

## WHAT IS ... THE METAPHOR BEHIND THE HIGHWAY RESOURCES?

### HOW ARE YOU TRAVELLING ALONG LIFE'S HIGHWAY?

We are all travelling along the busy and bustling Highway of Life. Everyone's vehicle is different, and everyone's journey is equally different.

As we travel along The Highway, there are predictable events, such as early childhood education progressing to primary and high school education, social happenings, big life happenings and every day happenings.

Along The Highway of our lives, travelling towards the destination of being happy and successful, we need to keep our fuel tanks full of Resilience – social resilience, emotional resilience and learning resilience. That's how *HIGHWAY HEROES* roll!



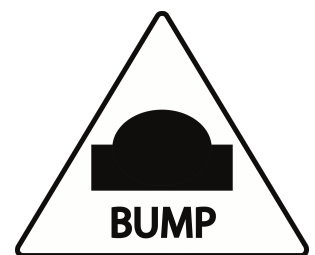
### BUMPS, HAZARDS AND TOOLS ON THE HIGHWAY

Everyone, absolutely everyone, experiences adversities as they journey along The Highway of their lives. There are little ones – BUMPS - and big ones – HAZARDS. These are a normal part of life, and being able to deal with these obstacles builds resilience.

Both BUMPS and HAZARDS are a warning for the driver to slow down, to think about what they need to do, and then to use a good TOOL and continue along The Highway.

Some TOOLS are internal – like being able to calm down, to change patterns of internal dialogue, and to ignore environmental stimuli that is challenging. Other TOOLS are learned along the way – such as how to assertively manage conflict, how to get organised and avoid distractions and how to understand and manage moods.

Little children learn about Little, Middle-size and Big BUMPS – fostering acceptance rather than overwhelm - and the notion that they can use a TOOL to deal with difficulties.



# TRAVELLING ALONG THE THREE HIGHWAYS

As children travel along The Highway of Life they need to learn:

- Social awareness and management skills
- Emotional self-regulation skills
- Skills that promote an active interest in learning.

The **Little Highway Heroes** and **Highway Heroes** curriculum assist this journey along the three Highways by developing self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and social management skills. Yes! And these are skills encompassed in the Australian National Curriculum's Personal and Social Capabilities Unit.

## The Social Highway

Tiny little babies love to interact – first with eye contact and smiles, and then with verbal and body language. As children grow and develop, so does their capacity to move beyond egocentric patterns of early interactions towards social reciprocity, and the desire to build relationships, gain social inclusion and acceptance. It's a journey – learning all the social skills required for life beyond the arms of a parent, and learning how to manage the inevitable 'tough stuff' along the way. Arriving at the destination of well-developed social skills requires social resilience and playground wisdom.

## The Emotional Highway

With maturation, the human brain develops an increasing ability to emotionally self-regulate. Starting as a reactive infant who needs immediate wants satisfied, that baby can progress to a young adult who knows how to calm down, make healthy choices, resist first impulses, manage moods and bounce back from the 'tough stuff' at home, school – and everywhere. To arrive at this destination of well-developed emotional resilience and regulation requires monitoring and management of emotions, and an ability to change patterns of thinking towards positivity and finding solutions.

## The Learning Highway

A child's ability to learn is impacted by the development of many skills. Executive Functioning enables a child to plan, organise, persist, problem solve, engage in consequential thinking, time manage, and cope with the inevitable pitfalls of The Learning Journey. These skills are key to academic success and engagement, and are a pre-requisite to successfully arriving at their various