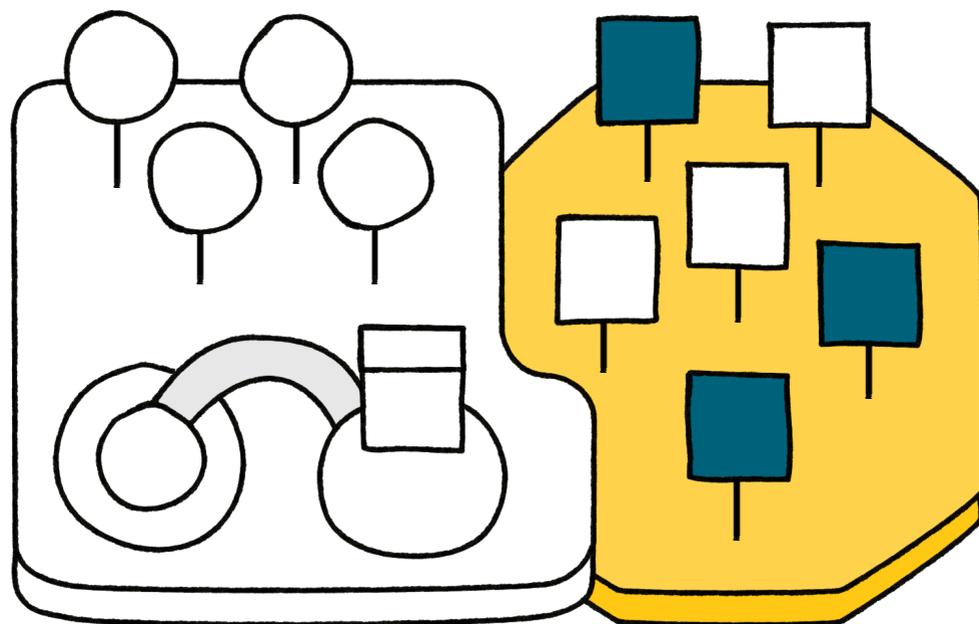


Geneva

Coaching on the school route for greater safety and independence in road traffic



Period

The project started on October 1, 2016, and has no end date.

Actors

Executive power

Typologies (types of spaces)

Intermediate areas



Institutional framework



Structural quality criteria

Strategic orientation
Designing the provisions
Cooperation

Background

The Schools Department [*Service des écoles (ECO)*] receives requests from the parents to establish new locations to be under the care of the School Patrol [*Patrouille scolaire*].

The establishment of a facility of this kind is subject to the consent of the police, who will perform an analysis and provide prior notice. The process takes several weeks and the response may be in the negative. As a consequence, the parents do not feel that they are being listened to and their anxiety remains.

At the end of 2015, ECO becomes aware of a service provided in the Canton of Valais. This consists of giving instructions to children so that they cross the road in a safe manner. The patroller remains on the pavement and does not stop the traffic; she provides guidance and makes sure that the child behaves correctly. In some municipalities, all the facilities under the care of the School Patrol have been replaced by people providing coaching. ECO does not want this; rather, it wants to use this new service as a complement to the existing facilities. Following police approval on September 26, 2016, ECO established the service, using it in various ways. When ECO receives a request, coaching is quickly given on site. This allows parents to be reassured and an initial analysis of the situation to be provided. If the police give a negative response, ECO undertakes to perform this service regularly at the site in question.

Objectives

The aim was to provide a rapid response to the parents' anxiety and to enable an experienced person to analyze the situation.

The other aim was to enable the children to gain independence. By remembering the school patroller's instructions, they would be able to cross at places they frequent outside of school hours as well. They could therefore move around in their district, adopting good habits and following advice specific to the crossings in question. A traditional facility does not always enable the patroller to carry out this kind of traffic education.

Ultimately, coaching does not require police permission; it offers freedom of action.

Target group

At present, the coaching relates to 35 referenced locations distributed across the whole of the City of Geneva.

These places concern 29 different schools, potentially the equivalent of 8,000 schoolchildren.

These figures will continue to grow because the Schools Department regularly receives new requests which do not lead to the establishment of new locations protected by the School Patrol.

Cost

The coaching does not lead to additional costs. It is carried out by the School Patrol employees without creating extra hours or a rise in their activity rates.

Project flow

The Schools Department went to the Canton of Valais to observe how the coaching is carried out on site. After assurance was obtained that this service could be transposed to the more urban context of the City of Geneva, a request was sent to the cantonal police to validate the principle.

Once the green light was given by this authority, which also gave special training to a group of school patrollers, the service was deployed progressively on an occasional basis in certain specific cases or re-iteratively in other situations: crossings which gave rise to concerns, construction sites near schools, crossings which had not obtained consent to the establishment of a location protected by the School Patrol, reinforcement of a location protected by the classic School Patrol.

The number of locations involved in coaching has not stopped growing since 2016.

Coaching services have been carried out regularly in this way at locations which have not obtained police consent for a classic School Patrol facility, that is, 35 different places including a fixed one due to the presence of a tram line.

Success factors

- Enthusiastic adherents, both parents and children.
- Involvement of the school patrollers, who see a way of diversifying their work and who recognize the usefulness of this service.
- In certain cases, the coaching makes it possible to avoid the establishment of a location protected by the classic School Patrol which is not necessarily the best solution.
- This service provides a better response to a growing phenomenon of improper behavior by motorists at School Patrol locations. The presence of a classic location does not resolve this problem in any way and creates difficulties for the School Patrol, whereas coaching enables it to keep children and parents alert and to equip them effectively for crossing in a safer way.

Challenges

- Standardizing coaching by means of targeted training.
- Increasing the frequency of this service at defined locations.
- Making this service more visible and making it better known to the public, school administration, parents of schoolchildren, etc.
- Analyzing the possibility of replacing some locations protected by the classic Patrol with this service.

Conclusion

Coaching presents several advantages, including the possibility of providing road safety training to children. In fact, contrary to a classic School Patrol facility, which protects the child efficiently but does not make him or her more independent, coaching will lead the child to reflect and observe. Advice given by a professional will help the child to grasp the characteristics of a crossing and to acquire experience and confidence. All these arguments will enable a child to move around subsequently on his or her own in his or her own neighborhood without the presence of the School Patrol. In concrete terms, the child will gain a grounding which will help him or her to be independent in any urban environment. This service does not entail a financial cost at present and enables an efficient and rapid response to parents' anxiety or to a situation involving a worrying site.

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