“Children need at least 60 minutes (and up to several hours) of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day.”

Physically active children are happier, healthier and more socially competent than children who have more inactive lifestyles, yet many Australian children do not meet recommended levels of physical activity.

Physical Activity Levels

Family Walking:
1km = 15min
2km = 30min

Pedestrian connectivity is only as good as the worst link

Safe routes to schools
Connectivity
Streetscape Design

For every km walked, children are 4.8% less likely to be obese.

15% of primary school students were driven to school in the 1970s.

Potential to Inform School Site Selection Criteria

• Highly connected pathways which maximise walking to and from schools should be a key consideration when developing site selection criteria for schools.
• Siting schools in neighbourhoods with current or future:
  • High connectivity and low traffic exposure increases likelihood of children walking to school.
  • Low connectivity and high traffic exposure decreases likelihood of children walking to school.

Network & Infrastructure Planning

• Pathway hierarchies should be planned to provide maximum connectivity particularly within the 2km radius of schools.
• Pathway networks should facilitate the required pedestrian (and cycle) volumes.
• Pathway networks need to provide connections to active transport corridors.

Town Planning

• When planning for development within a 2km catchment of a school, consideration should be given to the current and future pathway network and the infrastructure required to provide the appropriate active transport to maximise walking, cycling or scootering to and from schools.

Prioritisation of Infrastructure Investment

• Infrastructure which increases or maximises pedestrian connectivity to and from schools should be prioritised when allocating funds for delivery of infrastructure.
• Undertaking the necessary planning and design for active transport infrastructure needs to consider delivering the infrastructure at an appropriate time to ensure that active transport becomes a habitual behaviour within a family’s daily routine.

Streetscapes

• When planning and designing streets, the pedestrian environment and active transport requirements should guide the streetscape design and pathway network design outcomes.
• The pedestrian environment needs to be safe, attractive and encourage active transport.

Introduction

Incidental physical activity, including active transport, can substantially contribute to overall levels of physical activity yet it has declined markedly in recent decades.

The highly respected medical journal The Lancet (2012) published a series on physical activity including new analysis that quantifies the global impact of physical inactivity on the world’s major non-communicable diseases. Physical inactivity is taking over from smoking as a more significant burden of disease.

4.8% of primary school students live within 2km of their school

50% of primary school students live within 2km of their school

2km radius

50% of primary school children are driven to school within walking distance.

12% 64% 4% 20%

Primary School mode share

Primary School 5-12 yrs

1km Safe & Healthy School Zone

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