



## Built Environment and Active Transport to School Study: BEATS-2 Student Survey

Reference: 17/188;  
December 2017

# Parent/Guardian Information Sheet

### What is the study about?

School-age students are becoming more sedentary. The lack of physical activity in adolescents increases risks of health problems such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease both in teenage years and in adult life. Active transport to school is an effective way to increase physical activity in youth. However, to date we know little about adolescents' perceptions of active transport to school. It is very important that we learn more about factors that influence active transport and level of physical activity in adolescents, in order to be able to prevent health problems later in life. The aim of this study is to assess transport to school habits, the neighbourhood environment and the physical activity levels of students aged 13 to 18 years in Dunedin.

The BEATS-2 Study has been funded by Health Research Council Project Grant (19/173).

### Why my son/daughter?

We have invited all Dunedin secondary schools to take part in this study. Your son/daughter's school has decided to take part in this study and has allowed us to invite all students in your son/daughter's class to participate. All students, however, can individually decide whether or not to take part in the study.

### Where will this study take place?

We have agreed with the school principal that the study will take place at school during 2021-2022. Trained researchers will visit the school to conduct the study. The study will be organised to cause minimum disruption to your son/daughter's education.

### What will the study involve for your son/daughter?

The trained researcher would like to collect the following information during one school hour:

- **Study survey:** Students will be asked to complete an online survey about their transport to school, neighbourhood environment and lifestyle habits. The survey questions are **not like a school test, there are no right or wrong answers** and your son/daughter **does not have to answer** every question if they do not want to. Teachers will be present, but our research team will assist your son/daughter to complete the survey if necessary. All survey participants will be entered in a draw for one of fifty \$20 book vouchers per school.
- **Physical assessment** (optional): Trained research staff will measure students' height and weight in a screened off area of the class where they will not be able to be observed by other students. Students will wear light clothing during the assessment.
- **Physical activity assessment** (optional): Students may also choose to wear a small activity meter (the size is a little larger than an iPod shuffle) on their hip for 7 days after the survey. Research staff will show students how to put on and take off the meter. Participants will receive a log book to record the times when they are wearing the monitor. We will collect all devices from your son/daughter's school one week later. The device will not display any measurements. Students will receive a \$5 book voucher for returning the meter and

completed log book to their school on a scheduled date and an additional \$5 book voucher if they wore the meter for 7 days and for at least 12 hours each day.

- **Focus group** (optional): Several students may also choose to participate in a 45-60-minute focus group meeting at their school. In the focus group, students will talk to other group members about their perceptions of different transport modes, mode users, and experiences of travel. The sessions will be audio-recorded. All focus group participants will receive a \$10 book voucher in recognition of their participation and contributions.

### **What will researchers do with the collected data?**

Each student's name will only be included on the consent form and this will be kept separate from the information we collect during the study. Personal information collected on the survey will include date of birth, gender, ethnicity and home address. The information from all the surveys will be sent to the University web server and only the researchers involved in the project will have access to the data. The data collected will be summarised, presented to policy makers, and reported in research journals. At the end of the study the overall results will be made available to the students who took part and their parents. We will also supply a summary of study findings to the school principal of each participating school. No personal information about any individual students will be reported.

### **What do I do now?**

We very much hope that your son/daughter will be able to take part in the BEATS-2 Study. Please discuss the study with your son/daughter. Students can choose not to take part, or they can withdraw from the study at any time. This will not affect their future education or care in any way. Non-participating students will be given class work to do during the study assessments.

All students who wish to participate in this study will need to sign consent. Parental consent is not required.

### **Who can tell me more about the study?**

You can find more information about this study on the BEATS website:

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/beats>

If you have any questions about this project, please contact the study coordinator:

#### **BEATS Study Coordinator**

Centre for Sustainability, University of Otago, PO Box 56, Dunedin 9054

Phone: 03 479 5461; E-mail: [beats@otago.ac.nz](mailto:beats@otago.ac.nz)

We thank you for your time hope that you and your son/daughter will be able to take part in the BEATS Study.



Dr Sandy Mandic, BEATS Research Programme Principal Investigator  
Centre for Sustainability, University of Otago, and Auckland University of Technology

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03 479 8256). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.