

BEATS-2 Study

Built Environment and Active Transport to School



Reference: 17/188; December 2017

BEATS-2: Information for Schools

The lack of physical activity and an increase in sedentary lifestyle of adolescents is a global health problem. Active transport to school is a convenient way to integrate physical activity into everyday life, maintain or increase physical activity levels and may also develop into environmentally sustainable travel practices over a lifetime.

What is the BEATS-2 Study about?

Active transport to school is influenced by personal, family, social, environmental and school factors. The BEATS-2 Study investigates transport to school habits, the neighbourhood environment and physical activity of students aged 13 to 18 years.

We are currently recruiting Dunedin secondary schools for participation in the BEATS-2 Study in 2021.

The BEATS-2 Study is an extension of the original Dunedin BEATS Study conducted between 2013 and 2017.

Since 2014, on-road and off-road cycling infrastructure construction has occurred in Dunedin neighbourhoods, and pedestrian-related infrastructure changes began in 2018. These infrastructure changes affect the neighbourhoods of 6 out of 12 secondary schools in Dunedin. The BEATS-2 Study is a natural experiment which will measure the effects of these infrastructure changes on active transport to school behaviours and physical activity in adolescents, as well as adolescents' perceptions of their school neighbourhood built environment.

Why is the BEATS-2 Study important?

The findings from this study will provide valuable and unique information for schools, city councils, transport agencies and land planners. The results will also help inform future interventions for built environment change, education campaigns, school policy development and city policy development. Encouraging active transport to school among adolescents and using active transport to school as a means of increasing physical activity will promote obesity-preventing lifestyles and improve health and wellbeing.

A summary of the published BEATS Study findings is available on the BEATS website:

www.otago.ac.nz/beats

What will the BEATS-2 Study involve?

We are inviting all 12 Dunedin secondary schools to participate in the BEATS-2 Study: 6 'exposure' schools in areas where infrastructure changes have occurred and 6 'control' schools in areas where no infrastructure changes have occurred.

Using an online questionnaire, we are **aiming to survey 1,600 students (about 120 to 150 students per school)** from all 12 secondary schools in Dunedin. Some students may also decide to take part in a physical activity assessment and/or a focus group.

Data collection in schools for this study will take place **between May 2021 and September 2022**. Each school will choose the school term(s) that will be the most convenient for them.

What involvement is asked from the school?

If your school decides to participate in the BEATS-2 Study, we would kindly ask for your assistance with:

- A. **Promoting and recruiting students and parents** from your school.
- B. **Organising the days for the BEATS research team** to visit your school **to conduct the data collection**.
- C. **Allowing the BEATS research team access to your school on several days** during school time to allow students to take part in this study and one week later to collect physical activity measurement devices.
- D. **Providing a computer/laptop/Chrome book and the internet access to students to complete an online study questionnaire at school.**
 - In schools in which students have access to laptop computers or Chrome books, students can complete the online survey in a regular classroom.
 - In schools in which students do not have access to laptop computers or Chrome books, students will need to complete the online survey in a computer laboratory at school.
- E. **Sending relevant study information in an electronic format** (e.g. by email and school's newsletter) **to students and parents** in your school.
- F. **Assisting with collection of consent forms and physical activity measurement devices from students** in your school.
- G. **Assisting with the organisation of a focus group session** in your school (please note that focus group sessions be organised only in several schools the express an interest for running those session).

How does the school benefit from participation?

Each participating school will:

- Receive a **\$250 book voucher** as a gift to the school library for participation in the study.
- Receive a thank-you **morning tea for all school staff** after data collection is completed.
- Receive a **report** on the motivations for, and barriers to, active transport to school as reported by the students from their school.
 - See sample report: <https://www.otago.ac.nz/beats/otago694983.pdf>

BEATS-2 Student Survey

If you would like to receive a copy of the BEATS-2 Student Survey, please contact BEATS-2 Study Coordinator Kim King (phone: 03 479 5461; email: beats@otago.ac.nz).

What happens next?

We would greatly appreciate it if you and your school would consider taking part in the BEATS-2 Study. We look forward to answering any questions your school may have about this study.

Contact Us

You are welcome to contact us any time with questions regarding the BEATS-2 Study:

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Thank you very much for considering your schools' participation in the BEATS-2 Study in 2021-2022. We look forward to working with you and your school again.

Ngā mihi nui,



Dr Sandy Mandic,
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BEATS Research Programme (www.otago.ac.nz/beats)
Active Living Laboratory (www.otago.ac.nz/active-living)



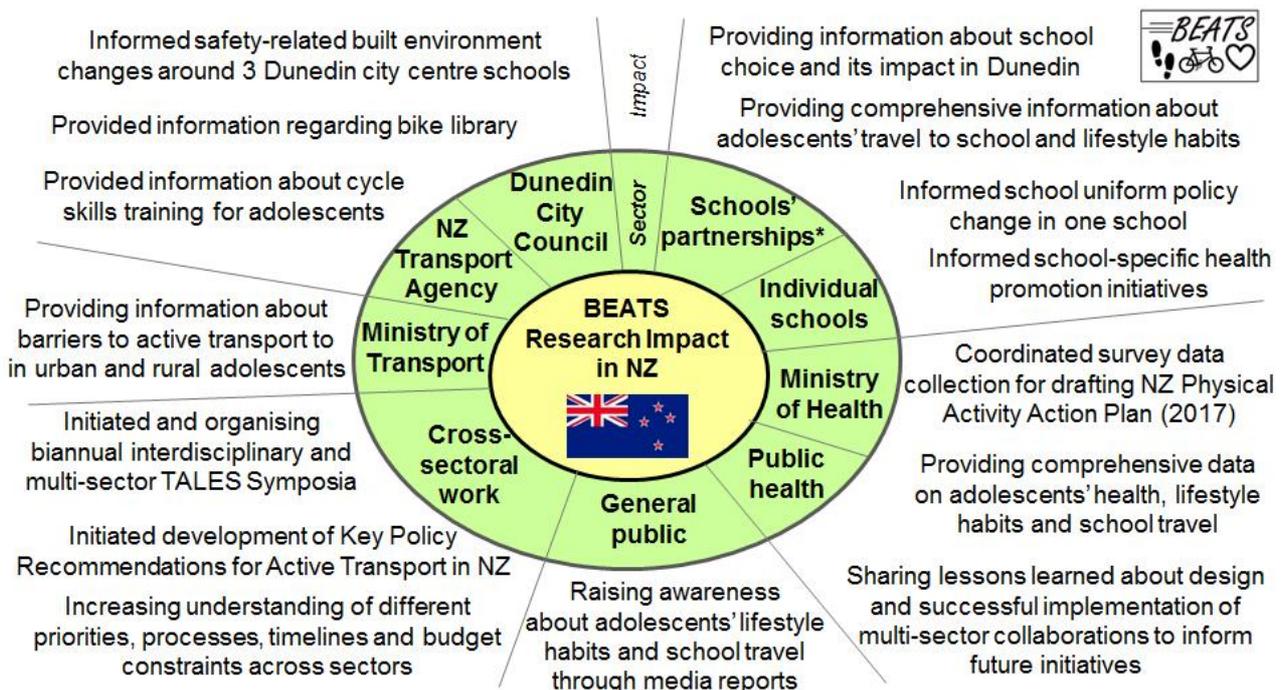
BEATS-2 Partnerships, Research Team and Funding

The BEATS Research Programme is a multi-sectoral collaboration between the University of Otago, the Dunedin Secondary Schools' Partnership, the Dunedin City Council and Auckland University of Technology.

The BEATS research team is multidisciplinary, with wide-ranging expertise including exercise science, public health, behavioural medicine, health promotion, geographic information science, geography, Māori health, transport, and biostatistics. In addition, the team involves national and international research collaborations and an Advisory Board group with representatives from stakeholders and the wider community. The team also involves PhD, Master's and Honours research students, summer research students, interns, research assistants and volunteers. Details are available on the BEATS Research Programme website: <https://www.otago.ac.nz/beats/staff/index.html>.

The BEATS-2 Study has been funded by Health Research Council Project Grant (19/173), and internal grants from the Division of Sciences, University of Otago and School of Physical Education, Sport and Exercise Sciences. The BEATS-2 Study has been approved by the University of Otago Ethics Committee (Ethics reference number: 17/188).

BEATS Research Impact in New Zealand



*Dunedin Secondary Schools' Partnership and Otago Secondary Schools' Principals' Association