

**FOCUS ON THE FAMILY**  
BY DR JAMES DOBSON

**THE NO-KNOCK POLICY**  
We've been talking these last few days about youngsters who need a little help coping with peer pressure and rejection. Another suggestion for parents is that they teach their kids what I call a "no-knock" policy.  
One of the common characteristics of a person who feels inadequate is that he or she talks about it to anyone who will listen.  
This self-criticism isn't as uncommon as we might think. You may even be surprised by how often you tell your friends about your own faults and while you're babbling about all your inadequacies, the listener is formulating impressions of you.  
After all, you're the expert on that subject. If you think you're a loser, then others are going to tend to see you that way.  
You can help your child understand this simple principle. Teach him or her to accept blame and criticism when it's valid, but not to continually talk about embarrassing flaws and failures.  
If your kids learn to respect themselves, others will tend to be more respectful, too.  
It's called a "no-knock" policy.

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**It's our personal attitude that makes the difference**

Letter from **JASON CHIAM CHIAH SERN, REDHILL**

**NO MATTER** what rules are introduced, the attitudes of pedestrians and cyclists will determine if they can share Singapore's pavements.

How many times have pedestrians been guilty of walking on clearly designated cycling paths along the East Coast Park when they have their own footpaths? I know I have.

**Ringling a bell does not constitute right of way**

Letter from **K W WONG, TAMPINES**

I HAVE lived in Tampines for almost 20 years and worked in Tampines Central for three years. I walk to and from my office every day.

I have often seen cyclists riding through crowded bus stops instead of cycling around them. They assume pedestrians will give way if they ring their bells. This is extremely inconsiderate and dangerous.

Cyclists also ride along the corridors or walkways of HDB blocks. I once witnessed a near-collision when a cyclist sped around a blind corner.

I regularly use the footpath from Tampines Central to Tampines Street 71. I have seen as many as four cyclists riding

**Cycling – a green, healthy solution to our traffic woes**

Letter from **PATRICIA CHEE, BUKIT TIMAH**

I REFER to "The politics of sidewalks" (March 15-16). There seems to be growing demand for bicycle lanes in Singapore, yet urban planners do not seem to be heeding these calls.

Cycling offers several benefits. It can help ease our transportation woes and help reduce global warming and improve our health.

It will also help us save money by countering the effects of rising oil prices.

Kudos to Members of Parliament Teo Ser Luck and Irene Ng for raising this issue recently in Parliament.

I think our urban planners should walk around more often. They could, for example, go to Bedok MRT station, and see for themselves, the large numbers of bicycles chained to any available guard rail and tree.

They should also ride a bicycle along the East Coast Park

and feel the wind blowing in their faces. This is far more enjoyable than being squeezed with other commuters in air-conditioned "comfort".

Some major cities are already pushing bicycles as an alternative means of transport.

Paris, Barcelona, Geneva, Stockholm, Oslo and Vienna offer bicycles for rent as they try to reduce the number of cars in big cities, improve air quality and provide a fun alternative to trains.

In Paris and Barcelona thousands have bought low-cost annual passes to rent bicycles from hundreds of stations located throughout the cities.

Organisers of the 2012 London Olympics are considering a ban on the use of cars at all the Games' major venues, meaning spectators would have to walk, cycle or use public transport.

Singapore should consider these creative approaches to solving traffic congestion instead of tweaking ERPs and COEs.



BLOOMBERG

**Cyclists just want to reach their destination in one piece**

Letter from **WU XIANGCHAO, HOUGANG**

I REFER to "The politics of sidewalks". Ravi Veloo refers to a rule created in 1981 that makes it illegal for cyclists to ride on the pavement – Rule 28 of the Road Traffic Rules.

However, there were probably more pedestrians in 1981 than there are now. Since then, more pavements and footpaths have been constructed, so the rule is less relevant today. There are inconsiderate cyclists, just as there are inconsiderate drivers and pedestrians.

There are several ways for me to travel from my home in Hougang to my weekly game of soccer in Sengkang. Going by bus takes at least 40 minutes. The MRT takes 30 minutes but is more expensive. But it takes just 20 minutes to cycle to my game.

Cycling down Upper Serangoon Road, just off Hougang Avenue 8 is dangerous. I have to fight for space with heavy vehicles, buses and cars that sometimes get too close. Meanwhile, the pavement along this stretch of road remains mostly empty.

I have seen signs along Hougang Avenue 2, opposite the stadium, which states that cyclists are prohibited from riding there. All cyclists are asking for is a safe, cheap and convenient way of getting to our destinations.

And in reply to Mr Veloo's last question: In 2006, about 500 summonses were issued for cycling offences.

**WE CAN'T SHARE THE PAVEMENT**

abreast along the footpath at high speeds, forcing pedestrians onto the grass to avoid being hit.

I have also encountered inconsiderate cyclists talking on their mobile phones while riding. Some ride in a zig-zag manner, which is especially dangerous for the elderly, children and pregnant women.

There is a neighbourhood centre in Tampines Avenue 3, which has several schools nearby. It is common to see hordes of cyclists on the pavement there.

I hope that decision-makers walk around Tampines to assess how dangerous the situation really is for pedestrians.

I have yet to see a single cyclist push their bike if the situation calls for it. They just ring their bells instead.

**We need a study that is more accurate and representative**

Letter from **EDMOND NG CHOON CHAI, SEMBAWANG**

I CONCUR with Ravi Veloo, that it would be almost impossible for pedestrians and cyclists to share the pavement.

A cyclist recently rode into my arm as I stretched to press the button at a traffic light. This is not my first unpleasant encounter with cyclists.

On another occasion, a cyclist knocked one of the grocery bags I was carrying out of my hand. He did not apologise or even help to pick up the bag.

Pedestrians encounter cyclists every

day on the pavement. It is intimidating to be confronted by two cyclists – riding abreast on the pavement – when neither of them want to give way.

I have yet to see a cyclist dismount and push his bicycle along the pavement.

I feel it is unrealistic to make it legal for cyclists to use the pavement, based on the Tampines studies.

If the authorities want an accurate study of more representative situations faced by most pedestrians, I suggest the road from Sembawang MRT station to Admiralty, where the pavements are not as wide as those in Tampines.

**Would cyclists bother about pedestrians' safety?**

Letter from **LAI YEW CHAN, TAMPINES**

THE pilot study at Tampines has been augmented by public education. However, would this undo the deep-seated roots of inconsiderate or rash behaviour?

Cyclists on the pavement may be more careless as they are less likely to be seriously injured if they collide with pedestrians than with vehicles on the road.

My own experience as a Tampines resident bears this out. I often have to look behind me whenever I walk along the pavement, as many cyclists are unconcerned about whizzing past pedestrians without warning.

The police's assurances of taking action against reckless cyclists is cold comfort.

Should pedestrians have to wait for cyclists to be reckless before they are booked?

There should have been a comprehensive law – enacted in tandem with the Tampines study – that encompasses major and minor offences when cycling on pavement.

We should not tolerate inconsiderate riding on the pavement, any more than we do not condone inconsiderate driving on the roads.

**Why not conduct a more detailed study?**

Letter from **YEOW MEI SIN, UPPER BUKIT TIMAH**

RAVI Veloo has highlighted a key issue: Why should a stretch of pavement in Tampines be used as the sample for the rest of Singapore?

If the Tampines study leads to a ruling that allows cyclists to share the pavement with pedestrians, this would create a less conducive living environment in Singapore.

Why has the study been confined to just one stretch of pavement in Tampines? Why not conduct a more in-depth survey?

As a regular user of the East Coast Park, I feel many cyclists are unsociable. Many prefer to ride on the pavement meant for pedestrians. Many of these errant cyclists ring their bells to warn pedestrians, then speed off laughing.

On several occasions, I even witnessed speeding cyclists almost knock down elderly

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or very young pedestrians who were in their way.

Signs on overhead bridges and underpasses stating that cycling is strictly prohibited are often defaced by vandals.

Ravi Veloo is correct in saying that our pavements are usually too narrow for cyclists and pedestrians. I often accompany my 83-year-old mother on her morning walks. She uses a walking stick and is understandably slow. I walk alongside her and hold her arm to give her confidence.

But the sight of an elderly

lady holding a walking stick hardly deters cyclists from ringing their bells rudely to warn her to move aside. I have been so irritated that I have taken to yelling at these cyclists. Instead of apologising, they snigger and ride away, leaving my poor mother quite shaken.

Cyclists should be given their own road lanes to ride in. Errant cyclists should also be penalised.

Like Ravi Veloo, I am also curious why Rule 28 of the Road Traffic Rules exists but is hardly enforced.

**Keep S'poreans small, ban char kway teow?**

Letter from **GOH KIAN HUAT**

I REFER to the report "Beware! Super-sized S'poreans on way" (March 17).

My nine-year-old daughter, classified as severely overweight, has been attending counselling sessions with food nutritionists at the Health Promotion Board for the past two years.

However, her attempts at losing weight have not been successful. It is easy to list the types of

healthy foods one should eat, but difficult to find and eat only these healthy items.

I applaud the initiative in asking fast-food outlets to put healthier options on their menus. They should also provide healthy choices for adults.

McDonald's could offer vegetables, fruits or desserts with their set meals and Kentucky Fried Chicken could remove the skin before frying the chicken.

Customers should also be able

to choose between soft drinks and ones that contain less sugar.

Health Minister Khaw Boon Wan said he eats char kway teow only three to four times a year, and that if we eat this frequently – five to 10 times a month – there will be trouble. I find this is no different from smoking. Should such unhealthy food be allowed to be sold in the first place?

I suggest that the National Environment Agency ensures that its licencees sell healthy, nutritious food.

Save for a rainy day.

But enjoy all the sunny ones too.



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## Outcome from Feedback ...

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**Title** : S\$2.8m cycling track to be built for Sembawang and Woodlands residents  
**By** :  
**Date** : 29 June 2008 0022 hrs (SST)  
**URL** : <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/singaporelocalnews/view/356992/1/.html>

SINGAPORE: Sembawang and Woodlands residents will have a new cycling track that will make both cyclists and pedestrians happy, as it has enhanced safety features.

At both these towns, there are many cyclists among the HDB residents and foreign workers living in nearby dormitories.

They will be happy with the new 7.4-kilometre cycling track in their area. The S\$2.8-million project will be completed in the middle of next year.

As far as possible, the cycling track will be built alongside the existing roadside pavement. However, where there are constraints, there will be clear demarcations like boundary lines and icons to show which track is for cyclists and which one is for pedestrians.

Speed-regulating signs with words like "slow" and "dismount and push" will also be put up.

Health Minister Khaw Boon Wan, who is also the MP for Sembawang GRC, officiated at the ground-breaking ceremony for the project on Saturday.

He said the cycling track will also help residents save money on transport and reduce congestion on the roads.

Some 400 residents joined in the day's activities, which included a brisk walk and other exercises. - CNA/ir

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**Title** : Tampines to extend by 6 months cycling-on-footpaths trial  
**By** :  
**Date** : 01 July 2008 1829 hrs (SST)  
**URL** : <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/singaporelocalnews/view/357569/1.html>

SINGAPORE: Tampines constituency will extend its cycling-on-footpaths trial by six months from August to study if it is feasible to let pedestrians share footways with cyclists.

If the success rate is high, Tampines MPs may ask for it to be fully legalised within the constituency. The trial, which is confined within Tampines, started last May.

One of the MPs in the Tampines GRC, National Development Minister Mah Bow Tan, said: "As fuel prices are high, it's not a bad way to travel short distances. It's more than just cycling, it's also about how we can work together to promote a more gracious environment.

"I hope that Tampines is a place where those who wish to cycle can do so safely and that they will be able to share the footpaths with the pedestrians and the pedestrians are willing to share the footpaths with them and that both can co-exist happily."

To facilitate that, Tampines will improve its infrastructure by creating more cycling tracks, educating residents and stepping up enforcement to encourage responsible cycling.

Irene Ng, MP of Tampines GRC, said: "What we've done is we've hired independent traffic consultants and they've done an extensive survey involving 20,000 residents.

"They've observed that conflict rates between cyclists and pedestrians have fallen drastically during the trial. In fact, the swerving actions have fallen by a big 70 percent.

"I hope that during the next six months, cyclists and pedestrians will give it a chance."

One resident said: "I'm not in favour because I, as a pedestrian, find it very irritating that somebody's behind me, honking the bell, thinking they have the right of way. I don't like that at all."

"I think it's a wonderful idea because there're a lot of cyclists and rollerbladers here," another said.

Throughout Tampines, selected footpaths will be widened to allow both cyclists and pedestrians to use them.

Volunteer cycling wardens will also be deployed across Tampines at busy areas during the trial to educate residents about responsible cycling. The constituency now has some 190 cycling wardens and it hopes to attract 90 more.

A cyclist could be fined S\$20 for failing to ride in an orderly manner. For more serious offences, the cyclist could be imprisoned for up to a year or fined a maximum of S\$5,000 or both.

- CNA/so

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