

Walking to School

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation

Walking to School: Achievements and Opportunities

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VicHealth Action Agenda

02

ENCOURAGE REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



MORE VICTORIANS ENGAGE IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

10
OUR 10-YEAR GOAL

MORE PEOPLE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE, PARTICIPATING IN SPORT AND WALKING

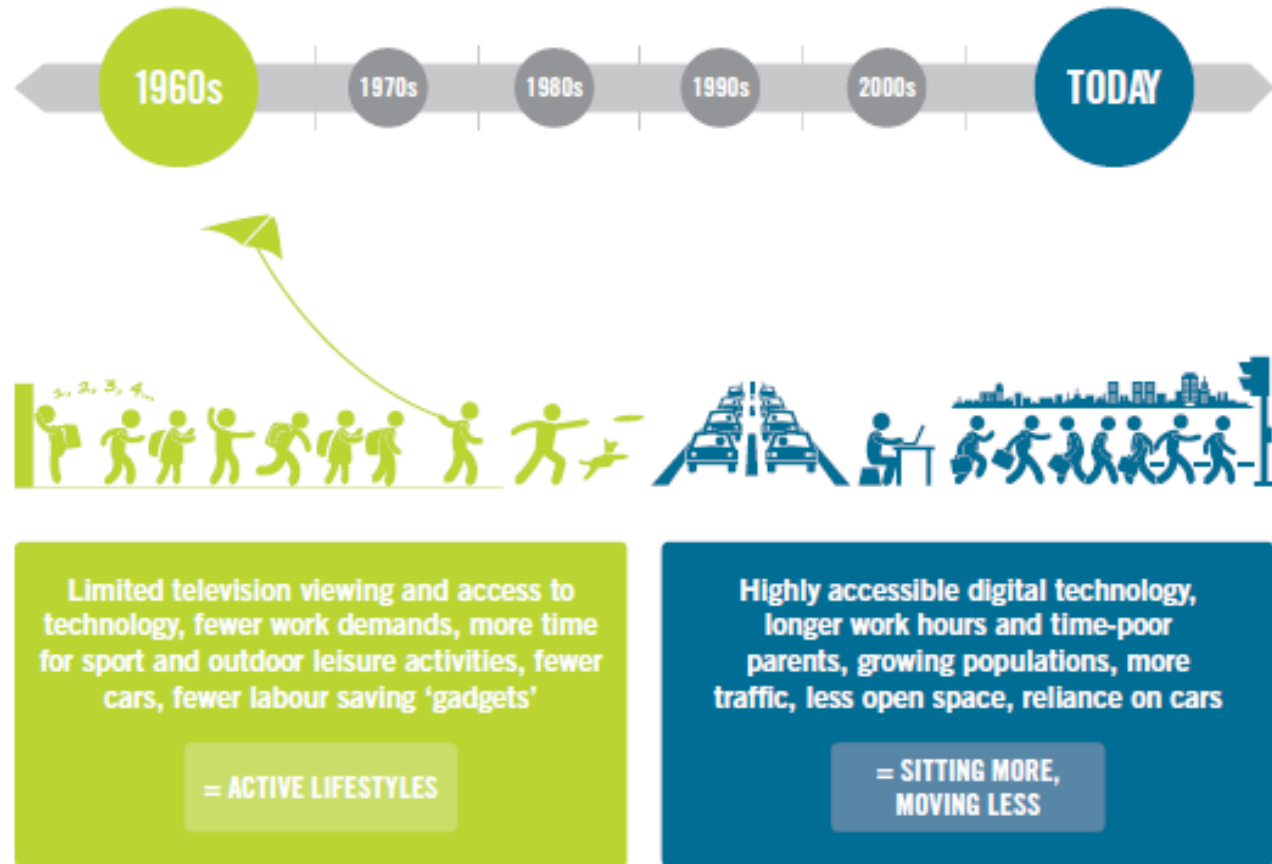
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OUR THREE-YEAR PRIORITY

VICHEALTH ACTION AGENDA STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

- PROMOTE HEALTHY EATING
- ENCOURAGE REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**
- PREVENT TOBACCO USE
- PREVENT HARM FROM ALCOHOL
- IMPROVE MENTAL WELLBEING



Our lifestyles are increasingly sedentary



Children are sitting more and moving less



5 to 17 year-olds getting the recommended one hour of physical activity every day (5 to 17 year-olds who average at least one hour of physical activity per day over a week: just over three in five)



5 to 17 year-olds engaged in no more than two hours of screen-based entertainment every day (ABS 2013c)

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ASSOCIATED WITH

- improved physical and mental wellbeing
- better academic performance
- less social isolation

SCREEN TIME ASSOCIATED WITH

- being overweight or obese
- poorer academic performance
- social isolation

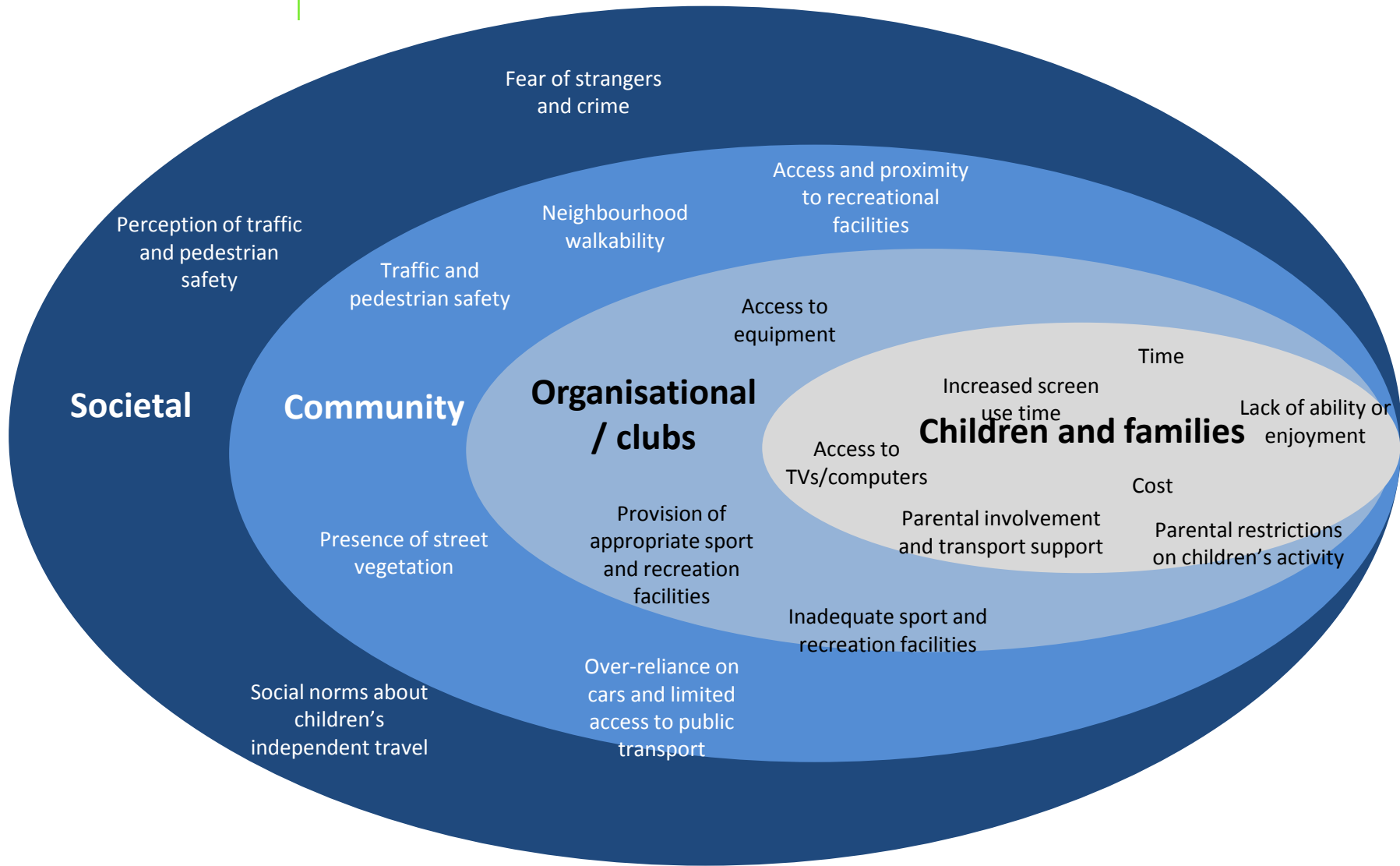
It affects children now and into their future

Lifestyle of an active twin

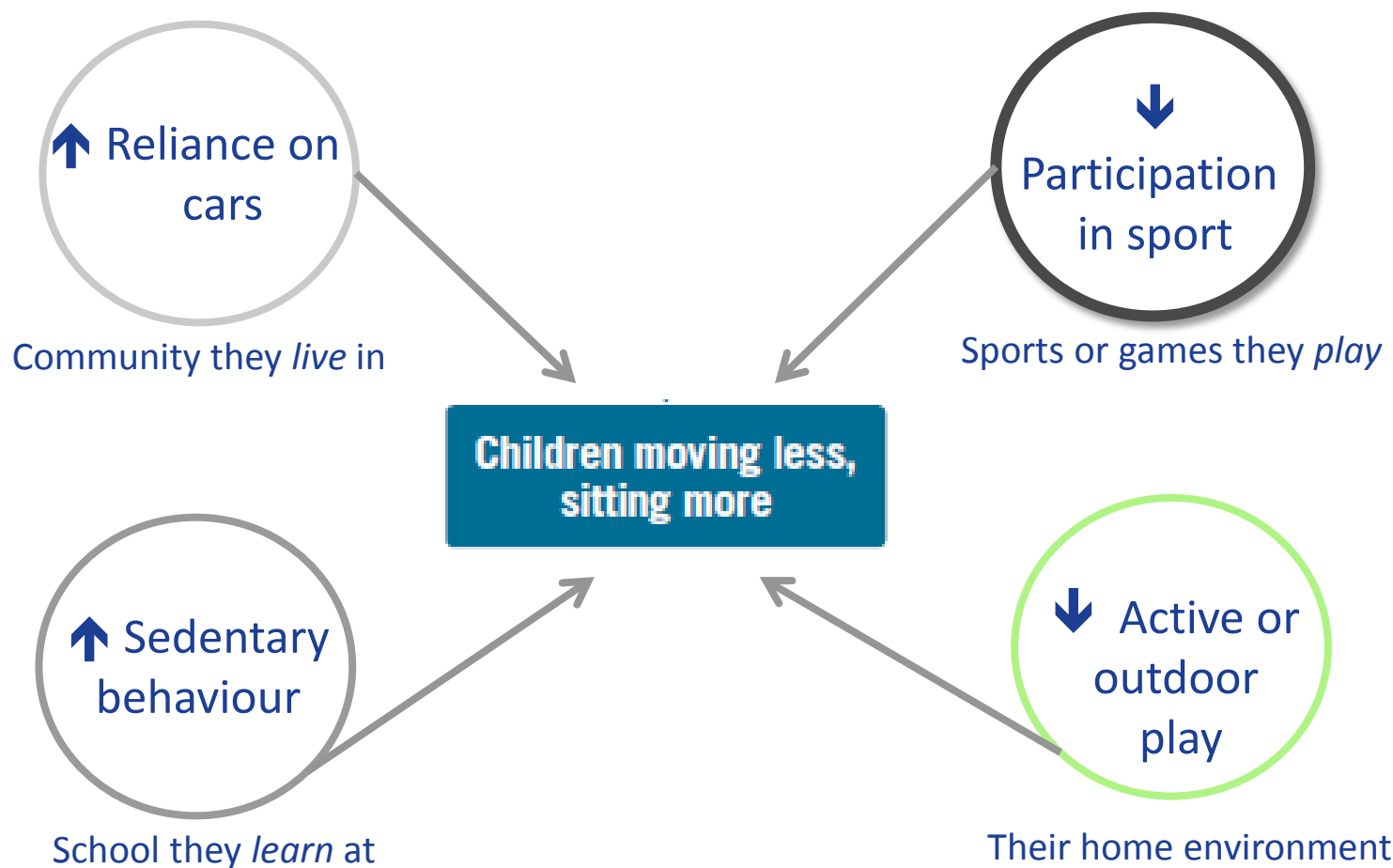
Lifestyle of an active twin									
PHYSICAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased fitness Less body fat Less risk of cardiovascular disease Better bone health 	MENTAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety 	SOCIAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More socially active 	ACADEMIC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better school performance Better concentration and memory 	PHYSICAL <p>Less risk of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heart disease Stroke Some cancers Type 2 diabetes Osteoporosis Obesity 	MENTAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less risk of depression, anxiety 	SOCIAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More socially involved 	CAREER/FINANCES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater workforce participation, less absenteeism, more income stability Less health costs 	LIFE EXPECTANCY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less risk of disability or premature death 	
CHILDHOOD					ADULTHOOD				
PHYSICAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obesity/overweight Poor bone density Poor muscular fitness 	MENTAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heightened risk of depression/anxiety 	SOCIAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced self-worth Poor pro-social behaviour 	ACADEMIC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor school performance Lower IQ 	PHYSICAL <p>Greater risk of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heart disease Stroke Breast cancer Colon cancer Type 2 Diabetes Osteoporosis Obesity 	MENTAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater risk of depression, anxiety 	SOCIAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less social interaction 	CAREER/FINANCES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower workforce participation, higher absenteeism, less income stability Higher health costs 	LIFE EXPECTANCY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater risk of disability, premature death 	

Lifestyle of a sedentary twin

Many factors influence children being active

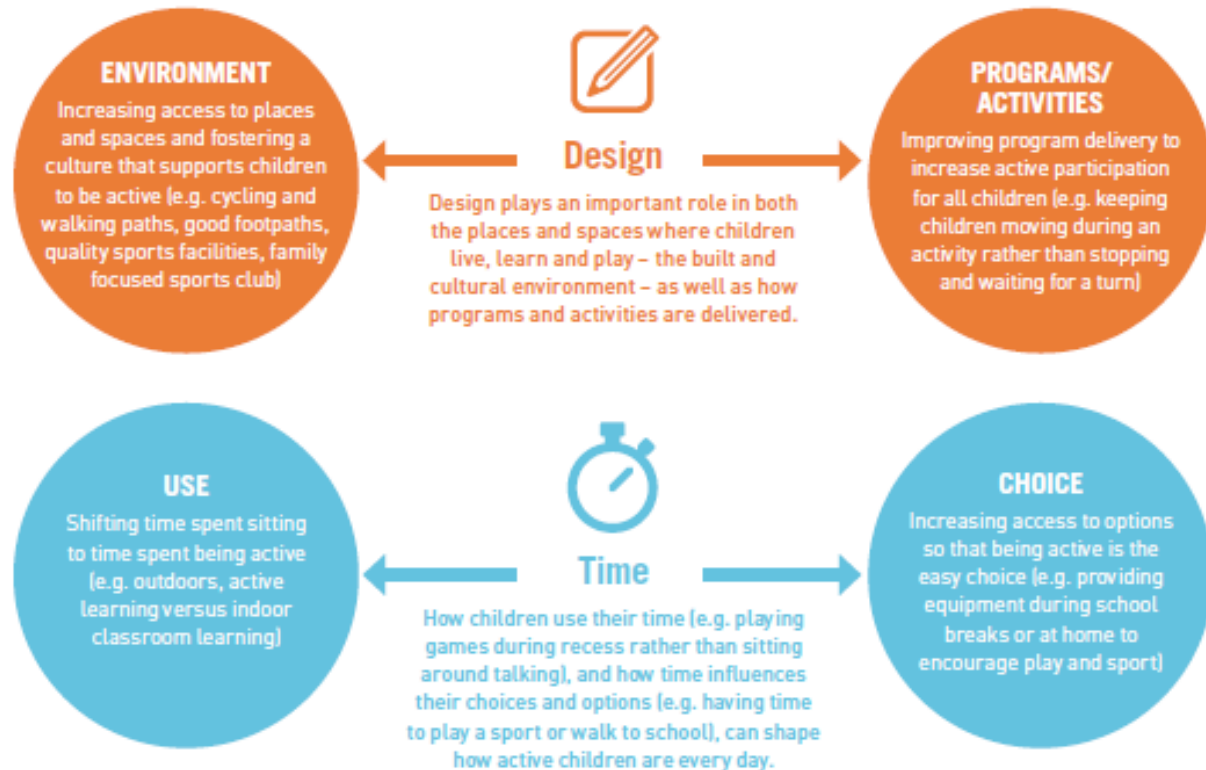


Everywhere we go, everything we do is affecting children's opportunities to be active



How to integrate physical activity into children's daily lives

KEY DECISION MAKERS CAN INCREASE CHILDREN'S PHYSICAL ACTIVITY THROUGH:



Community where children live influences their physical activity



Opportunities for Action: Community



Consider *greater access* to spaces and places for play



Activate local streets and community spaces



Seek children's views in the design and development of play grounds and play spaces

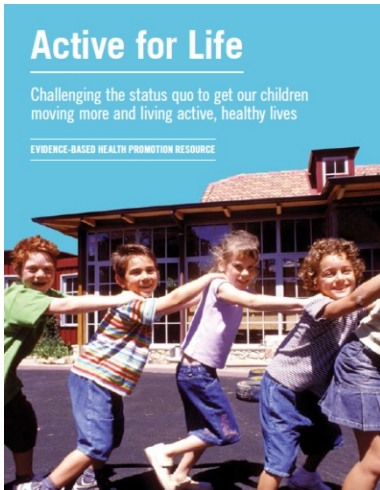


Create *more ways* to use public spaces and places for outdoor activities



Consider ways to *shift travel choices* away from cars

Understanding barriers to children's physical activity and active travel



Active for Life

Challenging the status quo to get our children moving more and living active, healthy lives

EVIDENCE-BASED HEALTH PROMOTION RESOURCE

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au



Influencing children's health: critical windows for intervention

Research highlights

About this research

Healthy children are more likely to live longer, active and independent lives – at school, at work and in retirement. However, many children are not meeting the recommended levels of physical activity. This research highlights the importance of physical activity in children's lives and the role of parents, schools and communities in supporting this. It also identifies critical windows for intervention and provides a range of strategies to support physical activity in children. Before making any changes to your child's physical activity, it is important to understand the barriers and enablers to physical activity in your child's life. This research provides a range of strategies to support physical activity in children.

In this report

- The importance of physical activity in children's lives
- The role of parents, schools and communities in supporting physical activity in children's lives
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Introduction

Healthy children are more likely to live longer, active and independent lives – at school, at work and in retirement. However, many children are not meeting the recommended levels of physical activity. This research highlights the importance of physical activity in children's lives and the role of parents, schools and communities in supporting this. It also identifies critical windows for intervention and provides a range of strategies to support physical activity in children. Before making any changes to your child's physical activity, it is important to understand the barriers and enablers to physical activity in your child's life. This research provides a range of strategies to support physical activity in children.

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VicHealth has initiated or partnered in research in relation to:

- Physical activity for children aged 4 to 12 years – *Active for Life*
- Developing healthy habits in children and adolescents – *Influencing children's health: critical windows for intervention*
- Better understand the barriers and enablers for children's active travel behaviour - with a focus on:
 - Children's active and independent travel
 - Parental fears regarding children's safety

Beyond the bubble wrap

Understanding parent's fears in allowing their children to play and travel independently

- 3-year study into parental fear – 2012 to 2015
- Conducted by La Trobe University and the Parenting Research Centre
- Included:
 - Two new measures of parental fear
 - Discussion groups with children and parents
 - Survey of more than 2000 parents of children 9 to 15 years across Victoria
 - Workshops with experts to identify initiatives to overcome barriers to children's independent physical activity



Preliminary findings: parental fear

PARENTAL FEAR OF STRANGERS

Assesses fear of harm to children from strangers.

48%

worried about their child's safety when they were not with an adult because a stranger might approach them.

- Victorian parents are more fearful about their child being harmed by a stranger, than they are about their child's general safety when out in their neighbourhood without an adult.
- Parents who were more concerned reported that their children were less likely to play and travel independently in the community.

GENERAL PARENTAL FEAR

Assesses parental concerns about children's safety when children are without adult supervision.

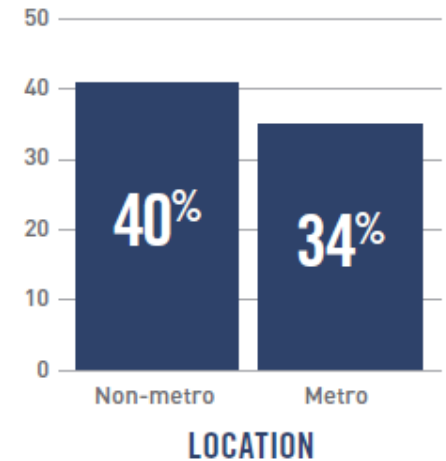
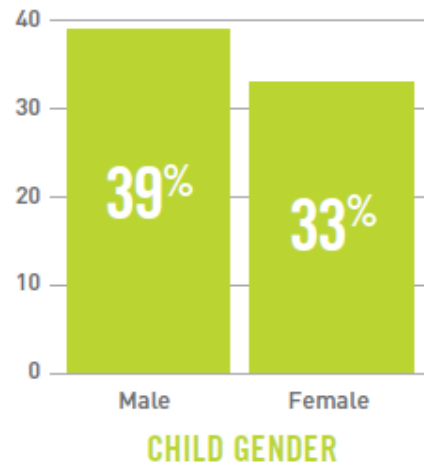
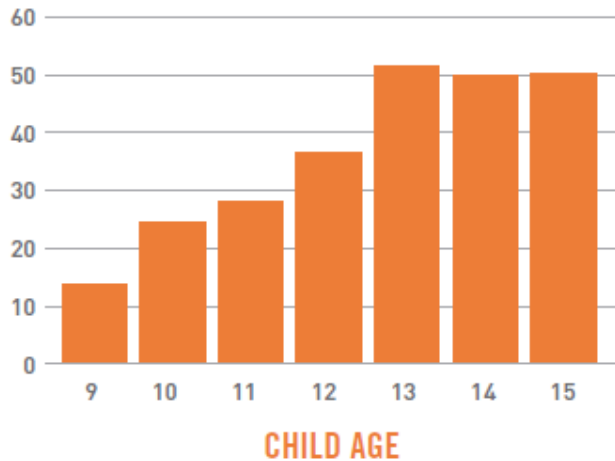
18%

always worried about their child's safety when they were out without an adult.

Preliminary findings: trips to school

Children's independence was related to their age, gender and where they live.

INDEPENDENT TRIPS TO SCHOOL (%)



Preliminary findings: other aspects

- What others think matters:
 - Family
 - School
 - Other parents
- Community is important:
 - People know each other
 - Traffic and pedestrian hazards
 - Adults and children walking
 - Children's practice and safety skills



Walking to School

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation

Walk to School

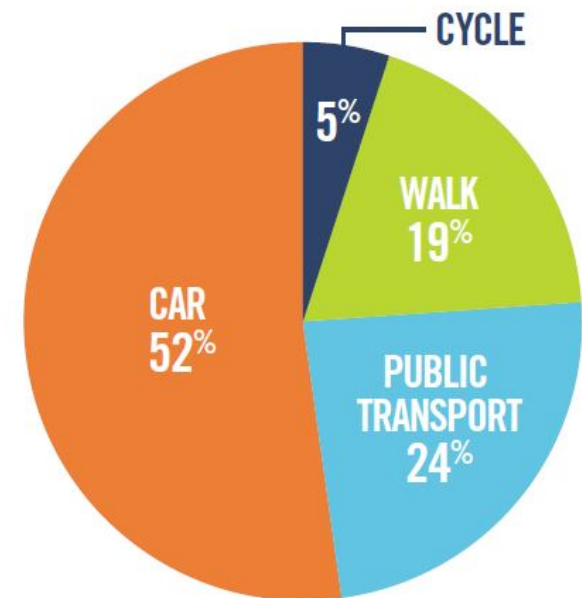
2014 Evaluation & Plans for 2015



Walk to School: the challenge

- > National guidelines recommend at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day for children aged 5–12
- > High levels of persistent physical activity participation are correlated with adult levels of activity
- > Only 1 in 5 children aged 5-17 get the recommended amount of physical activity every day
- > Active transport choices – walking and cycling instead of driving – contribute to individual achievement of recommended physical activity levels
- > Less than 20% of Victorian children walk to school.

TRANSPORT



Walk to School 2014: the campaign

Walk to School aimed to:

- > promote the benefits of walking to and from school to children, their families, and the community
- > build active transport habits among Victorian primary school children by encouraging them to walk to and from school during October 2014.

Key activity streams included:

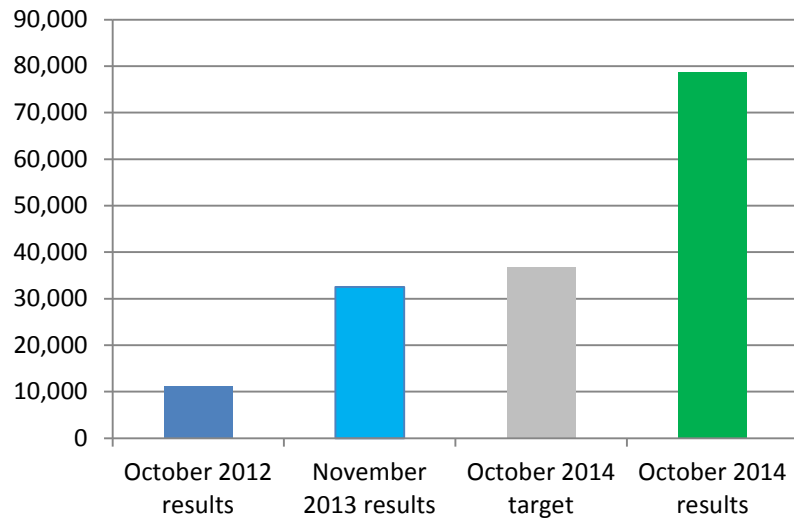
- > LGA grants program
- > Digital assets (website and app)
- > Sports partnership (Melbourne City FC)
- > Collateral and tools
- > Stakeholder engagement
- > Owned, earned and paid media
- > Research and evaluation strategy



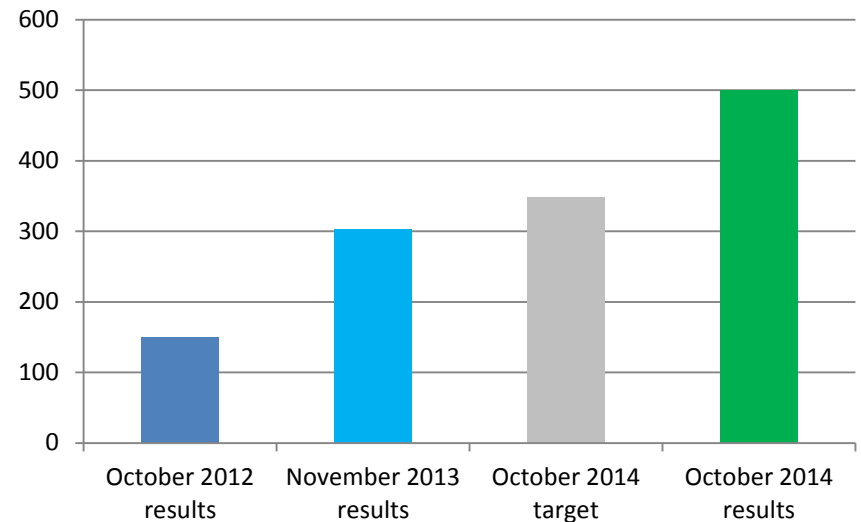
Walk to School 2014: the results

- > 78,628 students participated
- > 499 primary schools participated
- > 896,898 km (estimated) walked by participating students
- > 1,248,124 walks recorded

Participating students



Participating primary schools



Walk to School 2014: LGA grants program

Walk to School grants

52 local councils received funding of \$5-10k to run local Walk to School activities.

Activities included:

- > promotional activities
- > local school engagement
- > initiatives to support ongoing active travel



Above: Mansfield Shire Council



Above: Gannawarra Shire Council

Walk to School: media & PR

We worked with PR agency Haystac to deliver:
Ambassador engagement

- > Rebekah Elmaloglou (Neighbours actor)
- > Nathan Brown (sports commentator and ex-AFL player)

Local and metro media

- > 259 media mentions
- > estimated audience of 6,605,389

Workplace engagement campaign

- > promotion through 53 organisations



FAVOURITE NEIGHBOUR STEPS OUT

As the song goes "everybody needs good neighbours" and, if you live in Fitzroy North, Rebekah Elmaloglou could be one of yours.

The actress, who has stepped out as local ambassador for Walk to School Month, swapped life in Sydney for Melbourne with husband Kane Baker and son Kai last year.

The move followed Elmaloglou signing up to play Terese Willis in Channel Ten's enduring soap *Neighbours*.

It's Elmaloglou's second incarnation as a soap star, having first played wild child Sophie Simpson on *Home and Away* from 1989 to 1993.

Elmaloglou was just 15 when she started with *Home and Away* and found the pressure and media hype quite crippling.

"It is very different coming back as an adult," she says of her new *Neighbours* role.

"It was a lot of hard work for such a young person and not the easiest then being in the public eye, whereas now I'm one of the oldies and I'm absolutely loving it."

She's also relishing exploring her new home town. "[Melbourne] feels like a European city with all the cafés, restaurants, bars and pubs. The Northcote Social Club has become a bit of a favourite place to meet up with friends because it's kid friendly." \SH

» walktoschool.vic.gov.au



REBEKAH ELMALOGLOU & KAI



Walk to School 2014: evaluation strategy

Evaluation of the campaign comprised:

- > Online parent/carer survey
- > Classroom calendars & online participation data
- > Observation studies
- > Online stakeholder survey
- > LGA Grant program evaluation*



*More information at www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/walktoschool

Walk to School 2014: Online parent/carer survey findings

Behaviour

- > significant increase in the average number of walks per week in the Walk to School intervention group compared to the control group

Social norms

- > significant improvement in social norms among parents of children who participated in Walk to School 2014. No changes were observed in the control group.

Key factors

- > Suburb walkability
- > Distance from school less than 1km
- > No more than 1 car in the household



Above: City of Yarra

Walk to School 2014: Online stakeholder survey



Stakeholder surveys were completed by:

- > 47 (of 52) councils
- > more than 100 primary schools

Stakeholder surveys found that:

- > 94% of councils and 84% of schools were satisfied with the program
- > 94% of councils and 97% of schools are likely to participate in 2015
- > Key challenges included time and administrative burden

Walk to School 2014: LGA Grant program evaluation

Grant program evaluation found that:

Funded LGAs had

- > more schools participating
- > more students participating
- > higher walking rates

Councils are in a strong position to deliver relevant Walk to School activities and influence local social norms

Support from VicHealth, including resources available to schools and councils, is a key success factor



Above: Maroondah City Council



Walk to School 2015: Plans

Walk to School 2015

5-30 October

Campaign Activity:

- > LGA Grants Program (more info to follow)
- > Enhanced website
- > Refreshed creative and collateral
- > PR activity
- > Partnerships
- > Owned, earned and paid media
- > Stakeholder tools
- > Research and evaluation strategy



2015 LGA Grants

Your council can be part of VicHealth's Walk to School 2015 campaign and make a difference to the health and wellbeing of local primary school-aged children and their families.

What's on offer?

Funding (up to \$10,000) is available for councils to undertake the following requirements:

1. Promote Walk to School to the local community and encourage primary schools to register and participate.
2. Run local Walk to School engagement activities with participating schools throughout October 2015.
3. Deliver local initiatives to support ongoing active travel by primary school-aged children.



Walk to School 2015 Funding Guidelines

Encouraging regular physical activity

VicHealth is inviting Victorian councils to promote Walk to School 2015 in their local area. VicHealth will provide funding for councils to promote Walk to School, liaise with local primary schools in their area to actively participate in Walk to School, and undertake initiatives in their local community to support ongoing active travel among primary school-aged children and their families.

The Walk to School grant will provide funding of up to \$10,000 (ex. GST). In exception, VicHealth has the right to suspend any Walk to School grant funding and any decision to do so is at the sole discretion of VicHealth.

Councils can apply by completing and submitting a Walk to School Application and Project Plan online at www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/walktoschool.

Enquiries

For questions regarding Walk to School 2015 funding, please email walktoschool@vichealth.vic.gov.au

Further information

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/walktoschool

Important information

Funding period

Applications open	Thursday 7 May 2015
Applications close	Friday 5 June 2015 - 12pm
Notifications anticipated by	Friday 26 June 2015
Funding payments	June/July 2015

Before applying, please ensure you have thoroughly read and understood these Funding Guidelines and the:

- Terms and Conditions
- VicHealth Privacy Statement
- VicHealth Website Terms of Use

To complete your application, you will need to:

- have your ABN and bank account details
- register your details on the Funding Application System
- complete the online Eligibility and Compliance check
- complete the online Application
- complete a detailed Project Plan, which includes:
 - strategies to achieve each requirement
 - measurable objectives for each of your strategies
 - a proposed budget for your planned activities
- upload and submit your Application and Project Plan.

Helpful resources

Visit the Walk to School Funding page for:

- Your council can be part of the action
- Case Studies from Walk to School 2014
- FAQs



www.vichealth.vic.gov.au

Above: Grant guidelines

How Walk to School can support your local government priorities

Walk to School can support and strengthen a range of health benefits and priorities:

- > promoting active lifestyles and reducing sedentary
- > behaviour
- > engaging with schools, individuals and families
- > providing opportunities for social connectedness
- > providing equitable mobility options
- > reducing traffic congestion
- > reducing harmful air pollution and carbon emissions.

By promoting Walk to School in your local area, your council can also send a powerful message to the community that walking to and from school is acceptable, safe and normal.



Walk to School 2015 Your council can be part of the action

Your council can be part of VicHealth's Walk to School 2015 campaign that aims to promote to the health and wellbeing of local primary school aged children and their families, over next year. Local council action, participation and support. Councils have contributed to signs that year on year growth in Walk to School participants, helping primary school aged children achieve the physical activity they need each day.

Evaluation of Walk to School 2014 shows that councils play a key role in delivering local Walk to School activities, helping to deliver sign off and positive results within their communities. Find out more about Walk to School 2014 results, key success factors for councils, and stakeholder insights below.

To get involved in Walk to School 2015, apply for VicHealth's Walk to School funding for local councils. Find out more online at www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/healthtooschool

How Walk to School can support your local government priorities

Promoting physical activity campaigns such as Walk to School can support and strengthen a range of health benefits and priorities within Council Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan/Strategy.

- promoting active lifestyles and reducing sedentary behaviour
- engaging with schools, individuals and families
- providing opportunities for social connectedness
- providing equitable mobility options
- reducing traffic congestion
- reducing harmful air pollution and carbon emissions.

By promoting Walk to School your local area, your council can also send a powerful message to the community that walking to and from school is acceptable, safe and normal.

vichealth.vic.gov.au



ABOUT WALK TO SCHOOL

Walk to School is a community event that encourages primary school children to walk to school as often as possible during October. Now in its tenth year, Walk to School offers councils fantastic opportunities to deliver local initiatives and community engagement activities that support active travel among primary school aged children and their families. The Walk to School campaign encourages regular physical activity in primary schools and the supporting children and their families to establish routines, enjoy playing walking, and by supporting primary schools, local councils and communities to integrate walking behaviours into their local settings.

Communications and promotions

With strong campaign reach and a high level of interest from local media, Walk to School provides councils with a range of opportunities to promote local active travel initiatives, increase the achievement of local wellness and reinforce campaign messages within the community. The Walk to School 2014 campaign was supported by a program of public relations and media activity including ambassador engagement and partnering activities, paid media flooring, digital advertising and social media activity through Walk to School channels.

In 2014, local council press releases cover age-matched income than 2013 media mentions reaching an estimated audience of 60,000, 388.

Grant Application Timeline

Date	Activity
7 May 2015	Walk to School Grant Funding opens
5 June 2015 at 12pm	Walk to School Grant Funding closes
June–July 2015	Successful councils are notified Councils received funding

Detailed timeline:

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/walktoschool

Case Study

Requirement 1: Promote Walk to School to the local community and encourage primary schools to register to participate



Above: City of Greater Dandenong

- > The Community Sport and Recreation Team at **Greater Dandenong City Council** worked with two local schools to develop a promotional video for Walk to School 2014.
- > The video aimed to raise awareness of the Walk to School campaign in the local area, and encourage students, teachers, parents and carers to take part.
- > The short video was published on the Greater Dandenong City Council YouTube channel, displayed on the big screen at the City of Greater Dandenong's Civic Square, and shared through social media.
- > The response from the schools and community was positive, and everyone really liked the video.
- > In 2014, students from five local primary schools participated in Walk to School – a significant increase compared to students at just one school participating the previous year.

Dandenong Walks to School



Case Study

Requirement 2: Run local Walk to School engagement activities with participating schools throughout October



Above: City of Ballarat

- > The Community Engagement Team at the **City of Ballarat** prepared a set of 30 reward cards and a full coloured booklet as an incentive for students to walk to school more regularly throughout Term 4.
- > Cards featuring 18 different sports were printed and distributed through the ten primary schools that registered to be part of the Walk to School 2014.
- > Each time students walked to or from school during October, they earned a card to place in their Let's Walk Ballarat booklet.
- > In 2014, the City of Ballarat maintained strong school participation rates established in 2013, and saw an increase of more than 400 local students participating in Walk to School, compared to the previous year.

Case Study

Requirement 3: Deliver local initiatives to support ongoing active travel by primary school aged children



- > In 2014, **Mansfield Shire Council's** Sport and Recreation team redeveloped the local Walk to School map and developed a colour coded signage system to support primary school aged children walking to school.
- > The walk to school map illustrates seven safe walking routes from all corners of town which helps guide students to school safely. These routes make use of manned school crossings and avoid major roads and intersections.
- > The map is complemented by newly-installed way-finding signage to assist children to navigate their way to school.
- > The Council printed 700 copies of the Walk to School map, which were distributed locally.
- > This project helped to build a strong partnership between Council and the local schools.

Above: Mansfield Shire Council

How you can support Walk to School 2015

Your support is vital to success. Here's how you can help:

- > Submit a grant application
- > Promote Walk to School (toolkit will be available)
- > Follow us on social media
- > Ask us lot of questions - we are around in the break

More information: www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/walktoschool



Further information

Beyond the bubble wrap: Understanding parents' fears in allowing their children to play and travel independently

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/parentalfear

Active for Life: Challenging the status quo to get our children moving more and living active, healthy lives

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/activeforlife

Influencing children's health: critical windows for intervention

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/influencing-childrens-health-critical-windows-for-intervention

Walk to School

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/walktoschool

www.walktoschool.vic.gov.au

