In This Issue...

Welcome to the 10th issue of the Active Living Laboratory Newsletter! In this issue, we are sharing information about the BEATS Study Symposium 2018, The Active Living and Environment Symposium (TALES) 2019, latest BEATS Study publications, latest updates from our laboratory and recent newspaper articles about our research. Feel free to share this newsletter with others.

Thank you for your continued interest in our work!
Associate Professor Sandy Mandic

The BEATS Study Symposium 2018

Friday, 16 November 2018 | University of Otago | Dunedin, New Zealand
School of Physical Education, Sport & Exercise Sciences, Seminar Room 213/214

This symposium celebrated 5 years of the BEATS Study and showcased the latest study findings, including the preliminary findings from the BEATS Rural Study. The symposium was open to the public and included 14 verbal abstract presentations and 7 posters presenting recent findings from the BEATS and BEATS Rural Studies. The symposium was attended by 46 individuals representing academics, schools, health professionals, policy makers and the general public. It included in-person attendees from Auckland and Wellington and 7 New Zealand and international attendees via Zoom. The symposium was sponsored by the School of Physical Education, Sport and Exercise Sciences and the Continuing Education Fund.

Symposium proceedings, presentation slides and posters can be accessed on the following link: https://www.otago.ac.nz/beats/publications/otago699866.html

BEATS Research Team members at the BEATS Study Symposium 2018. Back row, left to right: Gavin Kidd, Long Chen, Charlotte Flaherty, Dr Anna Rolleston, Associate Professor Sandra Mandic, Dr Susan Sandretto, Dr Kirsten Coppell and Associate Professor Antoni Moore. Front row, left to right: Olivia Eyles, Jessica Calverley, Brittany White, Kimberley King, and Tessa Pocock.
The Active Living and Environment Symposium (TALES) is ready for you.

This symposium will bring together researchers, policy makers, health promoters, urban designers, transport experts and interested members of the public to engage in a multidisciplinary and multi-sector dialogue about Active Living and Environment. Symposium themes include Health, Transportation, Environment and Sustainability.

Symposium programme is available:  

We have confirmed 13 invited speakers (including 3 speakers from UK, Ireland and Canada):  

We have accepted 31 research and policy/practice abstracts.

Registrations are now open! We warmly invite you to join us.  
Early-bird registration fees are available until Friday, 30 November 2018. 
Register here: https://www.otago.ac.nz/active-living-2019/registration/

Visit our symposium website for details: www.otago.ac.nz/active-living-2019


For all inquiries, please email ale.symposium@otago.ac.nz or phone +64 3 479 9112.

Latest BEATS Study Publications

School bag weight as a barrier to active transport to school among New Zealand adolescents

This article shows that school bag weight was perceived by both adolescents and their parents as a barrier for active transport to school. Heavy school bags were seen as a greater barrier for cycling versus walking. Active transport users were less likely to perceive their school bag as too heavy. On average, adolescents’ school bags weighted 5.6 kg. Actual school bag weights did not differ by mode of transport to school. School bag weights should be considered in future active transport to school interventions.


Would New Zealand adolescents cycle to school more if allowed to cycle without a helmet?

This article shows that 21% of Dunedin youth stated they would cycle more to school if helmet use was not mandatory. Distance to school and route perceptions were identified as significant factors. Ethnicity, social norms and cycling often with friends emerged also as significant factors. These findings can be used to design educational interventions among adolescents to raise awareness that wearing a bicycle helmet provides protection from head injuries.

Javier Molina-García, Ana Queralt, Enrique García Bengoechea, Antoni Moore, Sandra Mandic. Would New Zealand adolescents cycle to school more if allowed to cycle without a helmet? Journal of Transport and Health. 2018;11:64-72 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2018.10.001  Full article
This article shows that optimal distance for walking to school in Dunedin adolescents was ≤2.25 km. Near-school built environment did not correlate with active transport to school. Perceptions of school route correlated with near-school built environment features. Perceived walking safety was the strongest correlate of active transport to school. Near-school built environment features may encourage active transport to school. Adolescents’ perceptions of walking safety should be considered as part of comprehensive efforts to encourage active transport to school.

Tessa Pocock, Antoni Moore, Michael Keall, Sandra Mandic. Physical and Spatial Assessment of School Neighbourhood Built Environments for Active Transport to School in Adolescents from Dunedin (New Zealand). Health & Place. (Epub: 13 Nov 2018); DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2018.10.003

Full article

Latest Updates from the Active Living Laboratory

- Brittany White and Jessica Calverley have received Active Living Laboratory summer research scholarship for 2018/19. Brittany and Jessica are preparing individual school reports based on the findings from the BEATS Rural Study conducted in 2018.

- We have developed a new research project entitled The Catalyst Project to inspire, empower and supporting adolescents in rural areas of the Otago region to engage with science using BEATS Rural Study data from their own school. As a part of this project, rural adolescents will develop innovative ways to encourage healthy lifestyle behaviours in their schools and communities. We are awaiting the outcome of a funding application for this project.

Recent Newspaper Articles about the BEATS Study Findings

“Adolescent activity levels revealed” (Otago Daily Times; 21 November 2018): https://www.odt.co.nz/rural-life/rural-people/adolescent-activity-levels-revealed?fbclid=IwAR1dG7F06Z2lx03gya_Ft5BwLLMNKI1Q8n5etvjhoal1bSI2xVmhHzQyXQ

“Study investigates pupil’s biking qualms” (The Star; 08 November 2018): https://www.odt.co.nz/news/dunedin/dunedin-pupils-reluctant-walk-or-bike

“Heavy bags barrier to walking, cycling” (The Star; 19 October 2018): https://www.odt.co.nz/news/dunedin/dunedin-pupils-reluctant-walk-or-bike

“Dunedin pupils reluctant to walk or bike” (Otago Daily Times; 29 September 2018): https://www.odt.co.nz/news/dunedin/dunedin-pupils-reluctant-walk-or-bike


Contact Details and Sign Up

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