Chicken or egg? The importance of school transport norms

Christine Cheyne and Imran Muhammad
Resource and Environmental Planning programme
Massey University
Outline

• Background to research on barriers to active transport to in Palmerston North

• Infrastructure(engineering), encouragement, education or...

• Changing culture(s)
HEARTLAND

Down by the dirt oval, the harsh blast of V8 engines fill the chill night air. Saturday night fever at the Palmy Showgrounds, local rednecks ring their gaudy battered jalopies.

....

Here in the Heartland wind whips through wide country town streets. Holed up in some late rock licence, Strobe light, disco sounds, its the only place on the "Square".
We're doin' some women watchin', Manawatu babe's 'n' boys, doin' the mating ritual.

...

Here in the Heartland, a twisting asphalt track, sacred turf, petrol heads paradise....
Robertson Holden International Speedway

Review Highlights

"Team Champs" pressure-time"
2017 Team Champs Finals afternoon: Great on field parking, directed carefully into tight order... read more
Reviewed 14 February 2017
Margaret B, Palmerston North, New Zealand

“A great night of entertainment”
This is well worth the effort. Great entertainment, plenty of noise and good competitive racing... read more
Adult cyclist head injuries versus helmet use

- Head injuries
- Helmet wearing

Year:
- 1990
- 1991
- 1992
- 1993
- 1994
- 1995
- 1996
Research question

What are the (perceived) barriers to walking and cycling in Palmerston North?

Data collection

- 2015 survey of adults (skewed towards older demographic)
- 2015 survey of tertiary students
- 2016 focus groups with secondary school students and doc analysis
- 2017 exploration of transition from intermediate to secondary school (to maximise and cement gains made from Bikes in primary Schools)
Palmerston North City Council and Manawatū District Council want our region to be the best place in New Zealand to ride a bike. We will do this by making the roads safer, building more cycle routes and facilities, and promoting cycling as an environmentally friendly, healthy and cheap way to get to work or school. Palmerston North city has a growing number of designated cycle lanes and cycling tracks. The cycle lanes provide a network for cyclists to get around the greater city, and to and from the CBD. The lanes give cyclists an additional measure of safety on their commute by ensuring all road users, particularly in high traffic areas, are given the visual reinforcement of the lanes, aiding fellow road users' awareness of cyclists.
Weather

Summer Average: 22 degrees Celsius (72 degrees Fahrenheit)
Winter Average: 12 degree Celsius (54 degrees Fahrenheit)
Annual Rainfall: 960mm (37.8 in) Rainfall occurs approximately 59-200 rain-free days each year.

Official marketing of ‘knowledge city’ to international students (secondary)

Why Palmerston North?

- World class quality education providers
- Safe, quiet, inexpensive & friendly city
- Natural playground
- Multi-cultural society
- Exciting student city
- Central Hub of New Zealand
- Education and ‘Knowledge City’
- Easy transportation
- Unique destination
Focus groups with secondary school students (year 12)

- 3rd year Planning students tertiary students led focus group discussion

- 3 secondary schools – one focus group in each
  - single sex girls’ school (PNGHS)
  - single sex boys’ school (PNBHS)
  - co-ed (Freyberg HS)
Findings

• Significant differences between the three schools linked to
  – school travel norms/culture (which also linked to school facilities and uniform)
  – gender
  – infrastructure and location (road environment)
**TRANSPORT**
We encourage students to bus, bike or walk to school.

**Buses**
Students need to obtain and use the school identification card as proof of their enrolment to receive discounted or free travel. Students eligible for Ministry of Education free bus transport must live at least 4.8 kilometers from their nearest school. Students are expected to display school values when travelling to and from school. For example: to stand up for full fare paying passengers.
Cycling
We encourage girls to cycle to school. There is a bike rack at the rear of the administration block – please ensure bikes are locked and helmets are worn.

Since school kilts are not practical for biking, girls are permitted to wear trackpants to school during Terms 2 and 3 when winter uniform is worn, and are able to change in the gym changing rooms.
Summer Uniform Years 9-11

• Regulation navy blue dress, mid calf length
• Regulation red wool cardigan jacket, with navy stripe, monogram and zip front
• Regulation plain black leather McKinlay shoes, either Kristen ‘T’ Bar or Molly ankle strap, or Delta lace-up or McKinlay black sandals (optional)
• White ankle socks

Winter Uniform Years 9-11

• Regulation kilt, mid calf length
• Regulation white blouse with Peter Pan collar
• Regulation red wool cardigan jacket, with navy stripe, monogram and zip front
• Regulation plain black leather McKinlay shoes, either Kristen ‘T’ Bar or Molly ankle strap, or Delta lace-up
• Black opaque tights
• Anorak or Raincoat, regulation blue Fairydown or Exeat brands
• Regulation red scarf (optional)
• Black gloves (optional) - not fingerless
• White scoop/v-neck thermal under blouse (optional)
PNGHS – key focus group themes

- Concerned about safety
- Strong preference for walking
- Uniform not seen as suitable for riding a bike
- Concerned about physicality (‘personal hygiene’)
PNBHS – key focus group themes

- Not overly concerned about safety but aware of hazards in the surrounding area (with serious crashes involving student cyclists)
- Concerned about condition of city streets
Palmerston North Boys’ High School is located within walking distance to the City’s main centre & facilities:

- The Square
- The Plaza Shopping Mall
- Numerous restaurants & cafes
- Palmerston North City Library
- Esplanade
- Cinemas
Freyberg HS – key focus group themes

- Male students and younger students were more likely to bike to school than females and older students
- Lack of facilities for cyclists school could be a deterrent to biking to school
- Convenience of car parking and driving to school
School rules (proxy for policy?)

6. Students are under the control of the school on the way to or from school, or at any event organised by the school. Travel to and from school: No student has permission to be a passenger in a vehicle driven by a PNBHS student unless specific permission has been granted (see 15.3).

12. Bicycles:

12.1 Bicycles must be wheeled (not ridden) inside the school grounds.
12.2 Cyclists must use the Featherston Street or Wellesbourne Street entrances.
12.3 Bicycle stands must be used – cycles should not be left against buildings or fences.
12.4 Cycle helmets must be worn at all times.
Key findings: areas to target to promote ATS especially biking

• safety
• convenience
• practicality (e.g. uniform)
• school transport norms
• assumptions about primacy of vehicles on road
• junior high school
Exploring the transition from intermediate to secondary

- Online survey of parents/care-givers of students in years 8 & 9 living in PN urban area – sent via School social media / newsletter and other social media (e.g. Manawatū-restricted Facebook pages)

- Analysis of school transport policies/info/facilities (or lack of)

- Significant drop in cycling after moving to new secondary school) especially for girls
Year
7-8

St Peters College
(Year 7-13)

Ross Intermediate

PN Intermediate

Monrad Intermediate
Infrastructure (Engineering)/ Education/ Encouragement

• Deficiencies in infrastructure need to be addressed

• Safe routes and improved road environment need to be provided – use apps and user-friendly maps/info for students & parents/caregivers

• NZTA Urban Cycleway Funding policy changes now emphasise travel behaviour change
Changing school culture(s)

• School transport norms are powerful and need to be closely examined by schools:
  – review information to students & parents in School handbook, and other info sources
  – Promote benefits (social not just health) of ATS with strong, positive images

• Convenience of driving needs to be reduced and convenience of walking and in particular biking promoted

• Give option of unisex uniform
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uniform Items</th>
<th></th>
<th>Uniform Items</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer Shirt (straight)</td>
<td>Summer Shirt (shaped)</td>
<td>Winter Shirt (long sleeves &amp; collar)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorts (unisex)</td>
<td>Long Pants (unisex) Skirt</td>
<td>PE Uniform (unisex)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polar Fleece (vest)</td>
<td>Polar Vest (sweatshirt)</td>
<td>Sports Shoes (for PE)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Leather Shoes</td>
<td>Black Roman Sandals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Awatapu College FAQs

Getting to School

Rural Bus Service
A rural bus service is available to out of town students via UZABUS. Please contact UZABUS on 06 356 4896 for the most up to date information regarding bus routes and pickup/drop off points. Students must carry their Awatapu College ID card when travelling on the bus service. ID cards are available from the school office for $7.50.

City Bus Service
Awatapu College is situated on the Awapuni/Rugby bus route. Please visit the Horizon Regional Council website for more information regarding city bus routes, timetables and fares: http://www.horizons.govt.nz/buses-transport/bus-routes-transport
Strictly gendered uniforms work to reinforce gender stereotypes and work to perpetuate the norms of a gender binary: a society in which girls ought to be feminine and that boys ought to be masculine. When uniforms reflect or reinforce cultural values that have traditionally been ascribed on the basis of biological sex, expectations of behaviour, and thus expectations of gender expression are imposed. ...

From a practical stance, some girls find skirts and dresses to be restrictive, limiting the types of activities they do before school, during break times and after school. From bike riding to sporting activities, feminised uniform options often disadvantage girls.
Conclusions

• Place-specific local (car) culture and geography need to be acknowledged in design of infrastructure and interventions to promote active transport

• Utilise new technologies – e-bikes are here; apps for PT

• Significant gains to be made from targeting year 8 and 9 students
Labour proposes free driving lessons for all students

Labour leader Jacinda Ardern announces an education policy at Kelston Girls College.

14 Aug, 2017 12:00 pm
THERE IS TOO MUCH TRAFFIC FOR BILLY TO WALK TO SCHOOL; SO WE DRIVE HIM.

Traffic Inducing Traffic

Source: Greater Auckland