

# Newsletter



Issue 17  
August 2020



## In This Issue...

Welcome to the 17<sup>th</sup> issue of the Active Living Laboratory Newsletter! In this issue, we share with you our recent research news, preparations for the BEATS-2 Study in 2021, and our latest five scientific journal articles.

Feel free to share this newsletter with others and thank you for your continued interest in our work.

Active Living Laboratory Team and  
Associate Professor Sandy Mandic

**Keep up-to-date** with all the latest news and events for our new **"BEATS-2 Study"** at the BEATS website:

<https://www.otago.ac.nz/beats/news/index.html>

## Keeping up our BEATS team spirit!

With the BEATS-2 Study data collection in Dunedin high schools now on hold until 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the BEATS team has been working behind the scenes to collect physical activity meters worn before the lockdown and download data. Participating students who returned their meters will receive activity graphs showing their physical activity levels and a \$10 book voucher reward for their participation. The BEATS team is working on preparing technical reports summarising school-specific findings for the two schools that participated in the BEATS-2 data collection prior to the lockdown in March 2020.



While things have slowed down somewhat for the BEATS team, we have been taking advantage of lunchtime badminton games at the Smithells Gymnasium at the University of Otago, meeting regularly for team lunches and connecting virtually through Zoom meetings to keep the BEATS-2 Study work moving forward. The BEATS Research Team has been in regular contact with the Dunedin Secondary School Partnership and will shortly be contacting schools to schedule 2021 data collection dates for the BEATS-2 Study.

PhD students Margaretha Lilliana and Mohammad Lutfur Rahman have been working hard on their research proposals and both have had their abstracts accepted for the '2Walk and Cycle Conference'. Lutfur's presentation will be on the "Modelling safe routes to school framework" and Margaretha will present on "Active school travel and snacking behaviour". Due to COVID-19, the conference has been postponed to March 2021.



## Our Latest Publications

While the BEATS-2 Study data collection is on hold this year, the BEATS investigators and collaborators continued analysing and writing up results from previously completed BEATS projects and related spin-off projects. In this newsletter we share summaries of and links to five journal articles published by our team in the last few months.

### **Development of Key Policy Recommendations for Active Transport in New Zealand: Multi-Sector and Multidisciplinary Endeavour**

This article describes the process used for development of policy recommendations for increasing active transport in New Zealand. National targets for walking, cycling and public transport by 2050 were included. The 13 policy recommendations and 39 associated actions are New Zealand specific. However, the policy development process used is generalizable to other countries, cultures and times.

*Mandic S, Jackson A, Lieswyn J, Mindell JS, García Bengoechea E, Spence JC, Wooliscroft B, Wade-Brown C, Coppel K, Hinckson E. Development of Key Policy Recommendations for Active Transport in New Zealand: Multi-Sector and Multidisciplinary Endeavour. Journal of Transport & Health. 2020; 18:100859 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2020.100859> (Open access)*

### **Taking the bus? Barriers and facilitators for adolescent use of public buses to school**

This article used multiple sources of data to understand the barriers to and facilitators of public transport use by adolescents for school travel in Dunedin. Major barriers were distance to school, cost, parental trip chaining, built environment features, the weather, convenience, and safety perceptions. This article outlines recommendations that could increase use of public buses for school travel. Future actions would require government authorities, schools, parents and adolescents to work together to encourage adolescents use of public buses to school.

*Mindell JS, Ergler C, Hopkins D, Mandic S. Taking the bus? Barriers and facilitators for adolescent use of public buses to school. Travel Behaviour and Society. (in press; accepted on 11 August 2020) <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tbs.2020.08.006> (Open access)*

### **BEATS-2 Research Assistant and Volunteer Opportunities in 2021**

Enrich your research experience, be part of our vibrant team and have fun along the way

<https://www.otago.ac.nz/active-living/involvement/jobs/index.html>

## **Implications of attending the closest school on adolescents' physical activity and car travel in Dunedin**

Attending the closest school may benefit adolescents' physical activity and reduce car travel. This article estimated such benefits based on data from Dunedin. Around half of private motor vehicle trips to and from school were chained with other trips. In Dunedin, modest reductions in private vehicle traffic, particularly around schools, and increases in adolescents' moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity during the school commute period would be expected if all adolescents attended the closest school.

*Keall M, Hopkins D, Coppell K, Sandretto S, García Bengoechea E, Spence J, Wilson G, Mandic S. Implications of attending the closest school on adolescents' physical activity and car travel in Dunedin. Journal of Transport & Health. 2020; 18:100900; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2020.100900>*

## **Differences in Parental Perceptions of Walking and Cycling to High School According to Distance**

This article showed that parents of adolescents favoured walking compared to cycling to school. With increasing distance to school, social support for active transport decreased whereas personal, environmental and safety barriers became more pronounced. Two-thirds of parents expected to participate in adolescents' school travel decision making. The findings highlight that active transport to school initiatives should minimise parental concerns, considering the specificity of walking and cycling and take into account distance to school.

*Mandic S, Hopkins D, García Bengoechea E, Flaherty C, Coppell K, Moore A, Williams J, Spence JC. Differences in Parental Perceptions of Walking and Cycling to High School According to Distance. Transportation Research Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour. 2020; 71:238-249; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trf.2020.04.013> (Open access)*

## **Competing Tensions: Active Transport to School, School Choice and Policy Making**

School choice policies increase distance to school and reduce active travel rates. Findings from this article showed that school leaders were aware of main barriers to active transport to and from school. Many school leaders viewed school travel as a family decision and choice. Active school travel policies have not been in the school leaders' 'field of view'. Future efforts to encourage active school travel should involve students and their parents and consider comprehensive approaches that span in and out-of-school initiatives.

*Sandretto S, Hopkins D, Wilson G, Mandic S. Competing Tensions: Active Transport to School, School Choice and Policy Making. Journal of Transport & Health. 2020; 18:100908; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2020.100908>*

## Contact Details and Sign Up

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