.

big lorries,

big loads that tipped sideways,

big wheels that were not straight,

big drivers with red eyes,

sometimes too tired to drive.

sometimes too drugged to drive

sometimes, like Karim, thinking of something else

Mr. and Mrs. Malhar had gone out. They had told Fouzia to 'watch out for the boys'.

"Be careful when you cross the road" Fouzia told him.

...no reply... *Karim was in cricket land*

"Can I come too," said Ali. Ali thought his brother was very grown up.

"No", said Fouzia, "It is too near the road . It is dangerous"

Karim came out of cricket land for a moment.

"Don't listen to her," he said. "She's just a girl. Girls can't play cricket. Yes you can come and watch me".

"But Mummy and Daddy will be angry," shouted Fouzia
.....no reply ...*Karim was in cricket land* .

The two boys crossed the road. Ali held Karim by the hand.

Karim hardly noticed. In his mind he had already scored fifty.

“Can I play” asked Ali

.....no reply ...*Karim was in cricket land*

“PLEASE,” cried Ali

His brother looked at him. “You are too young to play well. You cannot play with us,” he said. “You stay here in the field here near the edge of the road. If I hit a hard one you can field it.”

.. and he ran towards his friends in the middle of the ground.

Ali waited. He wanted to show how good he was at cricket. Perhaps they would let him bat next time. He did not have to wait long.

Karim was batting,

Crack .. he hit the ball with all his strength. It came straight to Ali.

But Ali was little and the ball was coming very fast. It went straight through his legs and shot towards the road.

Ali ran after it. He must stop it and throw it back. He must show that how good he was. Then they would pick him next time. The ball ran onto the road. Ali ran after the ball.

Then it all happened.

ALI shouted Fouzia from the other side of the road.

ALI shouted Karim and his friends from the cricket field.

EEEEEEEEEE went the tires of a great lorry They could all see the face of the big driver with his big red eyes as he drove away as fast as he could.

