



**ACTIVE
HEALTHY
KIDS**
AUSTRALIA



THE ROAD LESS TRAVELLED

The University of South Australia is the Lead Research University for the Report Card initiative and the Administering Organisation of Active Healthy Kids Australia.



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ACTIVE HEALTHY KIDS AUSTRALIA

Who are we?

Active Healthy Kids Australia (AHKA) is a collaboration among Australian children's physical activity and health researchers. The primary goal of AHKA is to advocate for measures to increase physical activity levels among Australian children using the Physical Activity Report Card for Children and Young People as the core monitoring metric. The purposes of the Report Card are: to encourage all Australians to make changes in their lives to promote, facilitate and model positive lifestyle behaviours of increased physical activity participation and reduced sedentary behaviours among the children and young people of today and tomorrow; to inform policy changes and decision-making across various sectors with the aim of increasing physical activity participation; and to highlight where more research is needed to better understand the physical activity of Australian children and young people.

What have we done?

In May 2014, AHKA released its inaugural Report Card alongside 14 other countries at the Global Summit on Physical Activity for Children held in Toronto (www.activehealthykids.com.au). The Australian Report Card posed the question: Is sport enough? While 'Organised Sport' was graded a B- with well over half of young Australians participating in some form of organised sport, Overall Physical Activity Levels was graded a D-, with less than half of Australian children and young people meeting the daily physical activity recommendation, and ultimately generating the key message: Sport is not enough. The Report Card reached 11 million Australians through various media platforms, with AHKA and the Report Card initiative also receiving extensive interest from various national, state and local stakeholders.

What are we going to do?

AHKA is committed to releasing annually updated Report Cards over the period 2015 to 2018 with the vision they will continue to be released beyond 2018. In **2015** and **2017**, **Progress Report Cards** will be released, focusing on one physical activity indicator. In **2016** and **2018**, in tune with the Active Healthy Kids Global Alliance's Global Matrix, AHKA will release updated **Full Report Cards** (long- and short-forms) which cover all 12 physical activity indicators (that focus on physical activity behaviours, the settings and sources of influence and strategies and investments that impact these behaviours and traits linked with physical activity participation). This information will feed into the Global Matrix of grades allowing AHKA to benchmark Australia against the rest of the world. The Global Matrix is currently a collaboration between 39 countries who are working towards releasing country Report Cards using a synchronised process (more information can be found at www.activehealthykids.org).

How can you be involved?

AHKA acknowledges that as a nation we need to work together if we want to see real improvement in the physical activity levels of young Australians. AHKA wants to engage with people from all sectors: government representatives (at the federal, state and local levels), non-government organisations, community leaders, sporting bodies, leaders and organisations, physical activity and health advocates, researchers and academics, schools and their communities, principals and teachers, parents and families, and most importantly all young Australians. All Australians need to be aware of how we can encourage, facilitate and support the young people in their lives to engage in more physical activity every day.

Anyone who wishes to contact AHKA in regards to how they can be involved can do so via email: AHKA@activehealthykidsaustralia.com.au; or more information about AHKA, this year's Progress Report Card and last year's full Report Card can be found at: www.activehealthykidsaustralia.com.au.

ACTIVE TRANSPORT – WHAT? HOW? AND WHY?

When moving from place to place, people can get to where they are going using either passive transport (e.g. driving or being driven in a car), public transport (e.g. bus, train or tram) or active transport (e.g. walking, cycling, skateboard, scooter etc.). Active transport is one of the key behaviours that contributes to the overall physical activity levels of Australia's children and young people; it involves little to no financial cost and can be easily incorporated into daily schedules with minimal forward planning.

Benefits of active transport

How much bang for your buck does active transport really provide? Other physical activity behaviours, such as organised sport participation or active play, tend to be more readily associated with kids 'huffing and puffing' as they move around. Some may question whether active transport meaningfully contributes to a child's daily accumulation of moderate-to-vigorous-intensity physical activity (MVPA).

Children who use active transport to get to or from school are not only more physically active than those who do not but, also accumulate more daily minutes of health enhancing activity (i.e. MVPA), take more steps, expend more energy over the day and generally have better health-related fitness^{1,2}. Research in Canada³ showed that secondary school students who walked to school (either all of the way or as part of a trip using public transport) accumulated a substantial amount of MVPA across the total walking time (average walk trip duration of 12.6±6.5 minutes and average minutes per trip of MVPA 9.4±4.4 minutes). Studies conducted in the UK, found that school children accumulated anywhere from 5-6 minutes (age 11)⁴ to 10-11 minutes (ages 11-12)⁵ of MVPA during school-travel windows. These represent meaningful contributions of MVPA (8-18% of recommended daily MVPA) to a child's daily physical activity total.

Australian physical activity guidelines recommend that children accumulate at least 60 minutes of MVPA each day⁶. Children and young people who are active on a daily basis are less likely to be overweight or obese, at reduced risk of developing conditions such as Type II diabetes and metabolic syndrome, and more likely to see improvements in aerobic fitness and bone health and experience positive mental health benefits⁷⁻⁹. In addition to the general health benefits and contributions towards daily physical activity, active transport participation specifically promotes social connectedness, a sense of independence, and can improve a child's spatial awareness and knowledge regarding road rules and safety^{10,11}. Beyond the individual-level, active transport can create safer neighbourhoods by diffusing traffic congestion and reducing air pollution levels which could lead to numerous environmental benefits¹².

PASSIVE TRANSPORT



= NO physical activity

PUBLIC TRANSPORT



= maybe **SOME** physical activity

depending on how people get to and from pick-up and drop-off points.

ACTIVE TRANSPORT



= ALL physical activity

ACTIVE TRANSPORT



Typically, only half of Australia's children and young people use active transport at least once per week to travel to and/or from school. The grade this year reflects a synthesis of data from primary and secondary school students, with just below half of primary school students and just above half of secondary school students using active transport to and/or from school at least once per week.

The 2015 grade was informed by a number of datasets including Wave 2 of the NaSSDA survey (data collected in 2012/13 on secondary students), despite these data not being available to inform the 2014 grade. No new national-level data were available for primary school students. The 2014 grade for active transport therefore remains unchanged because participation rates were stable.





YEAR	2014	2015
GRADE	C*	C
BENCHMARK	A 81-100% B 61-80% C 41-60% D 21-40% F 0-20%	
CORE METRIC	Proportion of Australian children and young people travelling to and/or from school using active transport (at least once per week). Active transport is defined as any form of human powered transportation (e.g. locomotion on foot, or bicycle, skateboard, etc.).	

* The original grade assigned for Active Transport in the 2014 Report Card was a D based on the available data. Since the release of the 2014 Report Card AHKA have been informed that synthesised data from the NaSSDA 2009-10 survey were incorrectly interpreted. While only 20% of secondary school students travelled to and/or from school using active transport at least once per week, this figure did not include those children travelling to/from school every day using active transport (representing 38% of children). Given this clarification, the 2014 grade has been amended to a C to better reflect the true number of children using active transport to travel to and/or from school at least once on a weekly basis.

KEY FINDINGS



Parents of children aged **5-6 years** and **9-10 years** reported that **45%** and **47%**, respectively used **active travel** to and/or from school **at least once per week**¹⁴.



59% of secondary school students aged **12-17 years** reported **using active travel** to and/or from school **at least once per week**¹⁵.

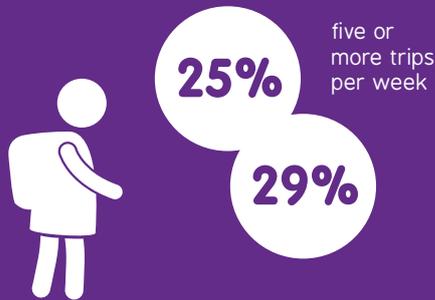


State-based data collected from 2009 to 2014 show that the proportion of children **using active transport at least once per week** to travel to and/or from school lies somewhere between **30% to 85% for primary school students**^{16, 20-22} and **58% to 60% for secondary students**^{17, 20}.

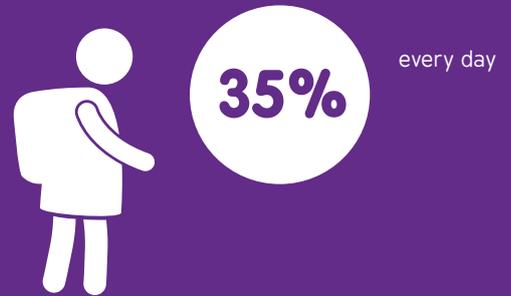
These variations, particularly for younger children, could be due to disparities in the questions asked of both parents and children rather than to true demographic differences.



State-based data collected from 2011 to 2013, for both **primary and secondary school students**, shows that **active transport** is the **'usual mode'** of transport to school for **25% to 32%** of students^{18, 19}.



Parents report that **25% and 29%** of children aged **5-6 and 9-10 years** respectively, travel to and/or from school **using active transport for five or more trips per week**¹⁴.



35% of secondary school students, aged **12-17 years use active transport every day** to travel to and/or from school¹⁵.

mean number of trips



The **mean number of trips** (one trip is defined as a one-way trip) travelling to and/or from school **using active transport** are: **2.5 trips for 5-6 year olds**; **2.8 trips for 9-10 year olds**¹⁴; **4.1 trips for 12-17 year olds**¹⁵.



On average children aged **5-17 years spend 18 minutes per day** (30% of recommended daily MVPA) **using active transport to various destinations**¹³.

LOOKING A LITTLE DEEPER...

Should we be happy with only around half of our children and young people using active transport at least once per week to get to and/or from school? Additionally, is travelling to school only once per week using active transport enough or is this setting the bar too low?

How do kids get to and from school?

When we look a little deeper at the number of trips to and from school that young Australians (of various ages) make using active (walking or cycling/scooter), passive (car) or public (train, tram or bus) transport it is clear there is a lot of room for improvement (Figure 1).

Figure 1 shows data from the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC) and the National Secondary Students' Diet and Activity (NaSSDA) survey^{14, 15}, which indicates that a large proportion of Australian children do not use active transport to get to and/or from school. While an alarming proportion of children of all ages do not walk at all to or from school each week (zero trips each week: 50-63% of kids), cycling statistics are much worse with 87-91% of all kids taking part in zero cycling trips each week to or from school. While the proportion of young Australians who travel to and/or from school by car declines with age, the prevalence of secondary students using public transport and walking to and/or from school is considerably higher than that of primary students.

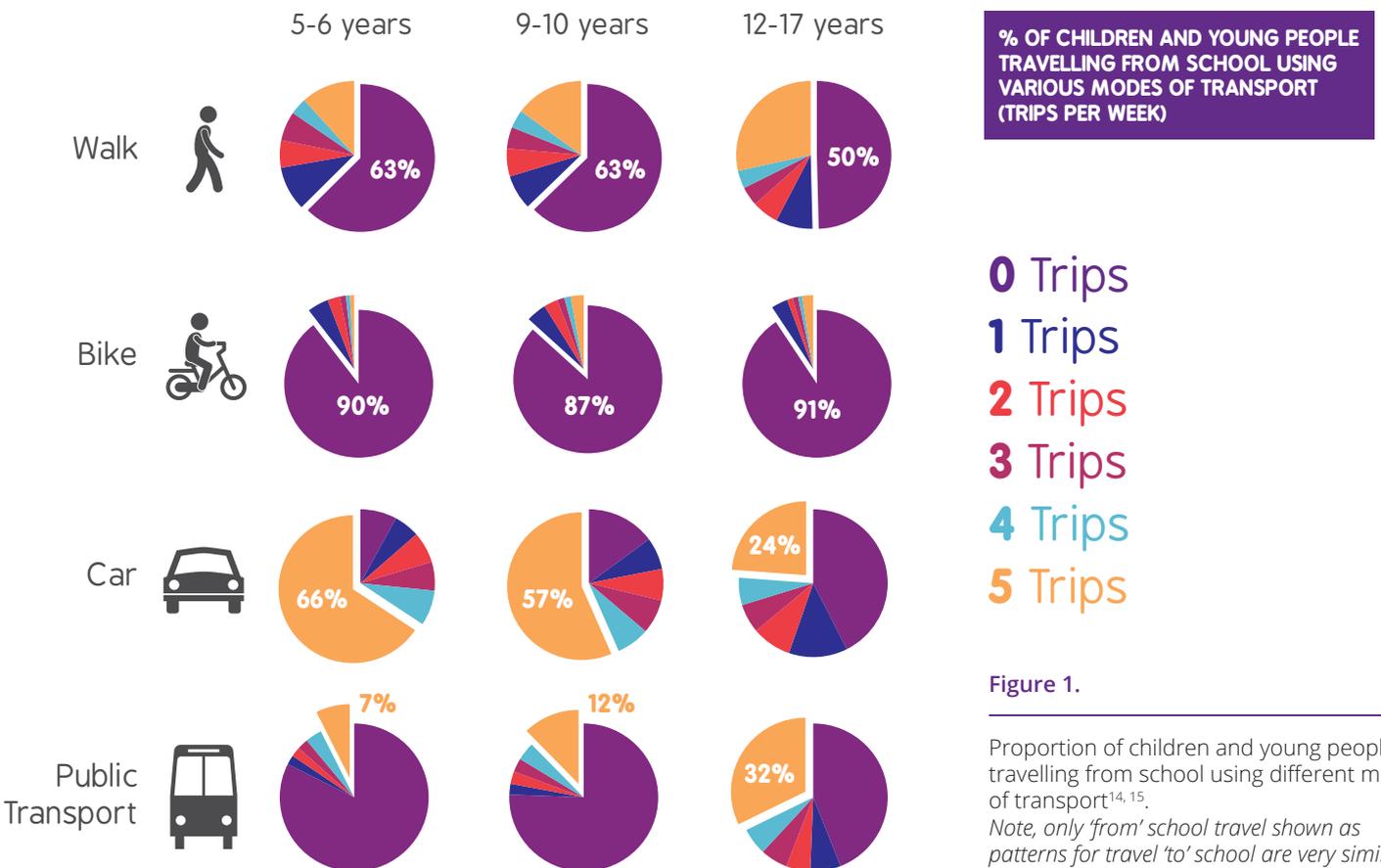


Figure 1.

Proportion of children and young people travelling from school using different modes of transport^{14, 15}.

Note, only 'from' school travel shown as patterns for travel 'to' school are very similar.

Trips to where?

National data show that children aged 5-17 years, spend an average of 18 minutes per day using active transport to various destinations (e.g. friend's house, shops, playground) and this increases with age (5-8 years: 13 min/day; 9-11 years: 18 min/day; 12-14 years: 20 min/day; 15-17 years: 24 min/day)¹³. At present there have been limited studies that examine active transport behaviours and participation rates to destinations other than school.

However, where children actively commute to destinations other than school, typical destinations include: friends' houses, sports or activity venues, parks and playgrounds and shops^{24, 25}. Each of these examples provide excellent opportunities for children and young people to not only engage in more active transport but many also provide further opportunities to be physically active once there.



Can we get more kids to cycle?

90% of Australian households have at least one child's bike in working order but only **11%** of children currently ride a bike to/ from school with only **25%** of those kids who do not currently ride to school, having ever ridden a bike to school before²³.

87% of parents are confident in their ability to teach their child how to ride a bike but only **45%** of parents believe it is important that children receive formal cycle training²³.

For **42-51%** of parents the main reasons why they did not allow their child to ride to and/or from school was that they were concerned with stranger danger and the dangers posed by traffic and other road users, and yet only **11%** of children have ever received formal cycle training²³.

THE ROAD LESS TRAVELLED...

What we have seen so far suggests there is definitely room for improvement, given that on a national scale we just scrape through with a C grade for Active Transport. However, has this always been the case? Or is it that walking and cycling to get somewhere has just become "The Road Less Travelled"?

How have active transport participation rates changed over the years?

The 2014 AHKA Report Card highlighted that over the past 30-40 years there appears to have been a worldwide decline in children's use of active transport (Figure 2). There has been a decline of about 42% (decline in terms of percentage points with an overall trend calculated using state-based time trend data from New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria) in young Australian's use of active transport between 1971 and 2013 (Figure 2), with declines varying in magnitude among the states²⁶⁻³⁰. Internationally, we also see declines in children's use of active transport, ranging from 7% in Brazil (from 2002 to 2007)³¹ and Switzerland (from 1994 to 2005)³², 12% in Canada (from 1985 to 1996)^{1,33}, 23% in the UK (from 1975 to 2012)³⁴⁻³⁶ and as much as 35% in the US (from 1969 to 2009)^{37,38} (Figure 2). As it is clear that participation rates have been much higher in the past than they are now, why can't things improve?

Car vs. Public Transport?

If school students use public transport to get to /from school it could be suggested that many of those students still actively commute to get to /from pick-up and drop-off points. A Canadian study has shown that secondary school students whose main mode of travel to /from school was public transport still actively commuted (via walking) from pick-up and drop-off points³. In addition to this, the amount of trip-based MVPA accumulated and the distance and duration of the walk-trip were similar to those students who just walked the whole way to /from school³.

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN / YOUNG PEOPLE WHO USE ACTIVE TRANSPORT TO AND/OR FROM SCHOOL

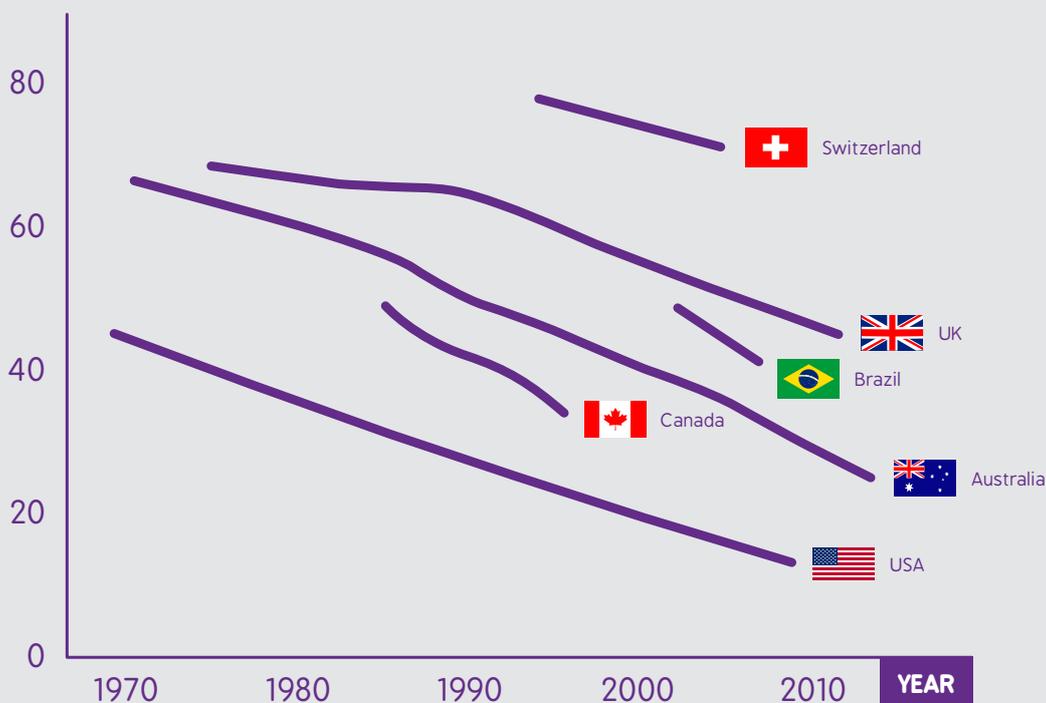


Figure 2.

Time trends in the percentage of children and young people who use active transport to and/or from school.

While the data tells a clear story a picture can speak a thousand words. What does the school environment (at pick up and drop off times) look like to today's students compared to that of their parents and or grandparents?

The contrasts between the images in Figure 3 and 4 represent the changes that have occurred over the past 2-3 generations. Now we see fewer bikes parked within and outside of school grounds and more cars creating traffic congestion and traffic hazards during pick-up and drop-off times.



Figure 3.

Generational differences in number of bikes parked at schools for the generation of today (right image) compared to previous generations



Figure 4.

Generational differences in number of cars parked outside schools for the generation of today (right image) compared to previous generations

Why are young people riding and walking to school less often?

These contrasting pictures, along with data showing international time declines, support the notion that travelling to school (and potentially to other destinations also) via foot or self-propelled wheel has indeed become 'The Road Less Travelled'. But why has this happened?

Family and home life:

There are a number of things that have changed within the family and home dynamics over the past 30-50 years that could have potentially had a negative impact upon the number of children actively commuting to and from different destinations including school (see pop out box). There are now fewer children within a family to walk or cycle to and/or from school (or to other destinations) together. The changes in family dynamics also makes the school drop-off and pick-up much more complex, with many parents perceiving car travel to be more convenient⁴³ (especially with the increased likelihood that the household will own two cars) as it allows them to incorporate school drop off/pick-up in the commute to/from work and other activities.

How has the family and home life dynamic changed?

1. Families are smaller: 3.5 children in 1960 vs. 1.9 today³⁹;
2. More mothers are in paid employment: 43% in the 1980s vs. 63% today⁴⁰;
3. More families now consist of two working parents (one part-time and one full-time): 27% in 1991 vs. 34% in 2011⁴¹; and
4. More families now own at least two cars: passenger vehicle ownership rising from 153 per 1,000 people in 1955 vs. 568 per 1,000 people in 2013⁴².

The distance kids are willing or allowed to go:

One of the biggest predictors of whether a child will actively commute to and/or from school is distance⁴⁴⁻⁴⁶, with the likelihood of active travel increasing as the distance from their home to school decreases^{47, 48}. However, the distances needed to travel to school have increased with time due to continuing urban sprawl, schools amalgamating and the increase in school size⁴⁹. More parents are also choosing to send their children to schools (both government and private) outside of their designated school zones⁵⁰.

At present, national data show that as the distance to school increases, the likelihood that kids will walk or cycle to school decreases at a very rapid rate (Figure 5). It seems the tipping point is around 2 km with the mean number of active trips to and/or from school per week dropping from 4.3 and 4.9 for 5-6 and 9-10 year olds respectively down to less than one trip per week once the 2 km threshold is reached¹⁴. Research also shows a 9-15% increase in active transport use on weekdays for children aged 5-16 years, at the optimal travel distance of 2 km⁵¹. Has the distance kids have been willing or allowed to go always been so small or did the children of generations before have a larger 'roaming radius'?

How far away are schools really?

71% of Australian parents report that the distance from home to their child's school is **5 km or less**, with a large portion of all parents (**57%**) reporting that the distance is actually **3 km or less**¹⁴.

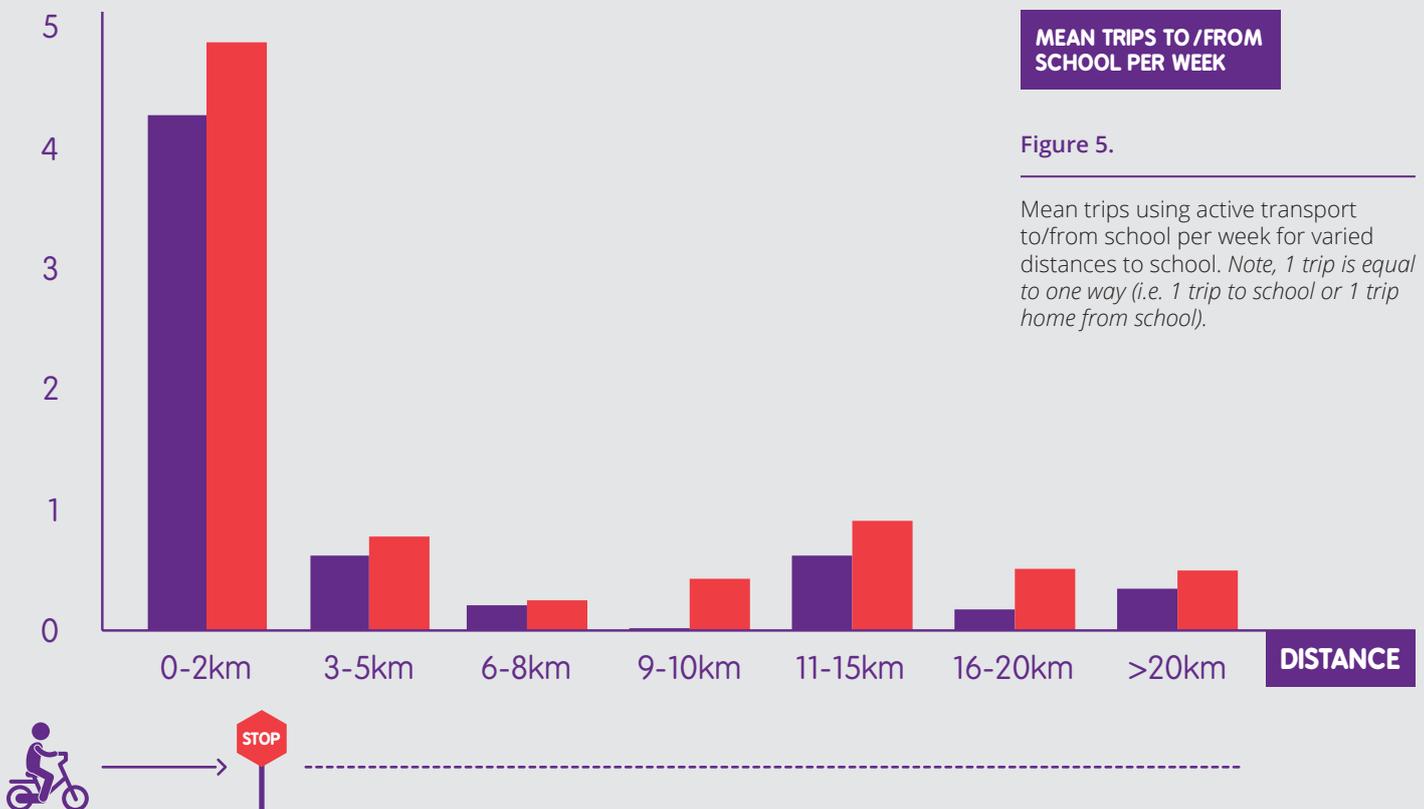


Figure 5.

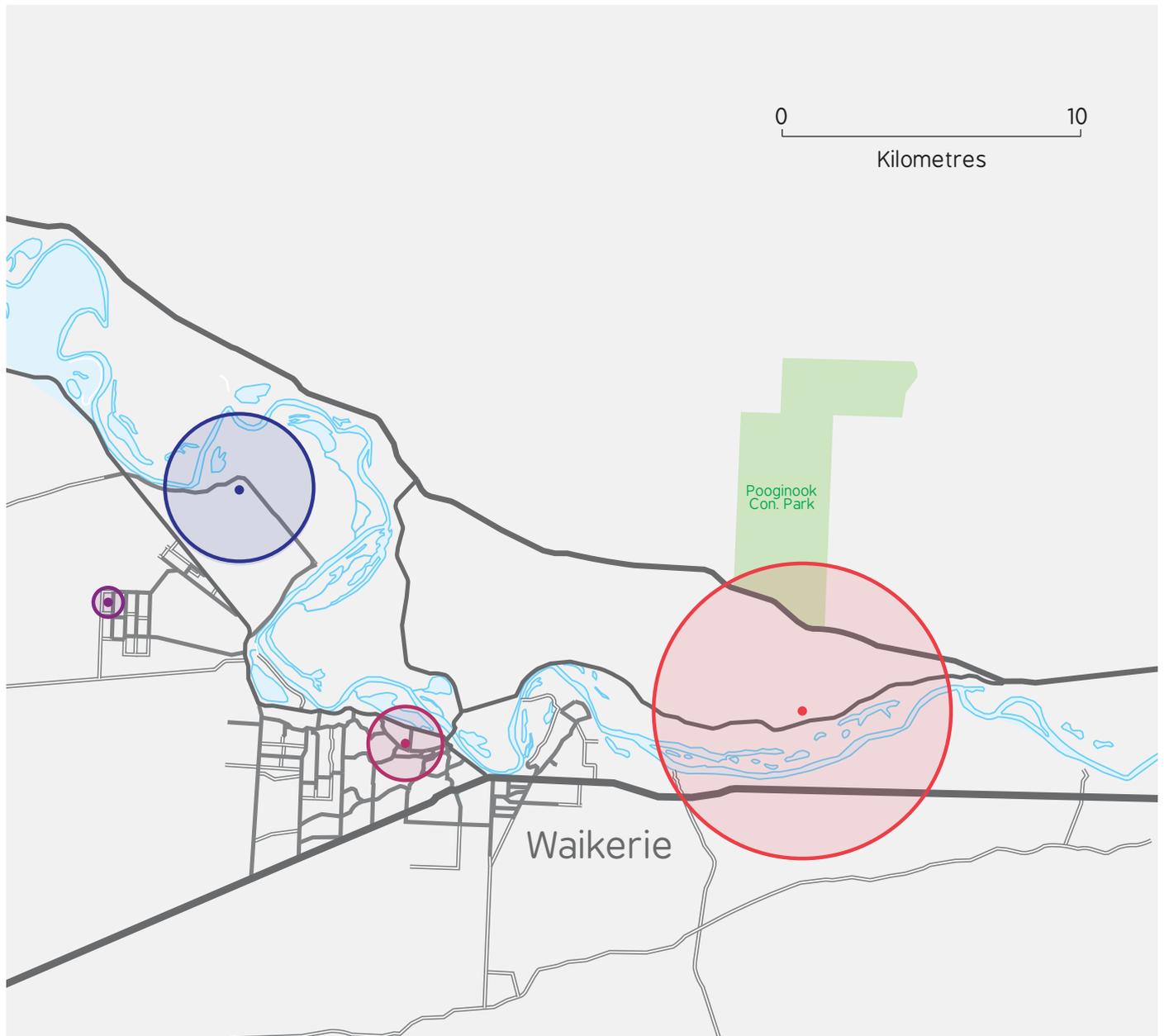
Mean trips using active transport to/from school per week for varied distances to school. Note, 1 trip is equal to one way (i.e. 1 trip to school or 1 trip home from school).

An article written by David Derbyshire in 2007⁵², inspired by a report that examined the links between the natural environment and mental health⁵³, showed that the distance children can/will navigate on their own has dramatically declined compared to that of generations past (Figure 6).

Four generations of the Thomas family (who were the focus of the article), using their own experiences at age eight, highlighted that over the past decade children fail to venture much past their own front yard, if they even get that far. The distance travelled by foot or bike has declined from over 9.5 km in 1919 to 1.6 km in 1950 and then down to 800 and 270 m in 1979 and 2007 respectively (Figure 6). While this report is based on a family from the UK, similar generational differences are seen throughout Australia.

Figure 6.

Roaming Radius' of the Thomas family over four generations. Note, this figure is based on a UK study⁵², but has been drawn with an Australian perspective, using the town of Waikerie which is a rural town in the Riverland region of South Australia



GREAT-GRANDFATHER
George aged eight in 1919 allowed to walk 10 km to the conservation park.

GRANDFATHER
Jack aged eight in 1950 allowed to explore 5 km of the Murray River.

MOTHER
Vicky aged eight in 1979 was allowed to walk to the local creek bed 2.5 km away.

SON
Ed, now eight is only allowed to walk on his own to the end of his street (1km).

Safety concerns:

Is it just too difficult and too far nowadays for young people to walk or ride to get to where they need to go? Or have parents (and to some extent children) become more safety conscious when it comes to deciding whether children actively commute to various destinations?

There is limited literature on the changes in parental fear over time but when you look collectively at the messages from research, the media and public opinion it is suggested that as a society we are more fearful for a child's personal safety now than we ever have been which can hinder their independent mobility^{54, 55}. Is the increased 'fear' justified? Or have we just become a society that lacks a sense of social trust and is risk averse, as a result of the media and public becoming more aware and fixated with the extreme cases of harm involving children^{54, 56}.

Concerns around child safety and wellbeing could be seen as some of the main reasons why children today have a limited 'roaming radius'. When we break it down the concerns are typically related to 'stranger danger' or 'road and traffic safety'^{46, 56-59}. However, do the statistics support this concern? State-based data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that a large proportion of crimes against children are performed by persons known to the victim, not strangers⁶⁰. National data also report that 88% of Australian parents believe that they live in a 'safe' neighbourhood¹⁴, which is supported by state-based data with 90-96% of parents^{22, 61} and 93% of young people (aged 11-17 years)¹⁷ believing the same thing.

If we then turn our attention to road and traffic safety, data from the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development show that the Australian pedestrian fatality and hospitalised injury rates for children and young people aged 0-16 years is 0.34 and 9.38 (per 100,000 people) respectively and that pedestrian fatalities have decreased by 62% for the period 1995 to 2014⁶². However this decline could also be attributed to, in part, the decline in the number of pedestrians on the roads.

Children from past generations were living in a very different world to the children of today. While there are many external factors that play a role in how active children are when getting to and from different places, we need to remember that we are also living in a society where many of our daily tasks have become sedentary for a variety of reasons and the likelihood that the world will adopt more labour-saving and sedentary practices is probable.

The time to act is now. We need to be looking for every opportunity to help kids be more active, and given active transport is inclusive for all we need to encourage the children of today for whom active transport is the 'road less travelled' to engage in more than what is currently being done.

What do kids and parents believe?

Research that looked at the attitudes to walking and cycling among children, young people and parents⁴³ found that:

1. Children and young people **would like greater independent mobility** to walk and cycle more but find they are restricted by their own safety concerns and those of their parents; and
2. **Car travel is perceived to be more convenient** especially by parents and older young people but this perception may be reflective of the social belief that car ownership is linked with higher social standing and cars are 'cool'.



What age is the right age?

79% of Australian parents believe that children should be aged **10 years or older** to ride a bike to or from school without adult supervision²³.

State-based data show that the proportion of kids travelling to school independently **peaks at age 13** (approximately 50% of kids), with **only 36%** of all kids aged 9-15 years travelling to school without an adult⁶³.

State-based data show that **boys (39% vs. 33%)** and kids living in **non-metro locations (40% vs. 34%)** were more likely to travel to school independently⁶³.

HOW MUCH ACTIVE TRANSPORT IS ENOUGH?

Is travelling to school using active transport at least once per week enough or as a nation are we setting the bar too low? The reason for adopting this metric in the first instance was to ensure Australia was in sync with the metrics of other nations within the Active Healthy Kids Global Alliance. However, we need to ask ourselves, is the grade, based on the above metric, a true reflection of the state of affairs in Australia? When we look at the data above we know:



Approximately **50% of Australian children** and young people do not use active transport to or from school on a **weekly basis**^{14, 15}.



Around one third (or less) of Australian children and young people use active transport **every day** to travel to and/or from school^{14, 15}.



Australia has seen a **42% decline** in children's active transport participation rates to/from school, **over the past 40 years**²⁶⁻³⁰, with no indication as to whether this decline is slowing down.

Research Considerations

What do we need to know more about?

1. How many children use active transport to destinations other than school? and
2. How many children use public transport to/from school and other destinations? And how much of their total journey (if any) is via active transport?

What do we need to do?

Until we have more data regarding active transport across the entire day for Australian children and young people, we should ask (at a minimum) the following standardised questions:

1. On how many of the past 5 school days did you/your child travel to (or part of the way to) school by walking, cycling or some other form of active transport? And how long (in minutes) was each trip (on average)?;
2. On how many of the past 5 school days did you/your child travel from (or part of the way) school by walking, cycling or some other form of active transport? And how long (in minutes) was each trip (on average)?; and
3. How often, during the past 7 days, did you/your child travel from place to place (not including to/from school) all or part of the way by walking, cycling or some other form of active transport? Answers: Every day; Most days (5-6); Some days (3-4); Not many days (1-2); Never.

How do we operationalise the core metric?

As a starting point, the core metrics used to assess and grade Active Transport could be:

1. Proportion of Australian children and young people using active transport, all or part of the way, for at least half of their trips to or from school for the past five school days (i.e. at least 5 trips out of a maximum of 10); and
2. Proportion of Australian children and young people using active transport, all or part of the way to destinations (not including to/from school), on at least 'some (3-4)' of the past 7 days.

Perhaps we need to initiate a national conversation to ask the question: where do we set the bar? It is important that all factors are considered and we find the right balance between wanting our children and young people to be physically active as much as possible every day and, what is practical and achievable for Australian families.

However, if we want to raise the bar and expect our children and young people to meet the challenge, we need to ensure the right supports and facilitators are in place across the areas that directly influence how much Australian children and young people use active transport to get to and from school and to other destinations on a daily basis.

SCHOOL

- + Schools should consider the size of their catchment zone in regards to how likely it is that children within their catchment can and will use active transport at least part of the way to get to and from school⁴⁵.
- + All schools should have active transport policies to promote and encourage the use of active travel to/from school, which are established as a result of input from all key stakeholders. Things to consider are: facilities within the school grounds to encourage walking and cycling (e.g. secure bike shelters and access to change rooms so can travel in all weather), engaging with the wider school community to initiate walking/riding school groups (that could be adult supervised), traffic-calming initiatives (e.g. crossing guards) and practices adopted by teachers and school leaders to encourage active transport use to and from school.

What are schools doing?

Only **24%** of Australian parents believe their child's school encourages students to cycle to /from school. Parents were more likely to believe this if their child attended a **public school** or if their child was of **primary-school age**²³.

State-based data show that **70-73%** of **primary** schools and **43-44%** of **secondary** schools (both urban and rural) encourage walking or cycling to school at least some of the time⁶⁸.

COMMUNITY AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- + Ensure that surrounding school neighbourhoods have high street connectivity and optimal density levels to support and encourage active commuting to and from school and reduce the distance needed to travel by students^{45, 69}.
- + Community groups and local sporting clubs/ organisations should engage with families and schools to minimise the distance children need to travel in order to attend before and after school activities reducing their dependence on car travel⁴⁵.
- + Communities should engage with local councils to advocate for changes being made to the physical environment that make it easier for children to negotiate traffic, such as adequate crossing infrastructure and measures to slow traffic^{70, 71}, and so children can travel on safe walking/riding paths.
- + Communities and local councils need to ensure that there are a variety of appealing landscapes within close proximities to homes that children can easily access and that encourage physical activity (e.g. playgrounds, sporting fields and courts, natural environments, skate parks etc.). Children who have more 'walkable' and 'cyclable' destinations close to their home are more likely to have a larger and more diverse roaming radius²⁴.

What are our children walking and riding on?

63-67% of Australian parents agree that there are good roads, footpaths and lighting in their neighbourhood and **66-71%** agree that their family has access to close, affordable and regular public transport¹⁴.

State-based data¹⁷ show that for young people aged 11-17 years:

77% do not find it difficult to walk in their neighbourhood because of traffic or having no footpaths;

72% have a cycling /walking path (not on the road) within walking distance of their home; and

58% have a cycling lane (on the road) within walking distance of their home.

What are schools doing?

State-based data¹⁸ show that primary schools are doing the following in order to promote active transport to and from school:

- 5%** of schools identify safe routes students can use;
- 42%** of schools provide crossing guards at intersections;
- 35%** have a designated 'car free' zone;
- 100%** allow bicycles to be brought on to school property;
- 85%** allow students to bring small wheeled vehicles;
- 100%** encourage the use of helmets;
- 65%** organise occasional walk to school days;
- 89%** provide students access to bike racks; and
- 74%** locate their bike racks in a secure area.

The following pages provide practical and real-life examples of what each Australian state and territory are currently doing to improve the grade for Active Transport. Each page highlights key initiatives, policies or programs that are currently happening within each state or territory to promote, facilitate and support active transport participation amongst children and young people, and provides details of where to find more information.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



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Ride or Walk to School

ACT Health's Ride or Walk to School (RWTS), a game plan to encourage active travel in ACT, was launched in September 2012. The RWTS program supports the ACT Government's Healthy Weight Initiative, Towards Zero Growth, which was established to address the rising rates of overweight and obesity in the ACT. RWTS builds the capacity of schools participating in the program to teach and encourage students to use active travel to and from school.



In 2014, ACT Health provided funding, including a grant from the ACT Health Promotion Grants Program, to the Physical Activity Foundation (PAF) to implement the program in schools.

RWTS utilises a whole of government approach. The ACT Children and Young People's Commissioner was approached and worked closely with ACT Health to develop an extensive consultation program to inform the design phase of RWTS. This consultation engaged over 550 students from Kinder to Year 12 in nine schools across Canberra. Stakeholders were also consulted to address barriers to active travel. Schools sign up for three years with the aim of increasing and sustaining higher numbers of children riding and walking to school.

RWTS supports school active travel action plans and guidelines, and provides resources, including bikes, helmets and maintenance kits; teacher professional development, student workshops and other activities to 52 schools across the ACT.

A key component of RWTS is Safe Cycle Years 5 & 6, a cycling education resource to assist ACT primary school teachers teach students how to cycle safely. Safe Cycle Years 5 & 6 is aligned to The Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, was developed by ACT school teachers with training and experience in teaching cycling, and can be accessed at <http://paf.org.au/safecycle/>.

All ACT schools are able to access program resources that support increasing active travel to and from school on the Physical Activity Foundation website (www.paf.org.au/programs/ride-or-walk-to-school).

Evaluation of Ride or Walk to School is collected throughout the school's three year commitment to monitor changes in behavior, confidence and attitudes to active travel at participating schools. Changes in the environment and policy are also monitored to determine the effectiveness of partnerships and the whole of government approach.

Website: www.paf.org.au or www.act.gov.health/ride-or-walk-to-school

Active Streets

As part of the Ride or Walk to School program (RWTS), an Active Streets pilot is being trialed in four schools participating in RWTS. Active Streets is a cross government collaboration which aims to address barriers and find solutions to increase the number of students who ride and walk to school.

Infrastructural changes and parent engagement measures will be implemented to increase the number of children using active travel to and from school within the ACT.

Active Streets will be evaluated after an initial one year period, with the draft evaluation plan exploring a cohort study model matching intervention and non-intervention school groups to determine the effectiveness of this across directorate initiative to increase the number of students using active travel to and from school.

Website: www.act.gov.health/ride-or-walk-to-school

Active travel

The Active Travel Framework was launched to highlight the importance of active travel in the ACT, and outlines how we can better plan, deliver, encourage and manage active travel in an integrated transport system.

The Active Transport Office is being established to coordinate planning and implementation of the Active Travel Framework. In 2014-15, a range of initiatives were progressed or completed including improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure.

Projects include the Civic Cycle Loop, Bike and Ride facilities in two suburban areas, and shared path upgrades on the Federal Highway. A city Shareway (known as the Bunda Street Shareway) was constructed and opened in May 2015. It combines a pedestrian, cyclist and motorist shared zone.

The ACT Government has also continued to invest in and promote active travel through the use of public transport. Park-and-Ride and Bike-and-Ride services have been promoted to increase use of public transport, cycling and walking and improve road network operations.

NEW SOUTH WALES



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Safer Active Travel for Children

Transport for NSW funds and manages the road safety education program within the NSW education system. Education partners include NSW Department of Education (DoE); Catholic Education Commission (CEC); the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) and the Kids and Traffic, Early Childhood Road Safety Education Program, (Macquarie University). Transport for NSW funds the positions of road safety education consultants/advisers within each of these agencies. They provide teachers with support for road safety education programs in schools.

Safety Town is an interactive road safety education program based on Transport for NSW's main road safety messages for school students in Stage 3.

Safety Town has been designed to challenge and stimulate students' thinking and to build connections by linking content to students' lives. All teachers and students in every NSW primary school are able to gain access to the Safety Town site as can families at home. The role of families in the road safety education of their children cannot be underestimated. Material for other Stage students and their families is being developed.



Teachers can select from a wide range of interesting lesson plans from the teacher resource booklet, ensuring that the lessons meet the local road safety needs of the students. The resource includes a video on distraction, featuring Sydney Swan's player Adam Goodes, supported by lesson materials. Distraction is a major issue for children at this age, particularly as pedestrians or when riding on wheels – they may know what they should do, but may not have the self-control and self-reliance to overcome distractions.

Contact: Greg Meehan,
Greg.Meehan@transport.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.safetytown.com.au

Children's active travel

The NSW Active Travel Charter for Children was launched in 2013. This Charter is an overarching statement on active travel for children in NSW, which will support government and non-government agencies to encourage greater participation of children in active travel.

New resources to support parents and communities to encourage children's active travel were recently released on the NSW Healthy Kids Website. These materials were developed following extensive stakeholder contributions and discussions with NSW Health, the Department of Education and Communities, and Transport NSW.

Contact: Chris Rissel,
chris.rissel@sydney.edu.au

Website: www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/campaigns-programs/childrens-active-travel.aspx



NORTHERN TERRITORY



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Amber Herrmann, A/Manager Community Development, Department of Transport
Tamie Needham, 2013 and 2016 Parent coordinator, Stuart Park Childcare
Simon Niblock, Chair, Nightcliff Primary School

Northern Territory Road Safety and Bike Education Programs (Department of Transport)

The NT Government provides road safety and bicycle education programs for schools and other community organisations and programs. School programs are aligned to the primary and middle school curriculums and aim to promote road safety, as well as supporting safe and active travel to schools.

The Road Safety and Bike Ed programs are delivered in schools by accredited Road Safety Officers and at two purpose built road safety centres in Darwin and Alice Springs. These centres include classroom facilities for theory sessions and miniature road systems, with working traffic lights for practical sessions. Both centres are equipped with a range of bicycles for different ages and levels of experience, and cater for up to 30 students at each session. Bike Education sessions focus on bike set up, safe riding techniques and basic road rules for cyclists. The Darwin centre is available for community use, when not booked for group sessions and popular annual community open days are held at both centres.

In the NT, participation rates for younger and older children are similar (around 50%), in contrast to the national average, where rates among older children are significantly lower.

Contact: Jo Cruickshank,
Ph: (08) 8924 7163

Website: www.transport.nt.gov.au/safety/road-safety/for-schools/road-and-cycle-safety-centres



The Safe and Active Routes to School Project (City of Darwin)

The Safe and Active Routes to School Project aims to develop a comprehensive model for safer travel routes and increased active travel to and from school, within the Darwin municipality. The project will develop a Toolkit to be used by schools, with the support of key stakeholders. The kit will include case studies, suggested activities, key resources, as well as a process to support the development of individual school action plans.

A number of workshops will be held to provide an opportunity to discuss some of the existing walking, cycling, parking and traffic issues around the various schools in Darwin, so that common themes, issues and opportunities can be identified. The model will be tested through a pilot program in a primary school in Darwin, who will develop and implement its own action plan.

Contact: Amber Herrmann, Email: a.herrmann@darwin.nt.gov.au

Website: Still being developed.

Walking bus to preschool

In 2013, parents of children attending Stuart Park Pre-School and Stuart Park Neighbourhood and Child Care Centre established a walking bus to transport children from the preschool, which they attended for the first three hours of the day, to the childcare centre, where they spent the rest of the day. A rope with handles was sourced for safety and rain ponchos were donated for use in inclement weather. A thorough risk assessment was also done with recommended parent to child ratios used for the age group.

Contact: Tamie Needham,
Ph: 0439 826 042

Website: www.stuartparkchildcare.com.au

Nightcliff Primary School Bike bus to school

Nightcliff Primary School (Darwin) is celebrating its first year of a regular Bike Bus to and from school. After a couple of weeks talking with parents and planning the route, we set out with 8 children on our first trip. Within 6 months that had grown to 25 children and even 30 on National Ride to School day. The initiative has highlighted specific impediments children face when riding or walking to school.

Contact: Simon Niblock.

Website: www.nightcliffprimary.nt.edu.au



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PEACH™

The PEACH™ program is a parent-led, family-focused healthy lifestyle program that supports parents and carers who are struggling to manage their child's weight. It offers families practical advice and information about healthy eating and ways to increase levels of physical activity over the six-month program. The program consists of 10 sessions; the first nine sessions are held weekly within a school term. Parents or carers meet in one group to learn about healthy eating options while children meet in another group for a fun physical activity program.

The PEACH™ program is available free for families with a child aged 5-11 years whose weight is above what is recommended for their age. The program is being offered in more than 20 locations across Queensland with more than 500 families taking part so far. It was funded by Queensland Health and delivered by the Queensland University of Technology

Contact: Michael Tilse, Email: Michael.Tilse@health.qld.gov.au

Website: www.peachqld.com.au



**Parenting, Eating & Activity
for Child Health**

HAST (Healthy Active School Travel)

The HAST (2013-2015) program aimed to increase physical activity in children by creating an environment that encourages students and the wider school community to travel to and from school using forms of Active Travel such as walking, cycling, public transport or other non-motorised modes. The program was funded by the Queensland Government.

Results have indicated that HAST was successful in encouraging voluntary travel behavior change in school aged children with an 11.2% increase in children who actively commuted and a 6.9% decrease in preference for car travel. Overall daily moderate activity increased by 72.8 minutes. Just over 73% of parents agreed that HAST had improved their knowledge and almost 93% of participating teachers agreed that HAST should be permanently implemented.

Contact: hast@translink.com.au

Website: www.translink.com.au/about-translink/what-we-do/healthy-active-school-travel

Good Start Program

The 'Good Start' program supports health professionals to work with and promote physical activity and healthy eating messages to Māori and Pacific Islander children, families and communities. It is hosted by Children's Health Queensland.

Culturally tailored resources for Māori and Pacific Islander children and families will be available soon on the Children's Health Queensland website.

Contact: Ph: (07) 3250 8605; Email: goodstart@health.qld.gov.au

Website: www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/statewide/



SOUTH AUSTRALIA



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OPAL (Obesity Prevention and Lifestyle) Program

OPAL is a joint initiative between local and state government which supports children, their families and communities to eat well and be active with the ultimate aim of increasing the number of children in the healthy weight range. Using a whole of community approach, OPAL combines a socio-ecological perspective with a social marketing methodology underpinned by community development practice to bring about behavior change at individual and institutional level.

OPAL has six goals, one of which relates directly to Active Travel. Using a yearly theme to bring to life specific goals, the "Think Feet First – step, cycle, scoot to school" theme was launched to stimulate action across a range of sectors and settings.

Across 20 rural and metropolitan communities the OPAL staff used a consistent framework for delivery that targets individual and environmental factors that influence daily behavioural patterns when it comes to active travel.

A multi-strategy suite of interventions (more than 600 in total) were implemented to create a collective impact across 25% of the South Australian population. The OPAL program generated a whole of community approach to increasing active travel by delivering specific programs (e.g. pedometer challenges, Park 'n Stride programs), undertaking research (e.g. walking surveys, streetscape audits), building partnerships (e.g. with schools, libraries, workplaces, community centres, kindergartens), developing policies and plans (e.g. Walk21 Charter pledges, whole of council Walking & Cycling Strategies), creating enabling environments (e.g. local signage, water fountains, bike racks, linear trail development), promoting and marketing key messages (e.g. media releases, billboards, on-line activity) and delivering education and training (e.g. staff workshops, expert presentations).

Contact: Fraser Keegan,
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Website: www.opal.sa.gov.au

Regional Public Health Plans

SA Health has been supporting local Councils to develop and implement Regional Public Health Plans. Under the public health plan priority area of 'Increasing Opportunities for Healthy Living, Healthy Eating and Being Active', Councils have been proactive in planning for and creating supportive environments for active travel. This has included the development of Council wide Walking and Cycling strategies which aim to provide the infrastructure, amenity and education to support cycling and walking as an attractive, safe and viable option for both recreation and transport.

Councils have actioned these plans with the installation of additional and wider footpaths, bike lanes, improved lighting, bus shelters and way finding signage.

Contact: Kath Thomas, Manager - Local Government Relations and Policy Team, SA Health,
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Website: www.sahealth.sa.gov.au

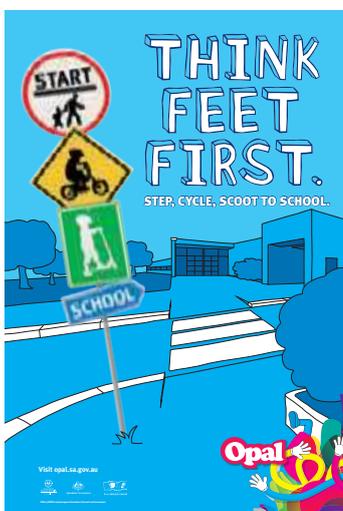
Way2Go

Way2Go is a statewide South Australian program promoting safer, greener and more active travel for primary school students and their communities. It uses a whole school approach built on a partnership between local councils, school communities and the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI).

As of September 2015, 33 local councils and 172 schools are Way2Go partners with 7000 students participating each year in Way2Go Bike Ed.

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TASMANIA



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Move Well Eat Well Award Program

The Move Well Eat Well Award Program is a state-wide initiative that is working to create healthier Tasmanian children who enjoy healthy eating and physical activity every day.

Move Well Eat Well supports primary schools, as well as local health and community workers, and families in the promotion of healthy eating and physical activity to children. The aim is for children to establish healthy habits at an early age so the principles of good health are taken into adulthood.

At July 2015 172 schools with primary enrolment had joined the Move Well Eat Well program. This represents 80% of all eligible schools and exposure to over 32,000 Tasmanian children and their families.

Contact: Le-ella Doyle, Email: le-ella.doyle@dhhs.tas.gov.au

Website: www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/mwew



STRIDE AND RIDE

Part Way is OK

Part Way is OK (PWOK) is an initiative of the Tasmanian Move Well Eat Well Primary Schools Award Program, designed to get more children walking to school. PWOK, originally developed in Victoria, and has been adapted for Tasmania with kind permission of Bicycle Network Victoria.

Currently there are five schools actively running PWOK programs and a further three are engaged in the PWOK program.

Contact: Rebekah Harrison, Email: Rebekah.harrison@dhhs.tas.gov.au; or Claire Burke, Email: Claire.burke@dhhs.tas.gov.au

Website: www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/mwew/families/stride_and_ride/part_way_is_ok_families

Ride2School Program

Ride2School is increasing road and bicycle awareness in Tasmania for primary aged students with a focus on safety. Ride2School's commitment to support school communities in Tasmania will positively reinforce a safer and healthier culture for younger people.

Earlier this year a pilot of the program was launched at Strahan Primary School. Following this success, State Government has awarded funding for the current year to support the program throughout Tasmanian primary schools.

Ride2School is a nationwide initiative by Bicycle Network which provides practical support and resources to schools to develop a healthy active travel culture.

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VICTORIA



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Walk to School

VicHealth's Walk to School is an annual event designed to raise awareness of the physical, environmental and social benefits of active transport.

Victorian primary students are encouraged to walk, ride or scoot to and from school during October, to kick-start healthy walking habits that can lead to good health for life.

In 2012, VicHealth broadened the scope from a Walk to School Day to encouraging walking every school day in the month of Walk to School. This shift in scope was designed to increase the amount of exposure the event receives in the community, and create a stronger foundation from which lasting behaviour change can be achieved.

Children who took part in Walk to School 2014 recorded more than 1.2 million walks throughout the month, with a total of 78,000 students from 499 schools taking part.

Evaluation suggests that the campaign helps to increase positive attitudes towards walking to school, and helps to increase active travel among primary school students who participate in the program, during the campaign and beyond.

Contact: Kelly Hartman, Senior Campaigns Advisor, VicHealth, Email: walktoschool@vichealth.vic.gov.au

Website: www.walktoschool.vic.gov.au



Ride2School

Ride2School is a nation-wide behaviour change program by Bicycle Network, with in excess of 2,000 schools across the country registered. We work with schools, students, parents and government to cultivate active and healthy communities. Schools that participate in our program report a physical activity level of 50% compared to the national average of 20%.

Ride2School provide support, tools and resources to enable, empower and encourage school communities to create a strong active travel culture.

Contact: Jeff McPhan, Email: jeffm@bicyclenetwork.com.au

Website: www.ride2school.com.au

Smart Steps resources for Schools

Victoria Walks has Smart Steps resources for primary and secondary schools that make it easy for teachers to embed walking within the school curriculum, as well as encouraging students to walk to school and within their neighbourhoods.

Contact: Email: info@victoriawalks.org.au

Website: www.victoriawalks.org.au/school

Kids on the Move

Kids on the Move is the core road safety education resource for primary schools. It links to AusVELS and focuses on children in Prep to 2 when they are commencing school and establishing learning patterns, and at Levels 3 to 6 when they start to learn to become independent travelers and move towards the transition to secondary school.

Contact: Jacinta Evans, Group Coordinator, Road Safety, TAC, Email: jacinta_evans@tac.vic.gov.au

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Walk Over October – Walk to school day

Walk Over October is a state-wide, multi-agency campaign that aims to raise awareness of the transport, health, recreational and environmental benefits of regular walking. The project is now in its fourteenth consecutive year, with 2015 being the fifth year of implementation of Walk Over October, replacing 10 years of Walk Week. A key component of the campaign is to focus on daily opportunities for families to walk including replacing small car trips such as the school drop off and trips to the shops or park. A key feature of Walk Over October campaign is Walk to School day. In 2014, 70 schools across the state registered for the Walk to School Day event. This represents an estimated 18 500 West Australian school children and a significant number of parents, grandparents and siblings walking to school.

All registered schools receive promotional materials and prizes, event kits, links to Active Transport curriculum materials including resources linked to the congestion photo. Walk to school day radio messages were timed to engage commuters during peak travel times to ensure maximum coverage and to reinforce the active transport message. Media coverage for Walk to School Day has been significant with coverage in print, radio, television and online content all promoting benefits of Active Transport.

Contact: Dorte Hansen, Email: Dorte.hansen@heartfoundation.org.au

Website: www.walkoveroctober.com.au



TravelSmart to school

TravelSmart to School is a program run by the Department of Transport. The aim of the program is to increase the number of students walking, cycling and using public transport to travel to school. There are currently 31 active schools which equates to approximately 14,400 students and together they have achieved a 12% increase in active travel and 9% decrease in car trips.

Contact: Emma Jack, Alliance program officer,
Email: tsts@transport.wa.gov.au

Website: <http://tsts.com.au>

Healthy Active By Design

Healthy Active by Design (HABD) is an online tool to inform the design of communities that support and promote healthy and active living. Practical guidance, checklists and case-studies are categorised into nine key design features that assist planners, urban designers and related professionals to design a built environment that enables people to be healthy and active in their community. 'Schools' is one of the nine key design categories. Healthy Active by Design was awarded the PIA Presidents Award and the Planning Ministers Award for Planning Excellence in 2014.

Contact: Jo Appleby, Manager Planning for Active Living, Email: Jo.appleby@heartfoundation.org.au

Website: www.healthyactivebydesign.com.au





ABBREVIATIONS

ABS AHS	Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Health Survey
ACTPANS	Australian Capital Territory Yr 6 Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey
AHKA	Active Healthy Kids Australia
HowRU	Victorian Adolescent Health and Wellbeing Survey
ISCOLE	International Study of Childhood Obesity, Lifestyle and the Environment
km	kilometres
LSAC	Longitudinal Study of Australian Children
m	metres

min	minutes
MVPA	Moderate-to-vigorous-intensity physical activity
NaSSDA	National Secondary Students' Diet and Activity Survey
NSW CHS	NSW Child Population Health Survey
QLD CHS	QLD Child Health Status Survey
TAS CHS	Tasmanian Child health and Wellbeing Survey
VCHWS	Victorian Child Health and Wellbeing Survey

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACT Yr 6 Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey (ACTPANS)

This Progress Report Card used data from 2012 ACTPANS. We acknowledge the role of ACT Health and ACT Education and Training Directorate staff in managing and co-ordinating the survey. The use of ACTPANS data is authorised by the ACT Chief Health Officer.

International Study of Childhood Obesity, Lifestyle and the Environment (ISCOLE)

ISCOLE is a 12-nation study co-ordinated by the Pennington Biomedical Research Center in Louisiana. The Principal Investigators are Dr Peter Katzmarzyk and Dr Tim Church. The Australian Chief Investigators are Professor Tim Olds and Dr Carol Maher from the University of South Australia. Thank you to Dr Lucy Lewis, Dr Katia Ferrar, Dr Rebecca Stanley and Effie Georgiadis for their help in data collection. ISCOLE was funded by the Coca-Cola Company. The funder had no role in study design, data collection and analysis, decision to publish, or preparation of manuscripts.

Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC)

This Progress Report Card used unit record data from the Growing Up in Australia, the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children. The study is conducted in partnership between the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). The findings and views reported in this paper are those of the author and should not be attributed to the FaHCSIA, the AIFS or the ABS.

National Secondary Students' Diet and Activity (NaSSDA) survey

This Progress Report Card used aggregated data from the National Secondary Students' Diet and Activity (NaSSDA) survey. We acknowledge funding for the NaSSDA survey was sought from Cancer Council Australia and the National Heart Foundation of Australia and State and Territory Government Health Departments.

NSW Child Population Health Survey (NSW CPHS)

This Progress Report Card used data provided by the NSW Ministry of Health. The data provided is also managed by the NSW Ministry of Health.

Obesity Prevention and Lifestyle Survey (OPAL)

OPAL data were collected by Flinders University for SA Health and are owned and managed by SA Health, South Australia, Australia. The opinions expressed in this work are those of the authors and may not represent the position or policy of SA Health.

QLD Child Health Status Survey (QLD CHSS)

The Department of Health, Prevention Division, Preventive Health Branch provided aggregate results from the child preventive health telephone survey for this Progress Report Card. The interpretation of these results are those of the report authors.

SA Monitoring & Surveillance System (SAMSS)

SAMSS is owned by SA Health, South Australia. All collected source data are maintained and managed by Population Research and Outcomes Studies, The University of Adelaide. The opinions expressed in this work are those of the authors and may not represent the position or policy of SA Health.

TAS Child Health and Wellbeing Survey (TAS CHWS)

This Progress Report Card used data provided by the Children and Youth Services in the Department of Health and Human Services in Tasmania.

Victorian Adolescent Health & Wellbeing Survey (HowRU)

This Progress Report Card used data provided by the Victorian Department of Education and Training.

Victorian Child Health & Wellbeing Survey (VCHWS)

This Progress Report Card used data provided by the Victorian Department of Education and Training.

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