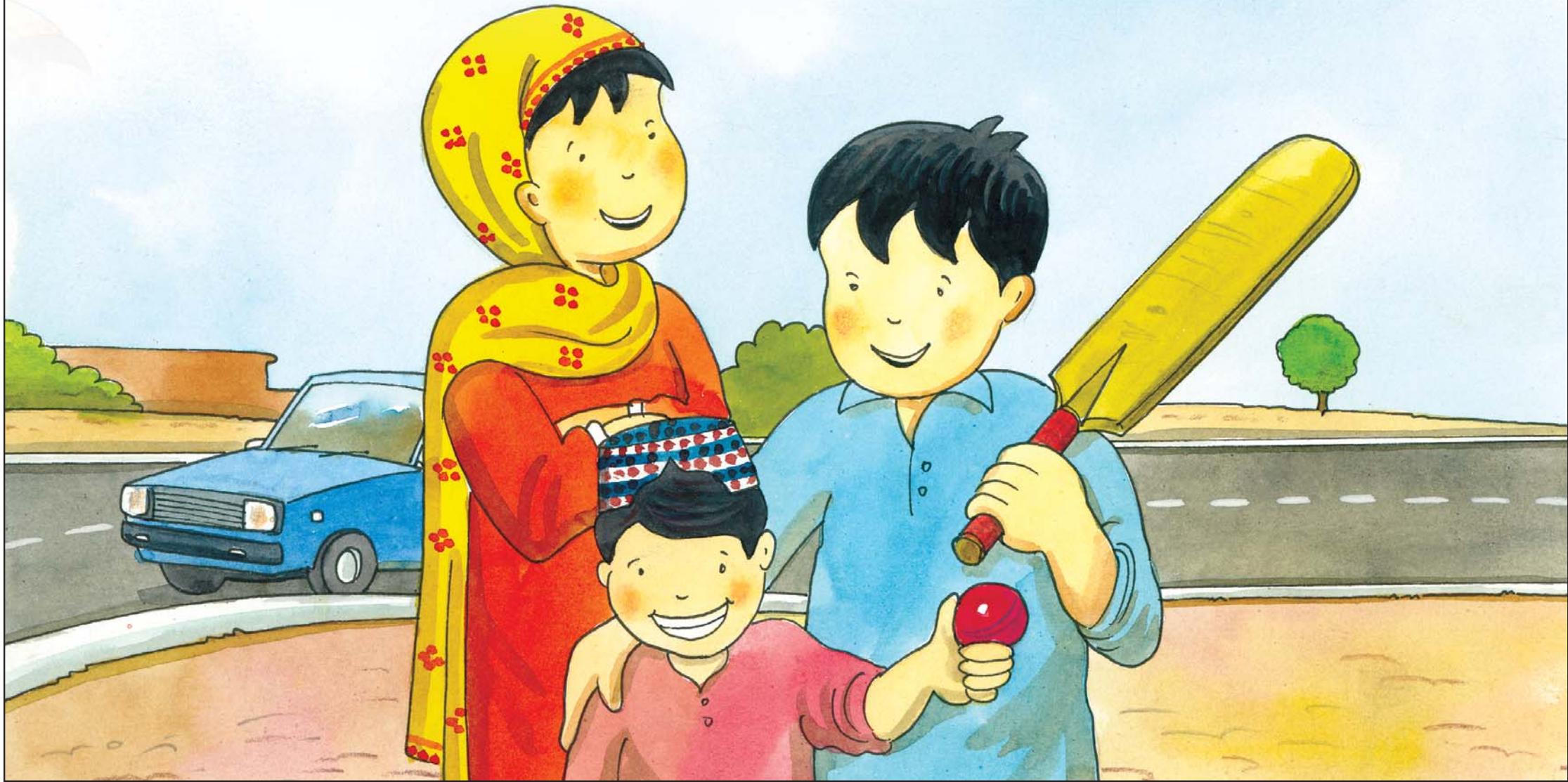


Playing on the road can be fun but...

Road Safety Stories for Children



Kiran and Raju were sister and brother. And although Kiran was 12 and Raju just 8 they meant the world to each other. They were like best friends and always stayed together and played together. Their cousin, Ali, usually came to their house to spend the day with them. Now more than spending time with his sister or his cousins Raju loved playing cricket. He thought he was the best and the strongest batsmen amongst all the children in the village. Ali was a small boy, hardly 5 years old but he loved playing cricket too.

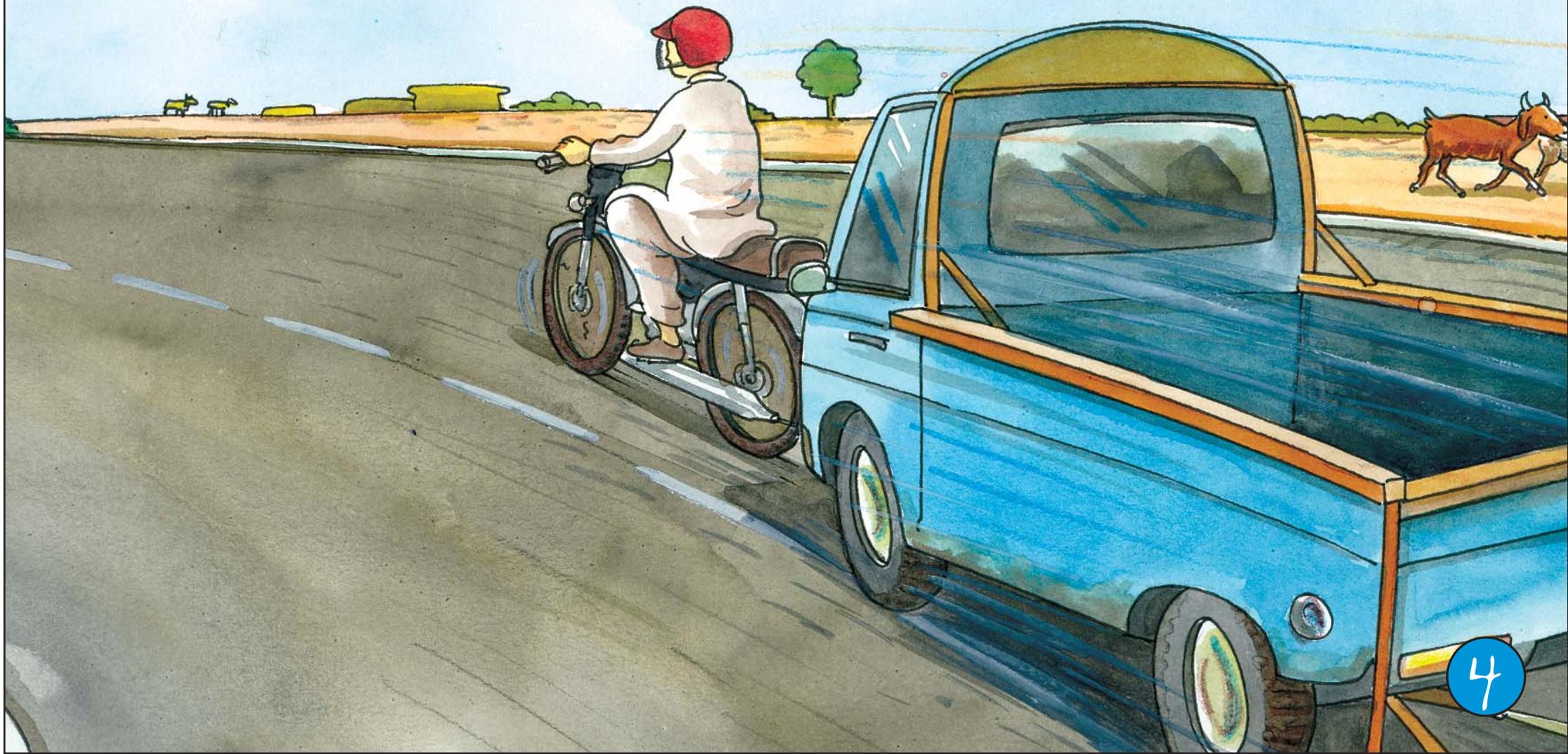




But no one loved cricket like Raju did. All day long he would think about hitting a shot here, hitting a shot there. His mind was always filled with cricket. One Sunday morning, both Raju and Kiran ran out to play cricket in the ground near by. They even brought along their cousin Ali.



The place where the children played cricket on was not exactly a big cricket ground. It was just a little area near the main road. Here the children would play cricket all day long while the cars, trucks and busses whizzed by. But the children didn't mind the noise, especially Raju. He would do anything and play anywhere just to have a chance to bat and hit a few shots all around the place.



That day too Raju wanted to bat first. His cousin Ali also wanted a turn, but Raju was insistent that he go first. Kiran tried convincing Raju to let his younger cousin have a go first. "Why don't you let Ali bat first sometimes, he's like your younger brother and you should take care of him more," said Kiran.



But Raju was too eager to hit the ball as hard as he could. "But I want to bat first because I always bat first," replied Raju. Raju just could not agree to the fact that someone else would get a turn before him.



Kiran did her best to look after her brother and cousin and keep them safe, but sometimes Raju was too much to handle. His head was just stuffed with cricket.

“I’ll tell you what Ali,” Raju said to Ali, “while I bat you can field and catch my shots. You will have more fun that way.”

“But Ali should not stand close to the road, it’s dangerous there,” said Kiran. “I learnt in school that children should always try to stay away from busy roads especially when playing,” Kiran tried to tell Raju.

“Don’t listen to her,” Raju said to Ali. “She’s just a girl. Girls can’t play cricket. You can be my fielder and I will teach you how to take catches.”

“But Mummy and Daddy will be angry because it’s not safe,” shouted Kiran

But there was no reply. The two boys crossed the road. Ali held Raju by the hand.



Raju looked at Ali. "You stay here in the field here near the edge of the road," he said. "If I hit a hard one you can field it..." Raju ran towards where he would be batting in the middle of the ground.

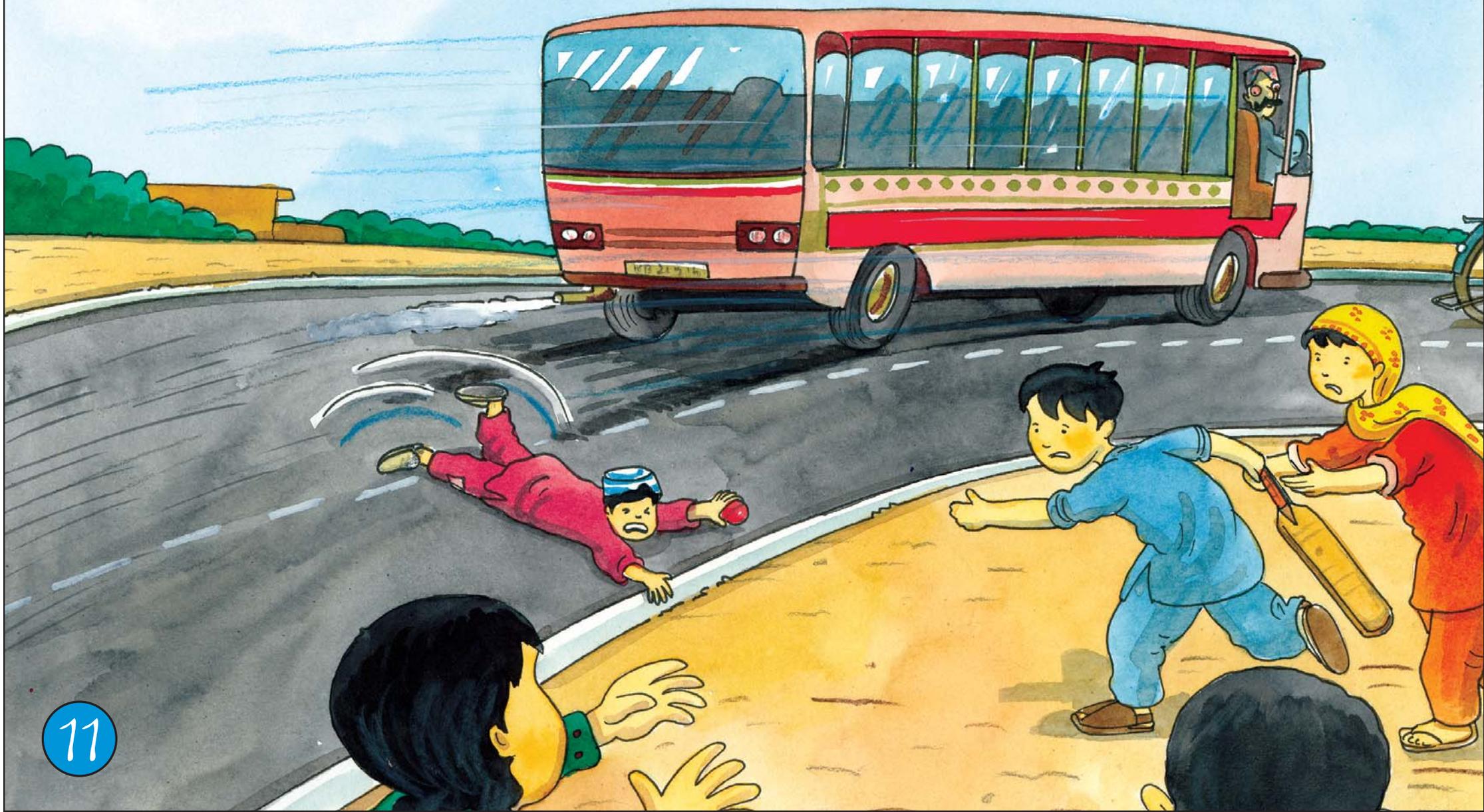
Ali waited. He wanted to show how good he was at cricket. Perhaps Raju would let him bat next time. He did not have to wait long.



Raju threw the ball and whacked it with his bat, 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. Only then Raju would let him bat next time. The ball ran onto the road. Ali ran after the ball.



Then it all happened. Crash!!!



Raju shouted for Ali and his friends from the cricket field. Ali shouted for Kiran from the other side of the road. EEEEEEEEE! went the tires of a big and fast bus. They could all see the face of the driver with his big red eyes as he drove away as fast as he could.

The children 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.

So everyone went home.

Raju was very, very quiet. After a little while he said "Kiran are you going to tell Mummy and Daddy?"

Kiran was also very quiet. Then she said, "Tell them what?"

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

"And what else," said Kiran.

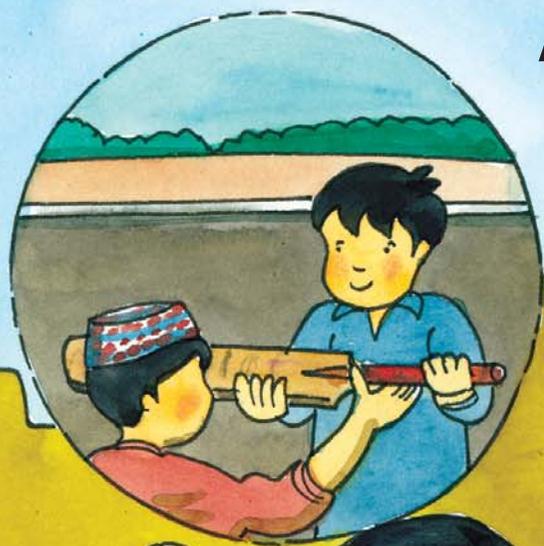
"That I did not mind about Raju standing there too near the road."

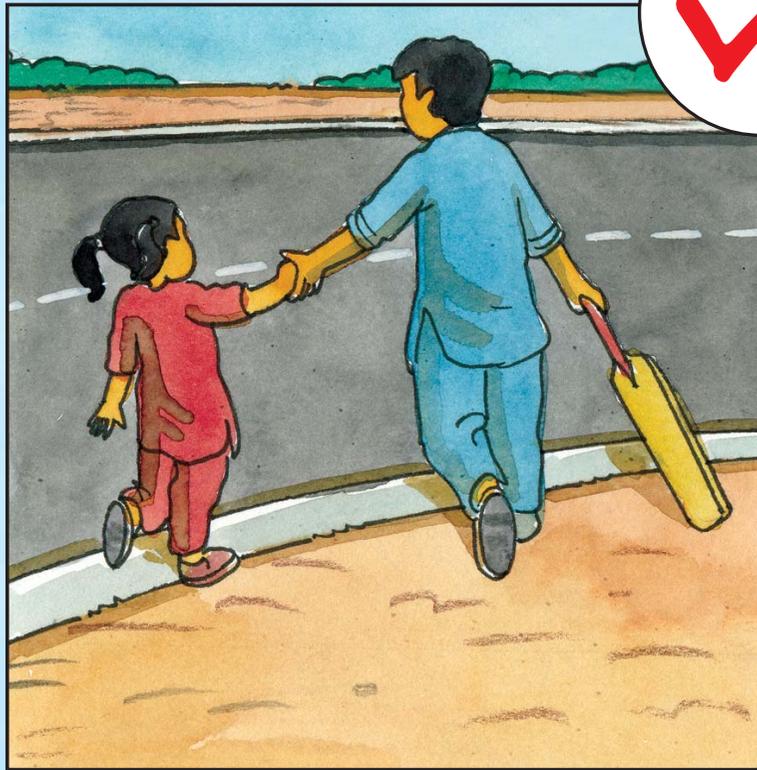
"And what else" said Kiran.

Raju 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 how well he could play. I should help him bat, not laugh at him. Also, I should be more careful when playing near the road."

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

And they went inside.



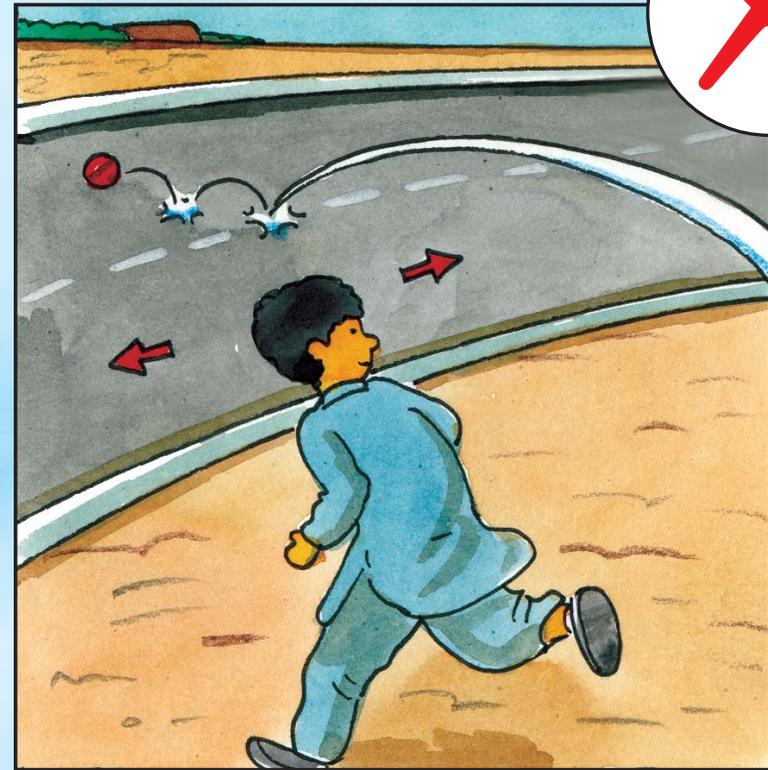


Before playing make sure the ground you are playing is not near the road or near traffic.

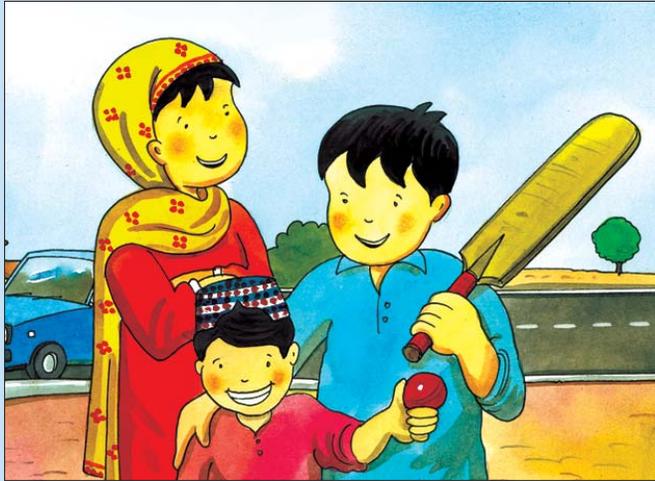
It is always best not to play near the road, especially if it is a busy one with heavy and fast traffic.

If you are playing near the road make your rules according to the traffic so the ball is not hit near the road or approaching traffic.

Also, if you are playing near a road make sure the younger children are in a safer place



If your ball runs across the road, never run after it. Pause, look and listen for approaching traffic. Then try to retrieve your ball. Never send a small child to retrieve the ball from the road



Playing on the road can be fun but...

A nice clean road usually means that children are bound to play on or somewhere near it. Kiran and Raju too enjoy playing a game of cricket at the village ground. What they don't take into consideration is the on-going traffic that is so close to their playground. Things get worse when Raju positions his younger cousin Ali right next to the road for some fielding practice. Read more about what happens next.

The Road Safety Education Program is a joint program that is being implemented in 100 schools of high-traffic districts of Sindh by the Road Sector Development Directorate, Government of Sindh and the Sindh Education Foundation.

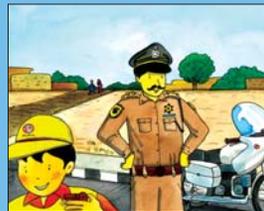
This story is part of a wonderful series of books that can help children learn more about keeping themselves safe on the streets. Read the whole series and be a road safe child.



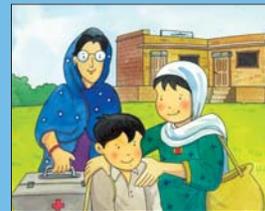
Raju's New Cycle!



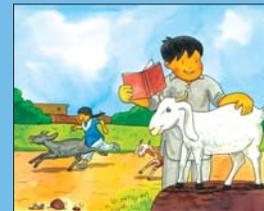
Raju Learns Something New



Who is the Stranger in the Village



Raju and his Injury



Bablu and his Cleverness



Raju and his Wonderful Dream

Central Theme: UNESCO | Illustrator: Adeel uz Zafar | Translator: Gul Baig GurGej | Composer: Khadim Hussain



Sindh Education Foundation
Government of Sindh



Road Sector Development Directorate
Works and Services Department
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