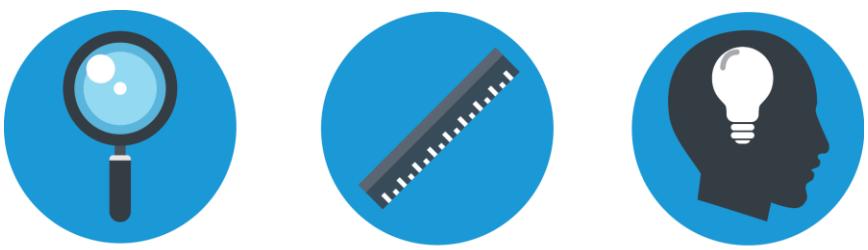
FIRST PERSON CONSULTING

ACT School Active Travel Programs 2012–2022

Evaluation Report

Prepared for

Transport Canberra and City Services



RESEARCH | EVALUATION | DESIGN

www.fpconsulting.com.au

Key contact

Mallory Notting

First Person Consulting Pty Ltd
ABN 98 605 466 797

03 9600 1778

mallory@fpconsulting.com.au
www.fpconsulting.com.au

Document details

Title:	Evaluation of ACT School Active Travel Programs
Authors:	Mallory Notting, Tatjana Pohl, Heather Bryan, Patrick Gilmour
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Executive summary

Overview

Between 2012 and 2022, **the ACT Government offered a range of programs designed to increase rates of children using active travel to get to and from school** (e.g., walking, cycling, scooting, or skating). The programs included:

- Ride or Walk to School (RWTS) and It's Your Move Safe Cycle (IYMSC)
- Active Streets (AS) for Schools
- School Crossing Supervisor Program (SCSP)

Overall, the Active Travel Programs sought to support schools to create safer school environments, reduce traffic congestion and encourage more students to travel actively to and from school more often.

First Person Consulting (FPC) was engaged to review and evaluate the Active Travel Programs between 2012 and 2022. The approach involved:

- Evaluation planning, including the creation of nested program logic models
- Desktop review of program documentation, including previous evaluation reports
- Primary data collection, including:
    - Online surveys completed by 1,039 students from 17 schools, 880 parents/carers from 67 schools, and 16 teachers.
    - Semi-structured qualitative interviews completed with 12 crossing supervisors, three teachers, and two Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) staff members
    - Pedestrian count and traffic volume data collected from 25 schools to match data collected in 2017 and 2019
- Data analysis and reporting

Key findings

Delivery

One hundred and two (102) schools across the ACT participated in at least one of the Active Travel Programs between 2012 and 2022, with most schools participating in at least two of the program offerings:

- RWTS: 73 schools
- IYMSC: 10 schools
- AS: 81 schools
- SCSP: 25 schools

The overall cost to deliver the Active Travel Programs was $9,317,604. The most expensive program was the SCSP and the least expensive was RWTS.

Overall outcomes

When looked at in combination, there is an encouraging trend indicating that the Active Travel Programs positively influenced rates of student active travel and perceptions of safety around schools. However, the evidence is less clear in terms of individual program impact, suggesting that **it**

is the combination of initiatives driving the achievement of key outcomes. These outcomes should also be contextualised against a background of declining active travel rates overall, as reported by ACT-wide data (47% of Year 6 students used active travel five or more times per week in 2016 compared with 39% in 2018). **These key outcomes include:**

- **Rates of active travel**
    - A high proportion of student survey respondents from participating public schools indicated that they use active travel each week, with **student respondents from schools that had engaged in both AS and RWTS reporting the highest rates of active travel overall** (higher than ACT-wide averages).
    - **A much lower proportion of survey respondents from non-government schools** reported using active travel each week. This suggests that distance from school is the key influencer driving rates of active travel.
    - Pedestrian counts at school crossings with supervisors did not noticeably change over time, although these crossings had significantly higher pedestrian counts than schools without supervisors.
- **Safety of school environment**
    - **The programs appear to have positively influenced perceptions of safety around schools;** however, there is limited evidence to suggest that this has directly translated into increased rates of active travel.
    - **Survey respondents generally agreed that students follow safe routes when traveling actively and that the roads and footpaths feel safe.** Non-government school students and parent/carer respondents were less inclined to agree than public school students.
    - Commentary provided by survey respondents identified safety concerns as an ongoing barrier inhibiting active travel rates.
- **Traffic congestion**
    - Average traffic volumes from school crossings surveyed in 2017, 2019 and 2023 do not appear to have noticeably changed over time.
    - Schools with a crossing supervisor had higher average traffic counts overall, which is likely related to the deliberate selection of schools with busier streets.

There were some key differences between cohorts in the survey sample, including higher rates of active travel reported by public school students compared with non-government school students. **Gendered differences also emerged,** most notably boys were more likely to use active travel, preferred to ride their bikes over walking, and were much more likely to note that they didn't like active travel because it took too long. Girls were twice as likely to report that active travel took up too much energy.

Program-level outcomes

It is difficult to disentangle individual program-level outcomes from the overall outcomes achieved by offering the suite of programs. However, when looked at separately, key findings for each program include:

- **Ride or Walk to School**

  - **A previous evaluation found RWTS increased active travel rates within participating schools**, and a higher proportion of RWTS students used active travel compared with ACT-wide averages.
  - Schools that participated in RWTS appear to have a higher pedestrian count compared with schools that did not participate, **suggesting that RWTS helped to boost and/or maintain rates of active travel.**
  - **A higher percentage of student respondents from RWTS-engaged public schools said they travel independently,** compared with non-participating or non-engaged public schools.
  - **RWTS coordinators felt more confident and equipped to teach students how to ride a bike safely after participating in the program.**
- **Active Streets for Schools**
  - **A previous summary report found that the percentage of students using active travel across four pilot schools was higher following the implementation of AS.**
  - A high proportion of student respondents participating in AS said they follow safe routes, and the roads and footpaths feel safe.
- **School Crossing Supervisor Program**
  - **A previous evaluation found that the SCSP positively influenced parental attitudes around school safety.**
  - Crossing supervisors noted that parental attitudes remained a challenge, but some thought that parents/carers were now more comfortable letting their children cross the road independently.
  - Around two-thirds of student respondents from SCSP participating schools said **they regularly use the crossings around school.**

Recommendations

Based on the key findings summarised above, we recommend:

1. **TCCS should maintain ownership of the Active Travel Programs portfolio, while ensuring strong cross-directorate collaboration.** This evaluation has further demonstrated that the programs should aim to contribute towards a range of outcomes and strategic priorities beyond directly increasing rates of student active travel. To this end, input from various directorates should be leveraged as much as possible, including ACT Health and the Education Directorate. There also appears to be an opportunity to build stronger linkages with the Environment, Planning, and Sustainable Development Directorate as one of the wider goals of the Active Travel Programs is to contribute towards the ACT Climate Change Strategy.
2. **Further, TCCS could also consider implementing a more explicit focus on 'systems' within the approach.** A systems-focused approach would help indicate the level and type of contribution that could be expected from the various programs (e.g., AS and SCSP would not be expected to impact rates of active travel as directly as RWTS). There is a substantial evidence base for the systemic barriers and enablers to active travel, and it could be beneficial to draw from this to monitor and understand how the Active Travel Programs continue to influence the system.

3. **Continue offering RWTS as an ongoing investment, while remaining responsive to the specific infrastructure needs of schools.** There is value in continuing to ensure that all schools have access to and are encouraged to engage in RWTS as it is the least expensive program to run and appears to be the most significant driver of active travel rates. However, there is a clear need for one-off infrastructure investments (e.g., through AS) and more intensive resourcing (e.g., crossing supervisors) to be available for schools where appropriate. This will ensure that the transient school population continues to receive the benefits of RWTS, while the school environment is improved and maintained.
4. **Improving parent/carer awareness should continue to be a key component of the program going forward.** Parent/carer awareness and perceptions of safety continue to emerge as a key barrier inhibiting rates of active travel. There is an opportunity to increase the promotion of the Active Travel Programs and their associated benefits to the wider school community and encourage increased parent/carer engagement.
5. **Assess alternative options to address other recurring barriers.** For example, increasing the availability of school bus services would reduce traffic congestion, which may be particularly useful in cooler months when fewer students actively travel to school.
6. **A carefully designed monitoring and evaluation approach should be built into program implementation going forward.** The strongest evidence to date has been collected through pre-intervention/post-intervention measures that are directly tied to appropriate program-level outcomes. This approach should be mirrored in data collection tools for future offerings, in addition to increased monitoring of school participation and engagement information.

Contents

Figures

Tables

Acronyms

ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AS	Active Streets
EOI	Expression of interest
FPC	First Person Consulting
IYMSC	It's Your Move Safe Cycle
KEQ	Key Evaluation Question
RWTS	Ride or Walk to School
SCSP	School Crossing Supervisor Program
TCCS	Transport Canberra and City Services

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the School Active Travel Programs

Between 2012 and 2022, the ACT Government offered a range of programs designed to increase the rates of children using active travel to get to and from school. Active travel refers to walking, cycling, scooting, or using other active ways to get to school, either for the whole journey or as part of the journey. The benefits of active travel are well-documented and include health, social, and environmental impacts. For example:

- Increased physical activity and improved physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Increased social and community connectedness
- Reduced road congestion and pollution

Various ACT Government Directorates have been responsible for implementing the Active Travel Programs since 2012, with **Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) assuming responsibility for the full suite of programs by 2020**. The ACT Government recognises that schools, students, and families need a range of supports to encourage increased uptake of active travel options, which include:

- Providing infrastructure and facilities that support active travel
- Providing a safe and convenient route to school
- Offering educational programs and resources
- Aligning programs to the school curriculum

The Active Travel Programs have been designed to respond to these needs, and comprise:

- **Ride or Walk to School (RWTS) and It's Your Move Safe Cycle (IYMSC):** Provides ACT schools with access to curriculum aligned resources to teach students how to cycle safely, teacher training, and parental engagement materials to help the whole school embrace riding and walking to school. The program aims to increase the number of children walking or riding to and from school as a sustainable form of transport.
- **Active Streets (AS) for Schools:** Delivers infrastructure improvements around schools to make school environments safer and more conducive for active travel. The program promotes safe active travel through an educational campaign and infrastructure improvements focused on school routes, as well as pavement stencils along popular walking and riding paths.
- **School Crossing Supervisor Program (SCSP):** Provides crossing supervisor staff around school drop-off and pick-up times to assist children to cross roads safely by directing traffic and managing the flow of pedestrians and motorists.

Overall, the Active Travel Programs seek to support schools to create safer school environments, reduce traffic congestion, and encourage more students to travel actively to and from school more often.

1.2 Objectives and scope

First Person Consulting (FPC) were engaged to review and evaluate the Active Travel Programs between 2012 and 2022. The evaluation broadly aimed to assess whether the active travel programs

were successful in supporting schools to create safer school environments and supporting more students to travel actively to get to and from school. This initially involved gaining a clear understand of the program objectives at an individual level as well as at the collective level, documented in a set of nested logic models. The Active Travel Programs Theory of Change is shown in Figure 1 (individual program logic models are attached in Appendix 1).

A set of Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) were also developed to guide the evaluation. These are included in Table 1, with reference to where they are addressed in the body of the report.

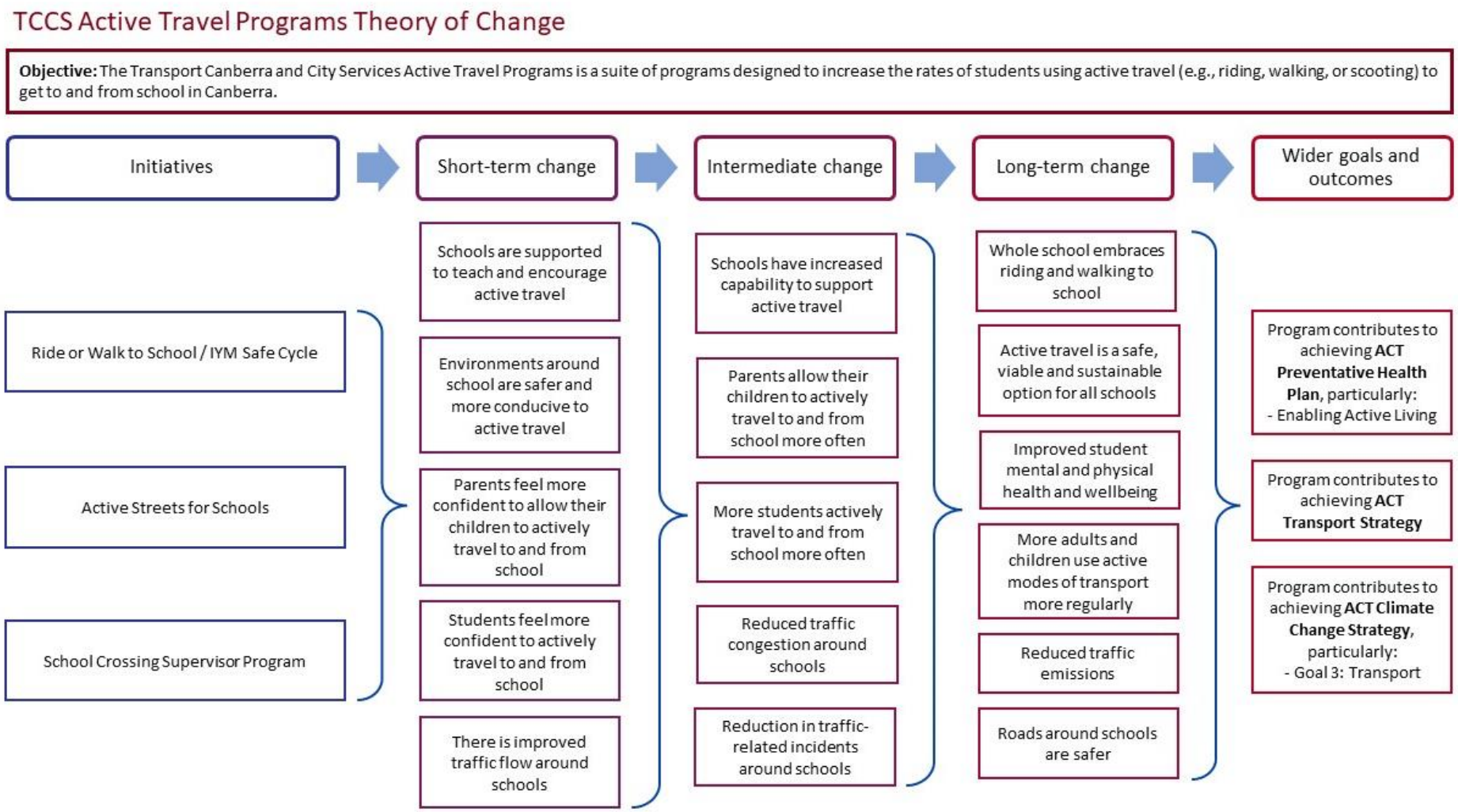

Figure 1. Active Travel Programs Theory of Change

Table 1. Evaluation questions and relevant section of report

Evaluation questions	Sub-questions	Section of report
1. To what extent were the Active Travel Programs delivered as intended?	a. What did each program deliver and when? b. What was the overall reach of the Active Travel Programs? c. What was the reach of each program? d. What were the enablers and barriers to implementation for participating schools? e. What was the overall cost to deliver the Active Travel Programs? f. What was the cost to deliver each program?	Section 2
2. To what extent were the intended outcomes for the Active Travel Programs achieved, as per the Theory of Change?	a. What evidence is there that there has been an overall increase in active travel rates in participating schools? b. What evidence is there that the school environment is safer and more conducive to active travel? c. What evidence is there that there has been a reduction in traffic congestion and traffic-related incidents around participating schools? d. Are there any notable differences in outcomes between different student cohorts?	Section 3
3. To what extent were the intended outcomes for each program achieved?	a. To what extent were the short and intermediate outcomes for Ride or Walk to School and Safe Cycle achieved, as per the logic model? b. To what extent were the short and intermediate outcomes for Active Streets achieved, as per the logic model? c. To what extent were the short and intermediate outcomes for the School Crossing Supervisor Program achieved, as per the logic model? d. What external factors influenced the effectiveness of each program? e. Were there any unintended benefits or consequences from each program?	Section 3
4. What lessons can be learnt from the Active Travel Programs?	a. What are the key success factors that influenced the effectiveness of the Active Travel Programs? b. What worked well and what didn't work well? c. What learnings would be useful to inform future program delivery?	Section 4

1.3 Approach

To meet the objectives and scope of this evaluation, our approach involved the following components:

- **An inception meeting** – held on the 17th of October 2022 between FPC and TCCS to confirm the project objectives, discuss the approach, and agree on methods, processes and logistics.
- **Evaluation planning** – TCCS provided a range of existing program documentation to FPC, including previous evaluation reports and project plans. FPC used this documentation to create draft logic models and a draft evaluation framework. An evaluation planning meeting with TCCS was then held to sense check the logic models and framework.
- **Primary data collection –** a range of additional primary data was collected in 2023:
    - **Online surveys conducted with students at participating schools.** The survey was made available to schools in the ACT, with 17 schools inviting students to participate. In total, there were 1,039 student responses to the survey.
    - **Online surveys conducted with parents and carers of students at participating and non-participating schools.** The survey was made available to schools in the ACT to distribute, with responses received from 66 participating schools, and one non-participating school. In total, there were 880 parent/carer responses to the survey.
    - **Online surveys conducted with teachers.** RWTS program coordinators were invited by email to complete a survey, with 16 responses received.
    - **Pedestrian and traffic volume data from school crossings.** Additional pedestrian counts and traffic volume data was collected from a random selection of 25 schools in March 2023, using the same method as counts conducted in 2017 and 2019.
    - **Phone interviews with crossing supervisors.** Twelve crossing supervisors were interviewed over the phone.
    - **Semi-structured interviews with RWTS coordinators.** Three semi-structured interviews were conducted over the phone and via videoconference. Only a small number of interviews were conducted due to low uptake.
    - **Semi-structured interviews with TCCS program staff.** In-depth interviews with TCCS staff members were conducted via videoconference.
- **Data analysis** – all existing and additional primary data was analysed using appropriate techniques, including thematic coding of qualitative data and statistical analysis of quantitative data. Data was combined and triangulated where possible. A detailed outline of the survey analysis approach is included in Appendix 2.
- **Reporting** – a draft final evaluation report was provided to TCCS in September 2023, with a final report incorporating feedback and revisions being prepared and submitted in October 2023.

1.4 Limitations

There were several limitations in the data available for this evaluation which should be kept in mind when reviewing this report:

- This evaluation looked at program implementation retrospectively over a 10-year period. There are some significant challenges with this approach, including **variability between**

intensity of school engagement over time, staff and student cohort turnover, and a lack of consistent monitoring data collected over this time.

- Additionally, the **primary data collected in 2023 specifically for this report could not be tied directly to program outcome measures.** This was because student and parent/carer survey respondents would not always be able to identify which programs their school had been involved in, and the student cohorts who had taken part in previous years would no longer be attending the school.
- For parent/carer and student surveys, there would ideally be before and after survey data or participating and non-participating data for all school types. As this data is not available, **a lack of evidence does not necessarily mean the programs did not have an impact, rather it could mean there is not sufficient data to capture the impact.**
- **There are also a substantial number of factors that influence rates of active travel. This** includes the multiple programs being offered by the ACT Government, the timing of these programs, demographic shifts in the ACT, and the various contextual factors for each school. **There was not enough data from different schools to test for the impact of all these factors, combinations, and interactions.** Instead, we have simplified the analyses to explore for the overarching impacts of key initiatives (e.g., RWTS and SCSP) and select factors that appeared to be driving differences (e.g., public versus non-government schools).
- **Feedback from interviews and surveys is inherently subjective.** As such, there is the potential for bias. We have attempted to address this by triangulating results across several different sources (e.g., surveys, pedestrian counts, observations) but this is still a limitation to keep in mind when reviewing these results.
- There was low uptake for the teacher survey and teacher interviews. We have therefore consolidated these findings with previous data where possible.

2 Delivery

This section addresses the question: **to what extent were the Active Travel Programs delivered as intended?** Specifically, it outlines:

- What each program delivered between 2012 and 2022
- The individual and collective reach and cost of the programs
- Enablers and barriers to program implementation

2.1 Ride or Walk to School and It's Your Move Safe Cycle

Ride or Walk to School commenced as a pilot program in 2012 and was initially delivered by ACT Health as a cross-directorate collaboration with the Education and Chief Minister directorates. **The program was designed as a health promotion program to address concerning rates of overweight and obesity among children in the ACT.**

Eleven schools took part in the pilot program between 2013 and 2015, which aimed to increase the capacity of schools to actively support and encourage students to ride or walk to school, primarily through teacher professional development, student learning and supporting the provision of infrastructure and resources. Resources developed and made available to participating schools included[1]:

- 'Safe Cycle' – an Australian Curriculum aligned classroom program for students to learn about bike safety and skills
- A free set of school bikes and/or access to student loan bikes to support curriculum delivery
- Online Teacher Quality Institute Accredited Professional Learning
- Face to face professional learning workshops
- Student curriculum resources
- Resources and support to promote and run active travel events
- Personalised maps to show the best routes to and from school
- Support from a dedicated program manager and connection to a network of teachers delivering the program in ACT schools

The program resources were developed in collaboration with the ACT Education Directorate to ensure they aligned with the school curriculum.

The Physical Activity Foundation was awarded an ACT Government Healthy Canberra Grant in 2014 to maintain the program and continued to contribute to program delivery until 2021. **TCCS assumed responsibility of RWTS in 2020, and subsequently transitioned program delivery in-house, with a TCCS staff member managing the program.** The TCCS program manager needed to re-engage all schools after two years impacted by COVID-19 lockdowns and remote learning.

It's Your Move Safe Cycle was added to program delivery in 2016 for years 7 to 10 in high schools. It was adapted from the Safe Cycle curriculum used for years 5 and 6 in RWTS.

[1] https://www.health.act.gov.au/about-our-health-system/healthy-living/ride-or-walk-school/about-program

2.2 Active Streets for Schools

In 2014 and 2015, feedback from parents outlined that **infrastructure around schools and concerns about safety were barriers restricting active travel**. From this, the Active Streets for Schools pilot program was developed and tested in four schools that were already part of RWTS. This pilot was led by TCCS, in partnership with ACT Health, the Justice and Community Safety Directorate, and the ACT Education Directorate. The AS pilot was designed to test that infrastructure improvements around school would lead to behaviour change.

The types of infrastructure upgrades delivered through AS include:

- Pavement stencils
- New and upgraded footpaths
- New and upgraded crossings
- Speed humps
- Bike racks and storage
- Dragon's teeth road markings (trialled during the pilot)
- Reduced speed limit (trialled during the pilot)

After a successful pilot, one high school and 24 primary schools were added to the program (2016–2018. Between 2018 and 2022 AS expanded to an additional 52 schools, identified and selected through an official EOI process.

2.3 School Crossing Supervisors Program

The SCSP was introduced in 2018, with **20 schools selected to receive crossing supervisor staff at crossings adjacent to the school. An additional five schools were added at the start of the 2019 school year.** To be considered eligible, crossings needed to be:

- Located on the road network adjacent to a school
- Used by early childhood, primary school or special needs children
- Located within a 40km/h school zone[2]

The school crossing supervisors are currently recruited and managed by a third party contracted by the ACT Government to deliver the service. Supervisors work for an hour each morning and afternoon on school days to align with drop off and pick up times.

2.4 Program reach

In total, 102 schools across the ACT participated in at least one of the Active Travel Programs between 2012 and 2022. As demonstrated in Table 2, most schools participated in at least two of the Active Travel Programs. Schools most frequently participated in AS and/or RWTS (Table 3).

[2] https://www.transport.act.gov.au/travel-options/schools/school-programs/school-crossing-supervisor-program.

Table 2. Number of programs schools participated in overall

Number of programs	Number of participating schools
One program	34
Two programs	51
Three programs	15
Four programs	2
Total	**102 schools**

Table 3. Number of schools that participated in each program

Program	Number of public schools	Number of non-government schools	Total
RWTS	56	17	73
IYMSC	8	2	10
AS	52	29	81
SCSP	16	9	25

A full breakdown of program participation is provided in Appendix 3.

2.5 Program cost

The overall cost to deliver the Active Travel Programs between 2013 and 2023 was $9,317,604. Table 4 outlines the overall cost to deliver each program, including the average cost per school for each program.

Table 4. Cost to deliver the Active Travel Programs

Program	Total funding	Number of participating schools	Average cost per school
RWTS/IYMSC	$1,215,604	83	$14,645
AS	$3,000,000	81	$37,037
SCSP	$5,102,000	25	$204,000
Total	**$9,317,604**	**102**	

2.6 Enablers and barriers to delivery

Barriers and enablers to delivery were identified by reviewing a range of existing documentation and information collected through additional interviews with TCCS staff members (n=2). **Table 5 outlines some of the high-level barriers and enablers**, including some example quotes to highlight the feedback.

Table 5. Summary of enablers and barriers to delivery

	Themes
Barriers	• Competing priorities within the school curriculum making it difficult for teachers to find time to run RWTS and subsequently becoming disengaged. When moving the RWTS program in-house, the TCCS program officer had to re-engage coordinators. • Insufficient communication channels between TCCS and schools to monitor and record school participation, including staff turnover leading to capacity gaps within schools (e.g., RWTS coordinator leaving the school). • Staff reluctance to take students out into the community on bikes and concerns around liability. TCCS noted that this generally came from a lack of understanding about the program. • Lack of data and reporting to monitor implementation and assess program effectiveness. • Lack of awareness from teachers around the teaching resources and online modules, leading to a lack of engagement. • Resources being out of date. *Probably going back to providing maps to schools again. It was one of the big posters on plastic backing and we put it on the bike cage. But it's been removed now – they were really handy, and then we could use that as a lesson to teach kids, could talk about access points etc. … but the posters would be really handy. (RWTS coordinator)* *We have a map of all the different footpaths from TCCS so over the last 10 years, I'd say there has been an increase in the rates of students riding or walking to school. I haven't used them in the last few years to be honest, used to send that out to community. On reflection that's something we could do, but would need some updated resources. (RWTS coordinator)* • Infrastructure upgrades taking too long to complete. • Finding and maintaining appropriate crossing supervisor staff.
Enablers	• Cross-directorate collaboration was seen as a strength of the program, drawing primarily from expertise and capacity within TCCS, ACT Health, and the Education Directorate. • A dedicated and enthusiastic RWTS coordinator within the school who champions the program. • The partnership with the Physical Activity Foundation was previously identified as an enabler for RWTS; however, it was noted that running the program completely in-house has led to increased engagement with schools. *I think since it changed hands I've had a bit more contact with [program officer], who is the person that I am in contact with. So before that it was very website based … I've had a little bit more personal contact since [the program officer] has been there. (RWTS coordinator)*

I think that's a real positive, because that actually allows us to be able to form a relationship and get to know what's going on in the schools. So I think that's definitely a positive now that it's all been taken over by Transport Canberra. (RWTS coordinator)

- Updating resources and making them – including the three full set of loan bikes – easily and readily available for use.
- Re-engaging staff in professional development by tying it with bike delivery in schools.
- Maintaining program flexibility where possible for schools and responding to identified school needs (applicable for all three programs).
- Offering and managing infrastructure upgrades (through AS) and staffing (through SCSP) without requiring the school to commit to anything themselves.

Teachers who completed the survey noted that they felt **the programs were generally well managed by TCCS and well designed to meet the needs of their school**, as indicated in Figure 2.

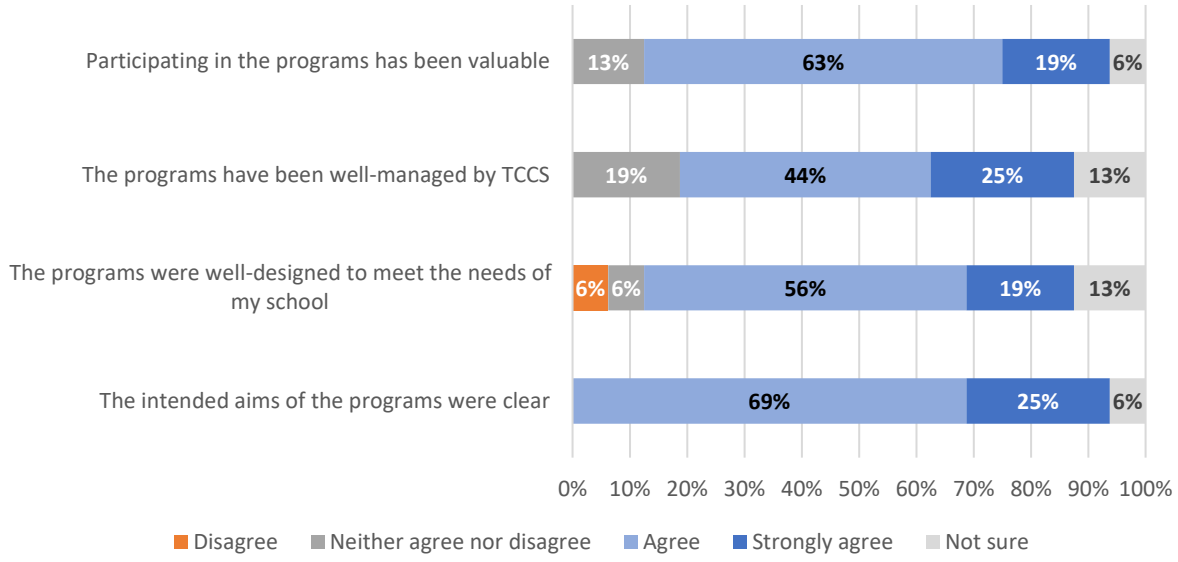

Figure 2. Teacher survey responses to program satisfaction questions (n=16)

3 Outcomes

This section addresses the question: **to what extent were the intended outcomes for the Active Travel Programs achieved, as per the Theory of Change?** Specifically, it outlines:

- The evidence that the Active Travel Programs achieved the overall intended outcomes
- The extent to which each individual program achieved its intended outcomes
- Notable differences in outcomes between student cohorts
- External factors that may have impacted the achievement of outcomes
- Unanticipated or unexpected outcomes of the programs

Key findings are summarised at the beginning of each relevant sub-section.

3.1 Overall outcomes

This section presents the available evidence against key overall outcomes, specifically, increases in active travel rates and increased safety of school environments. **When looked at in combination, there is emerging evidence from multiple sources that the programs have positively influenced rates of active travel among participating schools in Canberra. There is also evidence that perceptions around the safety of school environments have improved. However, the data is less clear in terms of individual program impact, suggesting that it is the combination of initiatives that is driving program uptake and achievement of key outcomes.** Therefore, the overall impact of the Active Travel Programs is presented first, followed by a discussion of individual program level outcomes.

Although there are positive trends emerging from the data when looking at the programs collectively, results vary between schools and between cohorts, making it difficult to quantify the impact of individual programs. Due to this challenge, results of the survey analyses in this section have been divided by public and non-government schools.

This distinction emerged by identifying distance from school as the driving influencer on rates of active travel, by observing lower rates of active travel at non-government schools where students tended to live further away, compared with those attending public schools. Results have been divided in this way because presenting results with school type combined would mask the real impacts of the program.

In addition to distance from school, there may be additional effects of school type. For example, much higher rates of active travel were observed at public schools than non-government schools when children lived between 2kms and 5kms with comparable sample sizes. This further warrants a division by school type for analysis, as described in Table 6.

Table 6. Average number of times children actively travelled to or from school in a week by distance from school and school type. ('n' shows the number of students in each group)

Distance from school	Public schools (n=148)	Non-government schools (n=134)
Less than 1km	7.7 (n=66)	8.3 (n=8)
Between 1km - 2km	5.0 (n=42)	3.7 (n=14)
Between 2km - 5km	3.4 (n=23)	0.1 (n=23)
More than 5km	0.4 (n=17)	0.7 (n=89)

In some cases, results have also been divided by program engagement and participation to better illustrate any possible impacts of program combinations, potentially masked if presented altogether. This approach is different to the division of results in Section 3.2, where program-specific engagement or participation is isolated and compared against all students who did not participate or were not engaged. [3]

3.1.1 Rates of active travel

Summary of key findings:

- According to ACT-wide data there has been an **overall decline in active travel rates** since 2016 (47% of Year 6 students travelling actively in 2016 compared with 39% in 2018).
- **A high proportion of student survey respondents from public schools indicated that they use active travel each week**; however, results varied among program participation groups (the combination of engaging in RWTS and AS had the highest rates of active travel). Similarly, all parent/carer survey respondents from public schools reported higher rates of active travel than the ACT-wide rates.
- **A much lower proportion of survey respondents (both students and parents/carers) from non-government schools reported using active travel each week than ACT-wide averages and those from public schools.**
- Parent/carer survey respondents reported that 52% of students walked to or from school at least once per week and 41% rode their bikes at least once per week.
- Pedestrian counts at school crossings with supervisors did not noticeably change over time (pre-intervention in 2017 and post intervention in 2019 and 2023), although these crossings have significantly higher pedestrian counts compared with schools without supervisors.
- Schools that participated in RWTS appear to have a higher pedestrian count compared with schools that did not participate, suggesting that **RWTS in particular helped to boost and/or maintain rates of active travel.**

According to ACT-wide data collected through the 2018 ACT Year 6 Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey (ACTPANS)[4], around 39% of Year 6 students in Canberra used active travel to get to and from school five or more times per week. As demonstrated in Figure 3, **there has been an overall decline since 2006, when 47% of Year 6 students used active travel five or more times per week.**

[3] In some analyses, 'engagement' is differentiated from 'participation'. There were some surveyed schools that signed up (participated) in RWTS, however did not meaningfully engage with the program. This distinction has been made to ensure that the results reflect the true impact of the program, as this was obscured when including these schools in the RWTS cohort. See Appendix 2 for more detail.

[4] ACTPANS 2018 data: https://www.data.act.gov.au/Health/ACTPANS-Proportion-of-year-6-students-who-usually-/ip4z-wrev

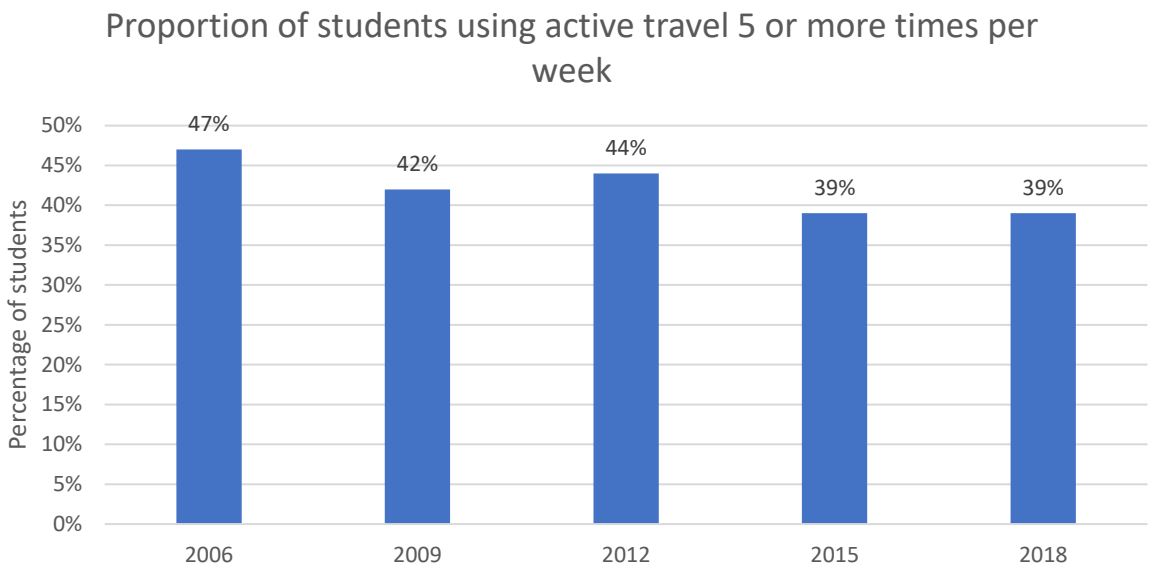

Figure 3. Proportion of Year 6 students using travel to get to and from school five or more times per week from ACTPANS results

The 2018 ACTPANS results were compared with self-reported rates of active travel from student survey respondents, **with a high proportion of student respondents from public schools indicating that they used active travel each week**[5]. However, results varied among program participant groups, with key results indicating:

- **An average of 45% of student respondents from schools engaged in RWTS and participated in AS travelled five or more times per week**
- An average of 33% of student respondents from schools participating in AS only travelled five or more times per week
- A total of 27% of student respondents from the school participating in AS and SCSP travelled five or more times per week

Figure 4 indicates rates of active travel compared with ACT-wide results, as reported by student survey respondents attending public schools.

[5] ACT-wide results are somewhat useful for comparison; however, data collection and analysis methods varied. Additionally, the results pertain only to Year 6 students, while data was collected from students in Years 4 to 6 for this report.

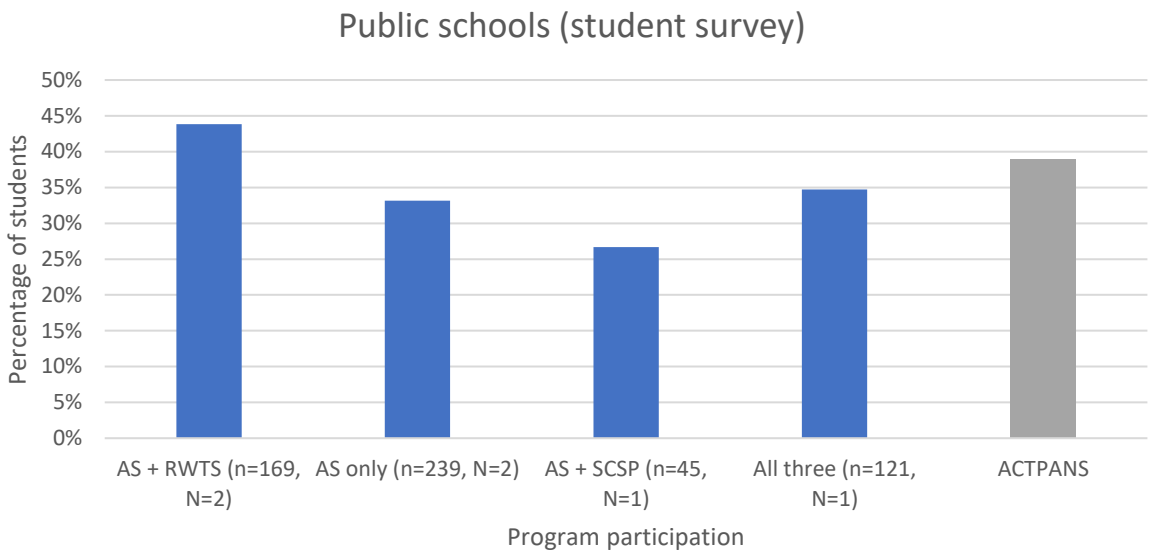

Figure 4. Percentage of student respondents actively travelling to and from school five or more times a week; average of public schools compared with 2018 ACTPANS Data; n=number of students, N=number of schools

Active travel by student respondents attending non-government schools was reported to be much lower than those attending public schools, with:

- An average of 15% of student respondents participating in AS actively travelling five or more times per week, and
- Only 6% of student respondents (on average) of those participating in AS and SCSP programs (Figure 5).

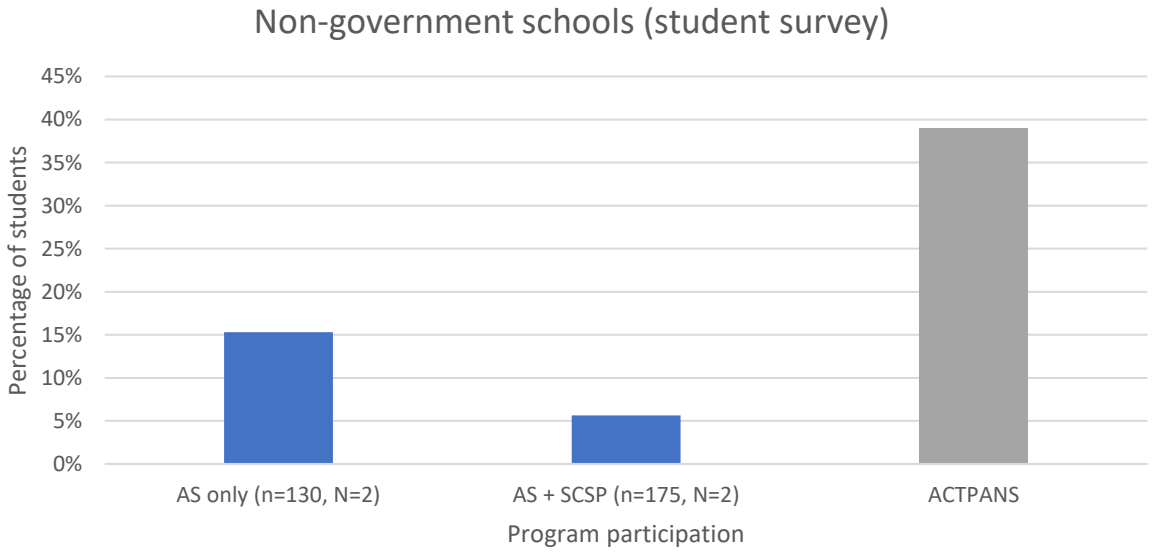

Figure 5. Percentage of student respondents actively travelling to and from school five or more times a week; average of non-government schools compared with 2018 ACTPANS data; n=number of students, N=number of schools

Similarly, **far higher proportions of parent/carer respondents from public schools reported regular active travel to and from school** (five or more times per week) of their children in the week immediately prior to the survey, compared with parents of children attending non-government schools. Among the parent/carer survey respondents:

- **All program participation groups from public schools reported higher percentages of travel rates than the ACT-wide rates.**
- 71% of parents from the school participating in the SCSP said their children actively travelled to school five or more times in the previous week (Figure 6).
- Parents from both program participation groups from non-government schools reported low rates of active travel in the previous week, far lower than ACT-wide data (Figure 7).

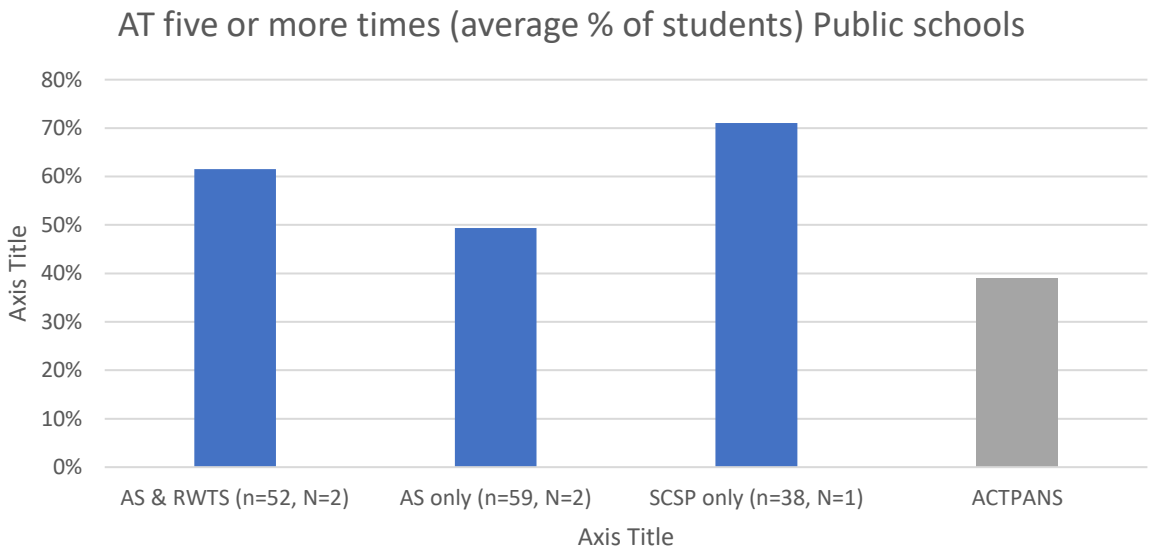

Figure 6. Average percentage of public school parents who reported that their children actively travelled to or from school five or more times the previous week compared with 2018 ACTPANS data; n=number of students, N=number of schools

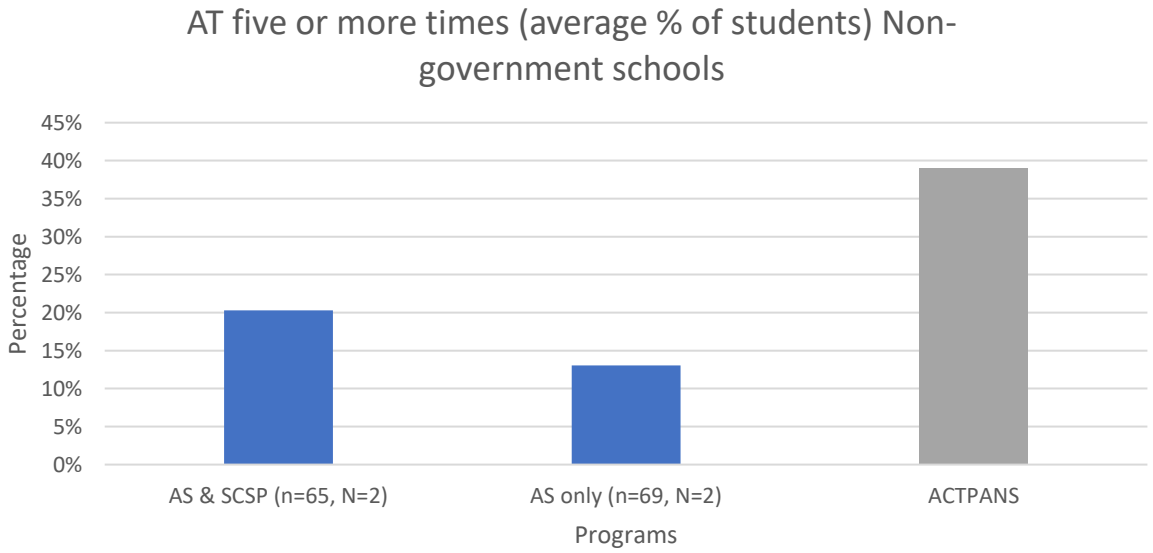

Figure 7. Average percentage of non-government school parents/carer who reported that their children actively travel to or from school five or more times in the week previous compared with 2018 ACTPANS data. n=number of students, N=number of schools

As outlined in Figure 8, **around three-quarters (78%) of students travel at least once per week in a car**, as reported by parent/carer survey respondents from all schools (Figure 8). **Around half (52%) walked at least once per week and 41% rode their bikes at least once.** Scooting/skateboarding and bus travel were used as well, though among a much lower proportion of students.

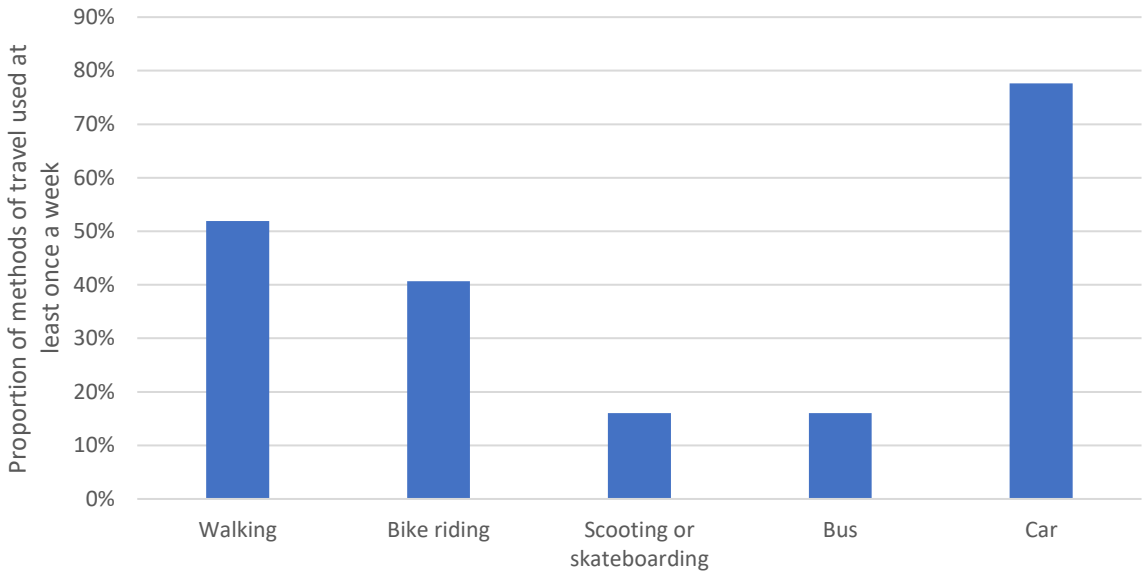

Figure 8: Modes of travel used at least once per week as reported by parent/carer respondents from all schools (n=880)

Semi-structured qualitative phone interviews were conducted with 12 school crossing supervisors, and all were asked to comment on the travel habits of students they observed at their crossings. Most noted that there was generally a combination of students being driven by car or travelling actively. **A small number of interviewees stated that they believed there had been an increase in the number of students riding or walking to school, although they generally noted an increase in cars around the school as well.** As one participant stated:

> *I think it's increased a bit, more riding and walking. On a nice day you find them doing it more. (Crossing supervisor)*

Student, teacher, and parent/carer survey respondents were also asked to indicate whether they believed that student rates of active travel had increased, decreased, or stayed the same compared with the same time last year. The results are summarised below; however, impacts of the program are not necessarily reflected in these results because program participation usually occurred several years before the survey was distributed, and active travel rates may not be expected to increase in the past year.

- **19% of student respondents from public schools thought they were using travel more than a year ago, while 9% of students from non-government schools thought the same.**
- A higher proportion of parent/carer respondents reported that their children actively travel to school less than a year ago than the proportion reporting they actively travel more than a year ago, in both public and non-government schools.

- Teacher survey respondents generally had not observed a noticeable shift in the rates of active travel among students, with one teacher noting that they thought students were now travelling actively more often, two teachers noting that they thought students were now travelling actively less often, and 13 teachers noting that they thought students were travelling actively about the same amount.

Pedestrian count data was collected from various crossings around ACT schools in 2017 and again in 2019 before and after the implementation of the SCSP. Additional pedestrian count data was then collected in 2023 from a random sample of schools with various participation combinations, including non-participating schools.[6] The data has been used as an indicative measure of active travel rates, although not all students travelling actively would use the school crossings, and not all students using the school crossings would be actively travelling.

The pedestrian count data were relatively stable between 2017 and 2019/23 (Figure 9).[7] There were, however, differences between schools that had participated in different initiatives:

- **Schools with crossing supervisors had significantly higher pedestrian counts compared with schools without crossing supervisors.** However, these differences also existed in 2017, before the crossing supervisors were put in place. This was likely related to those schools being specifically chosen to have supervisors because of their larger school sizes and greater levels of traffic. **As rates did not change after the crossing supervisors were put in place (2018), this suggests the crossing supervisors have not significantly influenced pedestrian counts at these schools.[8] However, it may also be interpreted as a positive sign that pedestrian counts were at least maintained over time,** given the background of generally declining rates of active travel according to the ACT-wide data.
- As with crossing supervisor schools, **those schools that have participated in RWTS appear to have a higher pedestrian count compared with schools that did not participate in RWTS**, particularly when analysed independently of crossing supervisors.[9] Given all these schools had started participating in RWTS prior to the 2017 survey, **this suggests that the RWTS program has helped to boost and/or maintain rates of active travel.** While there may be some self-selection bias here given schools opt-in to the RWTS program, separate evaluation of RWTS schools showed that active travel rates did increase after implementation of the program.[10]
- Public schools trended towards a slightly higher average pedestrian count (11%) compared with non-government schools (9%), but these differences were not statistically significant.[11]

[6] Note that 2019 and 2023 survey data have been averaged to increase the total number of schools with data available for analysis.

[7] Analysis with repeated-measures ANOVA indicates that there was no significant change in pedestrian counts over this time ($F_{1,27}$=0.16, p=0.694).

[8] Repeated measures ANOVA shows a significant difference for schools with crossing supervisors ($F_{1,27}$=0.70, p=0.013), but no significant change in these groups over time ($F_{1,27}$=0.14, p=0.708).

[9] Repeated measures ANOVA ($F_{1,28}$=5.06, p=0.032)

[10] Ride or Walk to School Program Evaluation, ACT Health, 2018: https://www.health.act.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-08/RWTS_Evaluation_Final_Report.pdf

[11] Repeated measures ANOVA ($F_{1,28}$=0.60, p=0.445)

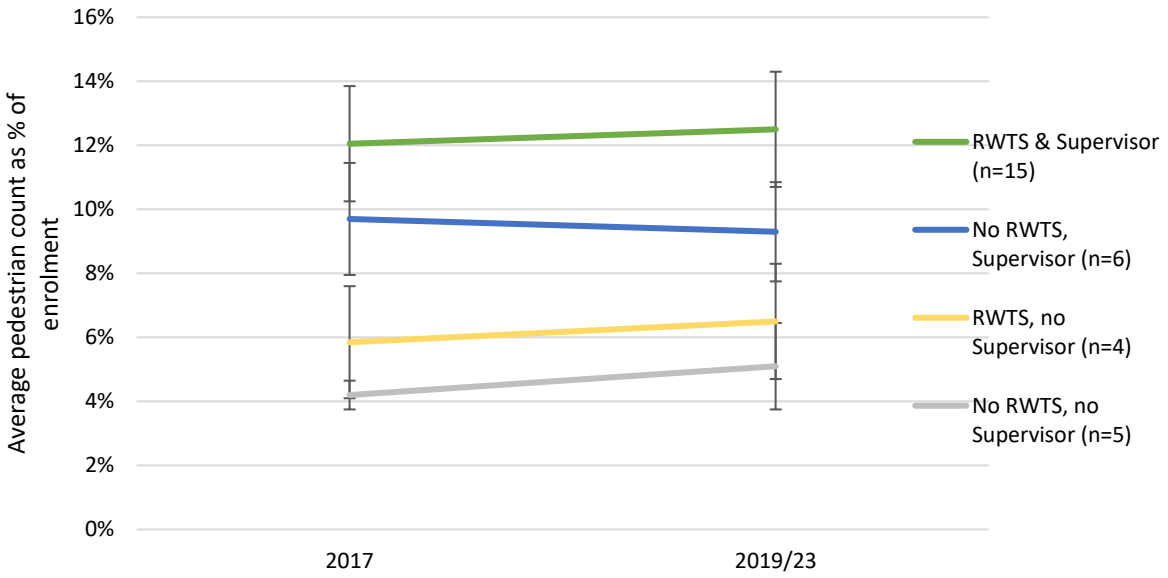

Figure 9. Pedestrian count data presented as average of enrolment counted travelling in either morning or afternoon for schools with different involvement in different programs

3.1.2 Safety of school environment

Summary of key findings:

- **There is evidence from multiple sources that the programs have positively influenced perceptions of safety around schools; however, there is limited evidence that this has directly translated into higher rates of active travel and a reduction in traffic congestion overall.**
- Student survey respondents generally agreed that they **followed safe routes to travel actively to and from school and that the roads and footpaths around school felt safe.** There was a higher level of agreement from public school student respondents than non-government school students.
- Parent/carer survey respondents were less inclined than students to agree that the roads and footpaths around school felt safe, **although in most cases they felt that their children thought they were safe.**
- Parent/carer survey respondents identified both infrastructure and attitudinal safety barriers to active travel, including a lack of adequate safety crossings, poorly maintained footpaths, traffic congestion, and poor behaviour from other drivers and other parents.

The Active Travel Programs intended to increase the safety of school environments using a variety of mechanisms that targeted different barriers to active travel. AS aimed to improve the safety of infrastructure around schools and create safer active travel routes, the SCSP aimed to make it safer for students to cross the road around schools and positively influence parental attitudes towards safety, and RWTS aimed to increase awareness of safe behaviours and safe active travel routes. **There is evidence from multiple sources that the programs have increased perceptions of safety**

around schools; however, there is limited evidence that increasing the safety of school environments has directly translated into higher rates of active travel overall.

Student survey respondents were asked to indicate whether they followed safe routes when actively travelling to and from school and whether they felt the roads and footpaths were safe. Generally, agreement among students was high, although there were differences between public and non-government schools. For both questions, agreement levels were higher for public schools than non-government schools, with very little overlap in school response range (Table 7).

Table 7. Average student agreement level of public (n=6) and non-government (n=4) schools when asked questions relating to safety

Question	Public schools average (range)	Non-government schools average (range)
I follow safe routes to walk, ride, scoot or skate to and from school	4.3 (4.2–4.5)	3.9 (3.7–4.0)
The roads and footpaths around my school feel safe	4.0 (3.9–4.3)	3.8 (3.6–4.0)

Results from the parent/carer survey were not as high as those for the student survey. In particular, parent/carer respondents were less inclined to agree that the roads and footpaths around schools were safe, though in most cases they thought their children felt they were safe.

Table 8. Average parent agreement level of public (n=5) and non-government (n=4) schools when asked questions relating to safety compared with one non-participating school (n=1

Question	Public schools average (range)	Non-government schools average (range)	Non-participating school
My children regularly follow safe routes to walk, ride, scoot or skate to and from school	4.1 (3.9–4.2)	3.3 (3.2–3.5)	3.8
My children generally feel that the roads and footpaths around school are safe	3.6 (3.2–4.0)	3.4 (3.1–3.6)	3.1
I feel that the roads and footpaths around my children's school are safe	3.2 (2.8–3.6)	3.2 (3.1–3.4)	3.2

Teachers were asked to reflect on the travel habits of students at their school, with most indicating they believed students felt the school environment was safe (Figure 10).

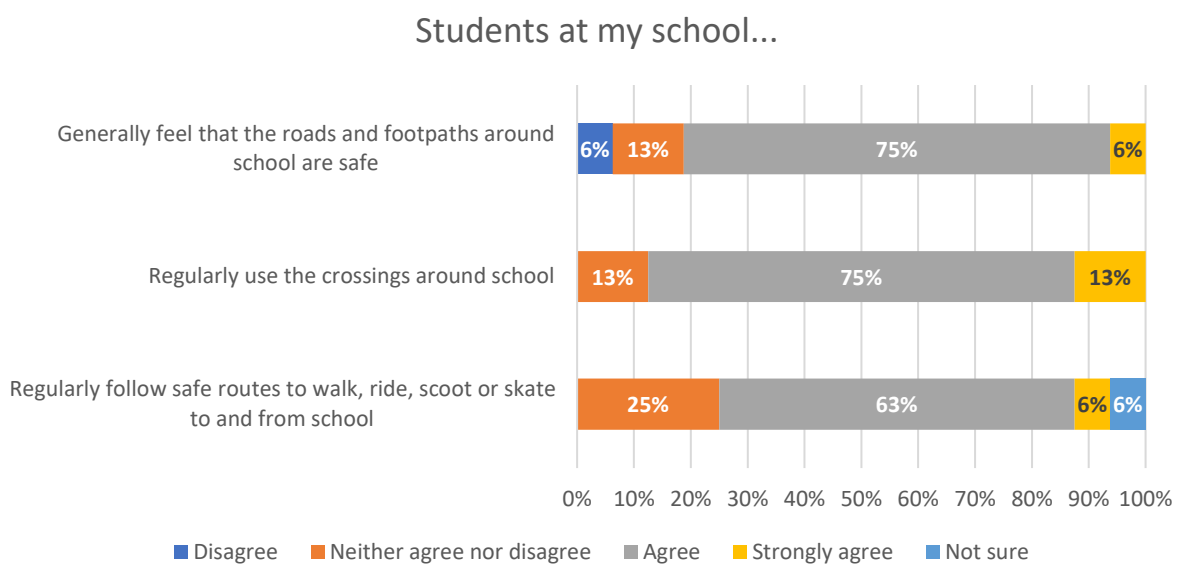

Figure 10. Teacher survey responses to questions relating to safety of school environment

Students and parents/carers provided qualitative commentary in the surveys around the safety of their school environments (see Appendix 4 for coding summary). **One hundred and five students noted that they didn't always feel safe when actively travelling, with girls being slightly more likely to report feeling unsafe when they used active travel than boys** (16% of all responses from girls compared with 13% of all responses from boys).

I don't feel safe because cars can run over me if they don't stop (which is most of the time). (Girl in Year 4)

Forty-four (44) students also noted that they were concerned about injuring themselves when using active travel.

You are more likely to hurt yourself when you ride or walk to school. (Girl in Year 4)

I don't like it because I could get seriously hurt. (Boy in Year 6)

In terms of infrastructure or environmental barriers, students generally identified paths that were not maintained and therefore difficult to ride on, roads that were not safe to walk alongside or cross, and difficult terrain to navigate.

I don't like the fact that there's a pretty steep hill we have to walk up. (Boy in Year 6)

If you are skating, there are big cracks in the ground and they make the ground very bumpy and I can't see. (Girl in Year 5)

A substantial proportion of parent/carer survey comments identified safety issues as a key barrier to them allowing their children to use active travel. These have been categorised as either infrastructure concerns or attitudinal concerns and are discussed below.

Infrastructure safety concerns

The most common infrastructure barrier identified by parents/carers was a **lack of adequate safety crossings on their children's route to school**, with 96 respondents mentioning this concern.

More/better crossings around schools. Not all students come from the same direction. (Parent/carer)

Build more under and overpasses so pedestrians and cyclists don't have to cross roads. (Parent/carer)

Fifty-one (51) parents/carers also noted that the footpaths on their children's route were not well maintained or appropriate.

The foot paths are cracked and full of grass clumps making them a trip hazard. (Parent/carer)

Take a look at how footpaths end in kerbs and/or no receiving path on the other sides of roads… My child has to stand on the road, lift her bike off the road up a kerb! (Parent/carer)

Parent/carer respondents also identified road and traffic congestion, as well as a lack of dedicated bike paths or lanes as a key barrier.

The roads around our school are very busy, we LOVE having a crossing guard, however there have been multiple times of near-miss incidents with him almost being hit by a car. (Parent/carer)

Create bike paths that are NOT 'on-road' bike lanes ... roads are for cars and children are too small to be riding on the road alongside vehicles. There should be separate bike paths away from roads for the safety of all. (Parent/carer)

Attitudinal safety concerns

Thirty-four (34) parents/carers identified poor driver behaviour as a key safety concern.

I do have concerns with the cars passing around the school road, sometimes they're not slowing down or stopping when they're seeing a pedestrian about to cross. It's the reason I'm not confident enough to let my child go to/from school alone. (Parent/carer)

Some drivers get so angry and impatient to stop as they don't see it as an official pedestrian crossing. Thank you to the crossing supervisors that try so hard to make sure the children can cross the road safely. (Parent/carer)

Twenty (20) parents/carers also noted that poor behaviour from other parents also created issues.

The roads around the school should be no parking during school hours. Especially outside the gates, cars park and it brings the road to one lane [and] children are not safe as parents weave in and out of the cars. (Parent/carer)

Other key concerns noted by parents/carers include a lack of adequate crossing supervisors and general feelings of unease with the idea of their children travelling alone.

Ensure underpasses are safe. My little fellow felt uncomfortable on one recent trip home going through the underpass as high school kids were vaping underneath. (Parent/carer)

There are just too little people in Canberra suburbs. Children are often found walking home alone in quiet streets. (Parent/carer)

3.1.3 Traffic congestion

Summary of key findings:

- **Average traffic volumes from school crossings surveyed in 2017, 2019, and 2023 do not appear to have noticeably changed over time.**
- Schools with a crossing supervisor had higher average traffic counts overall, and neither RWTS nor AS had a significant effect on traffic counts over time.
- A previous evaluation found small reductions (3%) in average traffic volume and traffic speed around four schools that took part in the AS pilot program, before and after the interventions.

Like the pedestrian data discussed above, TCCS surveyed traffic volumes from school crossings in 2017, 2019 and 2023.[12] This data is presented in Figure 11, which shows **the average traffic volumes to be very similar between 2017 and 2019/23 surveys.[13]** In terms of the influence of active travel programs:

- **Neither RWTS or AS had a significant effect on traffic counts overall or traffic counts through time.**[14] As such, these schools were grouped together in the comparison made in Figure 11.
- As with pedestrian count data, **schools with crossing supervisors had higher average traffic count overall.** This is likely related to the deliberate selection of crossing supervisor schools as those on busier streets. Given there was no change through time in schools with crossing supervisors, the supervisors do not appear to have influenced traffic volumes.[15]

[12] Note that 2019 and 2023 survey data have been averaged to increase the total number of schools with data available for analysis.

[13] Analysis with repeated-measures ANOVA indicates that there was no significant change in traffic counts over this time ($F_{1,36}$=0.07, p=0.787)

[14] Repeated measures ANOVA: RWTS = ($F_{1,36}$=0.31, p=0.581), Active Streets = ($F_{1,36}$=0.05, p=0.820).

[15] Repeated measures ANOVA on interaction between crossing supervisor schools and time ($F_{1,36}$=0.12, p=0.729)

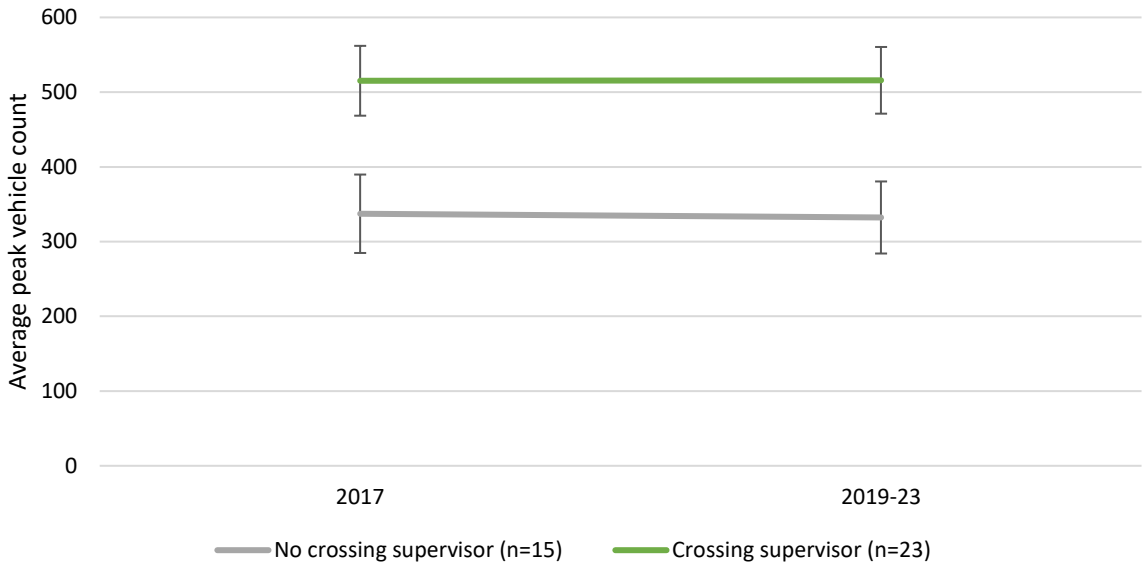

Figure 11. Traffic count data presented as average peak morning/afternoon vehicle counts at surveyed schools.

While it is very difficult to demonstrate any discernible changes in traffic volume or traffic incidents, a previous summary report prepared for the AS pilot program found that there were small but consistent reductions of 3% in both average traffic speeds and average daily traffic volume around the four schools that had participated in the pilot from May 2015 to November 2016.

3.2 Program-level outcomes

To tease apart survey results from individual programs, **student respondents from schools engaged in specific programs were isolated and compared with those who did not participate or were not engaged in the program.** As all student survey schools participated in at least one program, we were unable to compare results with non-participating schools. For the parent/carer survey, there was one active travel non-participating school (non-government), and this was compared with those participating or engaging in specific programs, as well as those participating in active travel programs.

Survey results are then supplemented with qualitative data and information from previous evaluation reports where appropriate to consolidate the findings.

3.2.1 Ride or Walk to School

Summary of key findings:

- **A previous evaluation found RWTS increased active travel rates within participating schools, and a higher proportion of RWTS students used active travel compared with ACT-wide averages.**
- RWTS coordinator survey respondents felt more confident and more equipped to teach students how to ride a bike safely.
- **All survey respondents from schools engaged in RWTS generally felt that students were confident in their bike riding skills and abilities** and followed safe routes to travel actively to and from school.
- However, there was no strong indication that students from RWTS engaged public schools had higher confidence compared to non-participating or non-engaged schools.
- **A higher percentage of student respondents from RWTS engaged public schools said they travel independently**, compared with students from non-participating or non-engaged public schools.

The RWTS program aimed to increase rates of active travel specifically through offering accredited professional learning and workshops for teachers, delivering the Safe Cycle program, and engaging the whole school community through active travel events and initiatives and resources. **The 2016 RWTS evaluation report[16] found that the program had successfully achieved several key outcomes**, including:

- Teachers found the resources and capability building components very useful and felt very confident to teach Safe Cycle.
- **Evidence that there had been an increase in the active travel rates of Year 5 and 6 students in participating schools**, and that this increase was likely attributable to their involvement in the RWTS program.
- A higher proportion of students at RWTS schools using active travel compared with non-participating schools when compared with ACTPANS data, as illustrated in Figure 12.

[16] Ride or Walk to School Program Evaluation, ACT Health, 2018: https://www.health.act.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-08/RWTS_Evaluation_Final_Report.pdf

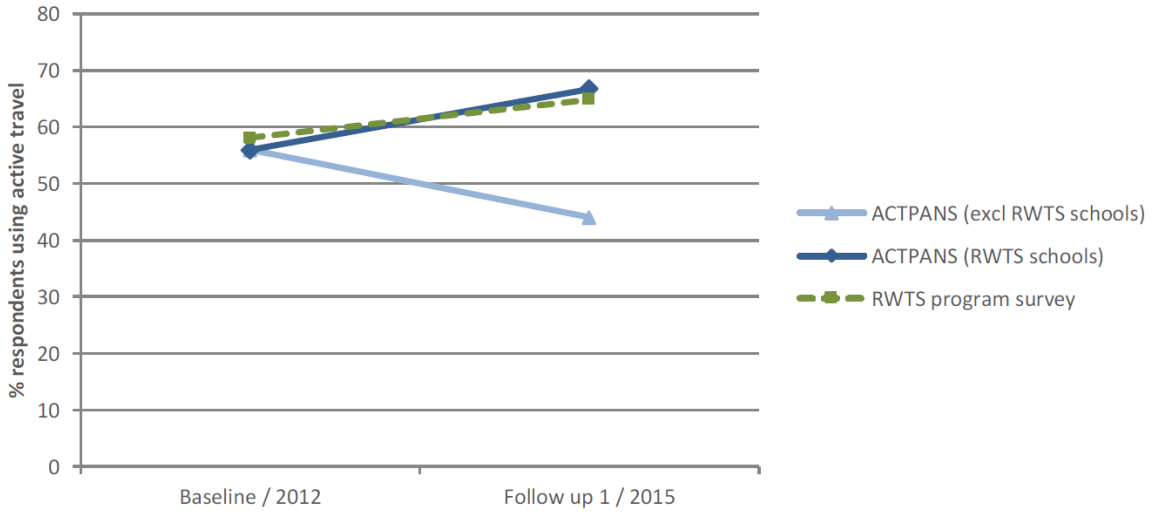

Figure 12. Graph taken from 2016 RWTS Evaluation Report demonstrating proportions of students using active travel at least once a week as measured by ACTPANS data and RWTS survey data; comparison is made through time for ACTPANS data (2012 (n=30) and 2015) and for Baseline (n=36) and Follow-up 1 (n=25) for RWTS data; ACTPANS data is also separated in 2015 between RWTS schools (n=16) and non-RWTS schools (n=17)

Outcomes relating to teacher confidence and capabilities were echoed in the 2023 teacher survey and interviews conducted with RWTS coordinators. **The majority of surveyed RWTS coordinators felt more confident to encourage students to ride or walk to school and more equipped to teach students how to ride a bike safely** (Figure 13).

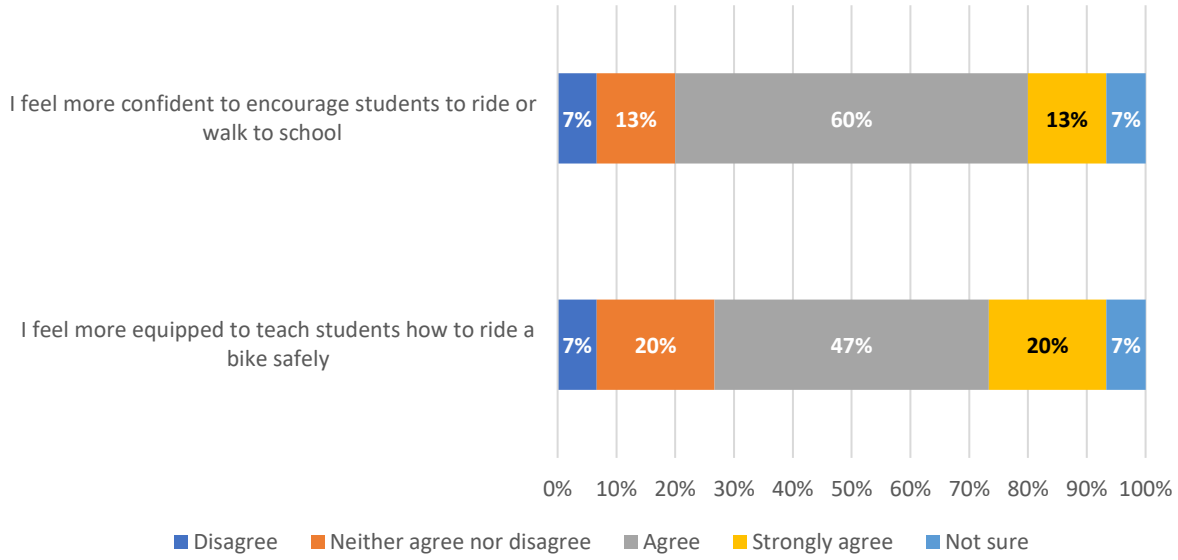

Figure 13. Reported confidence and ability of teachers to assist students to bike ride (n=16)

Survey results also indicate that students appear to be generally confident in their bike riding skills and abilities:

- 75% of teacher respondents indicated they thought students were confident in their bike skills and abilities.
- 77% of student respondents from RWTS engaged public schools indicated they were confident in their bike skills and abilities.
- 60% of parent/carer respondents from RWTS engaged schools indicated they thought their children were confident in their bike skills and abilities.

Anecdotal feedback collected from interviews with three RWTS coordinators suggest that the program helped students at their schools increase their abilities and competencies, in addition to learning bike safety skills:

> *By the time we finish doing the program, they can ride. Then there's probably another five or six who can just ride, by the time they finish the program, they can confidently ride. So they absolutely increase their confidence. (RWTS coordinator)*

> *I really like the way that the lessons teach kids how to check their bikes first, which is really important. Before that we saw bikes in the lockers which were worn down and broken, now we've passed on that knowledge. Helmets as well. (RWTS coordinator)*

While most student survey respondents felt confident in their bike skills and abilities, **19 students left a comment noting that they did not like travelling actively as they were not confident in their bike riding skills or abilities:**

> *I can't ride on two wheels and it's embarrassing. (Girl in Year 5)*

> *Because I do not know how to ride, scoot or skate … I only know how to walk. (Girl in Year 5)*

There was also a high level of agreement that students generally followed safe routes when travelling actively to and from school, with 87% of surveyed teachers agreeing with this statement, and 82% of students agreeing.

However, while average agreement for both statements (bike riding skills and following safe routes) was high among students, **there was no evidence that students from public schools engaged in the RWTS program had higher confidence in their bike skills or were more likely to follow safe travel routes compared with public schools participating in other programs** (Table 9).

Table 9. Self-reported student agreement with statements of bike riding confidence and active travel safety; students from RWTS engaged schools compared with those from non-participating or non-engaged schools that had been involved in other program offerings (note, no non-government schools included in the analysis were engaged in RWTS)

Program engagement	I feel confident in my bike skills and abilities			I follow safe routes to walk, ride, scoot or skate to and from school		
	Average agreement	Agreed or strongly agreed (%)	Disagreed or strongly disagreed (%)	Average agreement	Agreed or strongly agreed (%)	Disagreed or strongly disagreed (%)
RWTS, public schools (n=101 from three schools)	4.0	77%	11%	4.3	82%	5%

Other program(s), public schools (n=91 from three schools)	4.0	79%	16%	4.3	84%	3%
Other program(s), non-government schools (n=118 from four schools)	4.0	82%	10%	3.9	75%	10%

Similarly, when compared with other programs, the parent/carer survey did not provide strong or consistent evidence that the RWTS program was improving confidence and safety around active travel to and from school more so than other programs (Figure 14):

- Parent/carers of students from RWTS engaged schools reported slightly lower levels of confidence around bike riding abilities compared with non-participating public schools, and the same average confidence as non-government schools.
- While parent/carers reported feeling confident allowing their children to actively travel to and from school, RWTS engaged schools had similar average agreement to other public school groups.

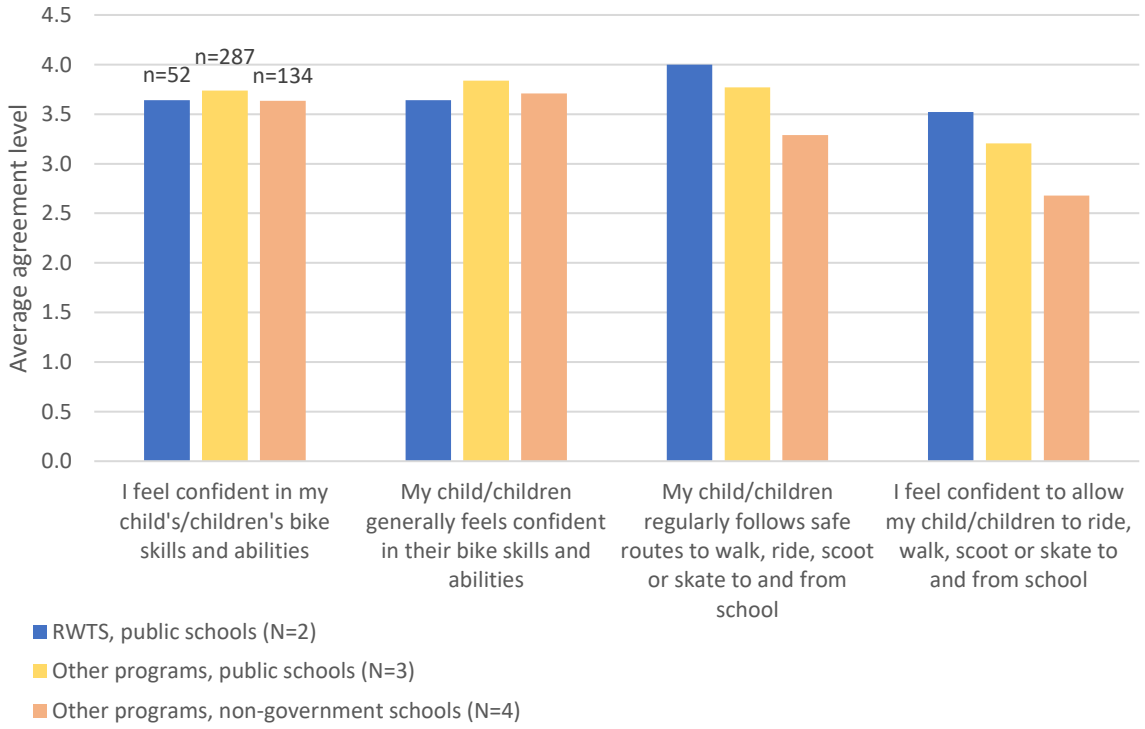

Figure 14. Average agreement level of parents with statements around active travel confidence and safety. Scale is 1-5 from strongly disagree to strongly agree; comparison of schools engaged in RWTS with those participating in other programs; note, no non-government schools included in the analysis were engaged in RWTS; N= number of schools, n= number of students, shown only on the first statement

A higher percentage of students from RWTS engaged public schools said they travel by themselves and with friends, compared with students from public schools participating in other programs (Figure 15):

- 6% more said they travelled by themselves
- 2% more said they travelled with other friends
- 5% less said they travelled with their parents/carers
- These differences were even more pronounced when compared with non-government schools not engaged in RWTS

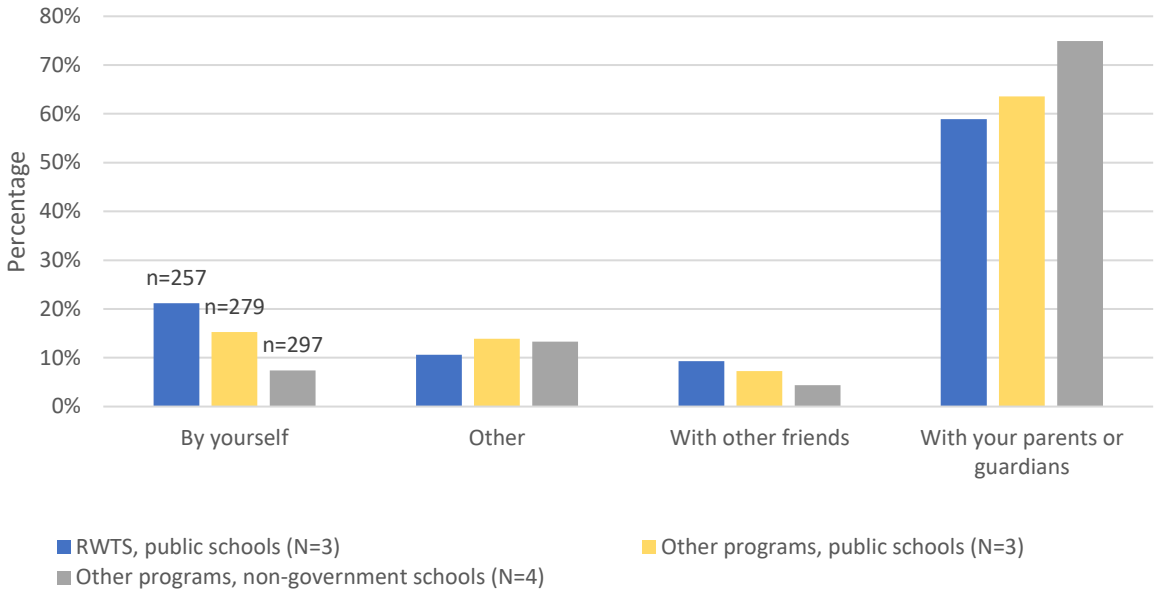

Figure 15. Percentage of students from schools engaged in RWTS who said they normally get to/from school using different methods, compared with those that participated in other programs; note, no non-government schools included in analysis engaged in RWTS; N=number of schools, n=number of students, shown only on the first item

3.2.2 Active Streets for Schools

Summary of key findings:

- **A previous AS pilot program summary report found that the percentage of students using active travel across four pilot schools was higher following the implementation of AS interventions.**
- A high proportion of student survey respondents participating in AS said **they followed safe active travel routes and the roads and footpaths around their school felt safe.**
- Self-reported independent travel was higher in schools participating in AS and additional program offerings, compared with schools only participating in AS.

Active Streets for Schools provided infrastructure upgrades and improvements to increase safe routes for active travel around schools. The AS pilot summary report prepared in 2017 found that:

- **The percentage of students using active travel across the four pilot schools was higher following the implementation of AS.**

- The ratio of children to parents travelling actively on the peak observation day increased between 2015 and 2016, **suggesting increased independent active travel in pilot schools.**

All schools from the student survey sample participated in AS; however, some participated only in AS, while others participated in additional program offerings. Here, we have isolated students from schools that participated in AS only and compared them to those participating in additional programs.

A high proportion of student respondents participating in AS said they followed safe active travel routes and the roads and footpaths around their school felt safe (Table 10):

- 82% of public school students and 77% of non-government school students agreed or strongly agreed they followed safe routes, though disagreement varied among these two school types:
    - Only 4% of public school students disagreed or strongly disagreed
    - 10% of non-government school students disagreed or strongly disagreed
- Over three-quarters of public and non-government school students (77% and 76% respectively), agreed or strongly agreed that the roads and footpaths around their school felt safe
    - only 3% of public school students disagreed or strongly disagreed
    - 8% of non-government school students disagreed or strongly disagreed
- Average agreement levels were high for both statements

Agreement levels were similar for students from schools participating in additional program offerings; however, a higher proportion of students participating in additional programs disagreed or strongly disagreed that the roads and footpaths around school are safe (7% compared with 3%; Table 10).

Table 10. Self-reported student agreement with statements around safety behaviour and feelings; students from AS participating schools compared with those from non-participating schools that had been involved in other program offerings

Program participation	I follow safe routes to walk, ride, scoot or skate to and from school			The roads and footpaths around my school feel safe		
	Average agreement	Agreed or strongly agreed (%)	Disagreed or strongly disagreed (%)	Average agreement	Agreed or strongly agreed (%)	Disagreed or strongly disagreed (%)
Public, AS only (n=91 from two schools)	4.3	82%	4%	4.0	77%	3%
Non-government, AS only (n=52 from two schools)	3.9	77%	10%	4.0	76%	8%
Public, additional programs (n=216 from four schools)	4.3	83%	4%	4.0	74%	10%

Non-government, additional programs (n= 45 from two schools)	3.5	73%	11%	3.7	70%	11%

Independent travel (alone or with friends) was reported to be higher by students from schools participating in additional program offerings for both public and non-government schools (Figure 16). Of particular note:

- 21% of public school students from schools participating in additional programs reported to travel by themselves, compared with 15% from schools only involved in AS
- 9% of students from non-government schools participating in additional offerings reported to travel with friends, compared with only 1% of those only participating in AS

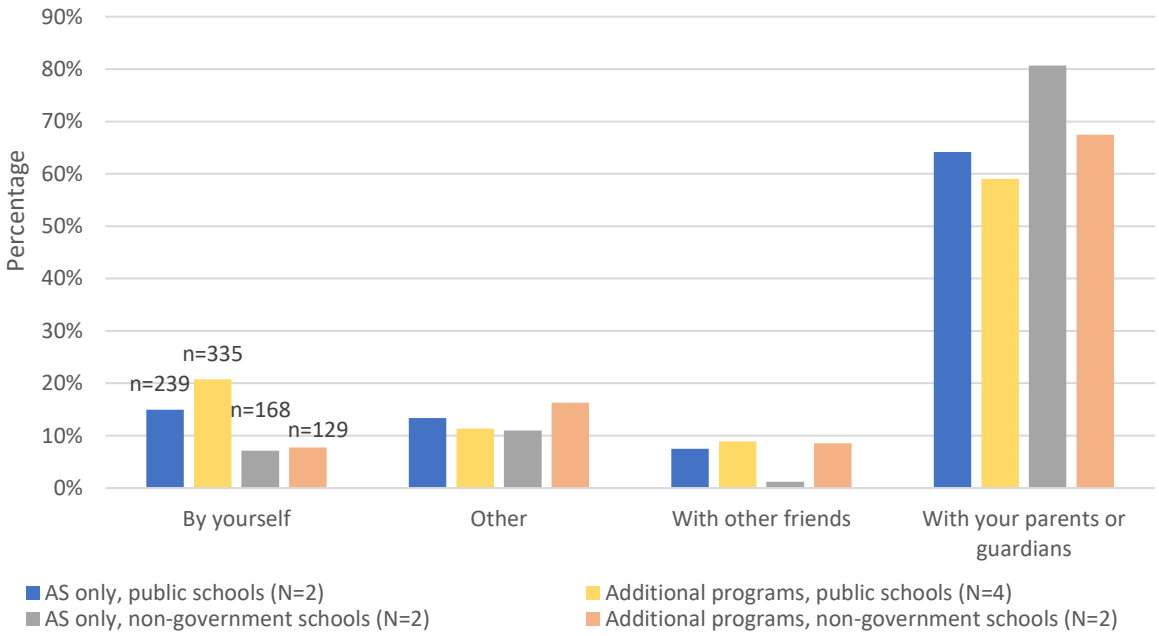

Figure 16. Percentage of students from schools participating only in AS who said they normally get to/from school using different methods, compared with those that participated in AS and additional programs; N=number of schools, n=number of students, shown only on the first item

3.2.3 School Crossing Supervisor Program

Summary of key findings:

- **A previous evaluation found that the SCSP had positively influenced parental attitudes around school safety and that parents/carers reported being more likely to allow their children to travel actively due to the presence of the supervisor.**
- Crossing supervisor interviewees noted that parental attitudes remained a challenge, but some thought **parents/carers were now more comfortable in letting students cross the road independently.**
- Student survey respondents from SCSP public schools felt very confident to actively travel to and from school and **around two-thirds said they regularly use the crossings around school.**
- Self-reported crossing use was highest in SCSP participating non-government schools.

The SCSP broadly aimed to make the school environment safer for students and to alleviate parental concerns around school safety. **An evaluation of the SCSP conducted in 2019[17] found that the program had positively influenced parental attitudes around school safety**, with key results from that study including:

- Respondents from participating schools rated the safety of the crossing the road consistently higher than control schools.
- When asked to indicate whether the presence of a crossing supervisor would make them more likely to allow their child to travel actively, parents/carers from participating schools increased substantially in likelihood and control schools decreased.

These attitudinal outcomes were echoed in the interviews conducted with crossing supervisors. Five interviewees discussed a slight change in behaviour they had observed where **parents/carers seemed to be more comfortable letting their children cross the road without them**. They commented that some parents would now drop their children off further from school, or stop walking with them some distance away, and allow them to cross the road and complete the journey by themselves.

> *But a lot of parents, rather than walk the child down to the crossing, they will stand at the corner or just come down a little way... And then their children keep coming on their own. (Crossing supervisor)*

> *The parents come and drop the children on the road, and they don't come with their children to cross it. Yeah, I think that maybe 10%, is more increased after that. (Crossing supervisor)*

[17] School Crossing Supervisor Program Evaluation, TCCS, 2019: https://www.fpconsulting.com.au/uploads/2/4/9/6/24962042/school_crossing_supervisors_-_evaluation_report.pdf

Interviewees also noted that parental attitudes likely remained a significant barrier restricting students being able to actively travel more regularly, although some noted that they believed their presence at the school helped alleviate some of these fears.

> *But I have parents saying they feel a lot more confident that their kids are allowed to ride and walk to school, because they see me there regularly and they trust that they can send their kids down, make them walk to school. (Crossing supervisor)*

> *I have found that more [parents] allow their kids to walk to school since I turned the crossing around and I'm going to take full credit for it. (Crossing supervisor)*

Survey results indicate that student respondents from public schools participating in the SCSP felt confident to actively travel to and from school (Table 11).

- 80% agreed or strongly agreed
- 10% disagreed or strongly disagreed
- **Average agreement level was high (4.0)**

Around two-thirds of student respondents said they regularly use the crossings around their school:

- 65% of students agreed or strongly agreed
- 13% disagreed or strongly disagreed
- The remaining 22% neither agreed nor disagreed

Similar values were reported by students from public schools participating in other programs, indicating SCSP program participation did not differentially impact active travel confidence or crossing use (Table 11).

Compared with public schools, fewer students from non-government schools participating in the SCSP said they felt confident to actively travel to and from school (Table 11):

- Only 60% agreed or strongly agreed they felt confident
- 16% disagreed or strongly disagreed

However, self-reported regular crossing use was highest in SCSP-participating non-government schools and significantly higher than non-participating non-government schools:

- 66% of SCSP participating non-government schools said they regularly use the crossings
- Compared with 56% of students from non-government schools who did not participate in the SCSP

Table 11: Self-reported student agreement with statements of active travel confidence and crossing use; students from School Crossing Supervisor (SCSP) participating schools compared with those from non-participating schools that had been involved in other program offerings.

Program participation	I feel confident to ride, walk, scoot or skate to and from school			I regularly use the crossings around my school		
	Average agreement	Agreed or strongly agreed (%)	Disagreed or strongly disagreed (%)	Average agreement	Agreed or strongly agreed (%)	Disagreed or strongly disagreed (%)
SCSP, public schools (n=150	4.0	80%	10%	3.7	65%	13%

from two schools)						
SCSP, non-government schools (n=118 from two schools)	3.5	60%	16%	3.6	63%	17%
Other program(s), public schools (n=372 from four schools)	4.2	80%	6%	3.8	66%	20%
Other program(s), non-government schools (n=103 from two schools)	3.9	82%	4%	3.7	56%	27%

There was some evidence from the parent/carer survey that the SCSP is impacting active travel confidence and crossing use in public schools. Average agreement levels with a set of statements around children and parent confidence for active travel to and from school was higher for students from SCSP participating schools compared with those participating in other programs (Figure 17).

More generally, parent/carer respondents of students from non-government schools tended to feel less confident to allow their children to actively travel to school compared with public schools and thought their children felt much less confident:

- Average agreement around confidence for both participation groups was ~2.7
- In all cases ~37% of parents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they and their children felt confident to actively travel

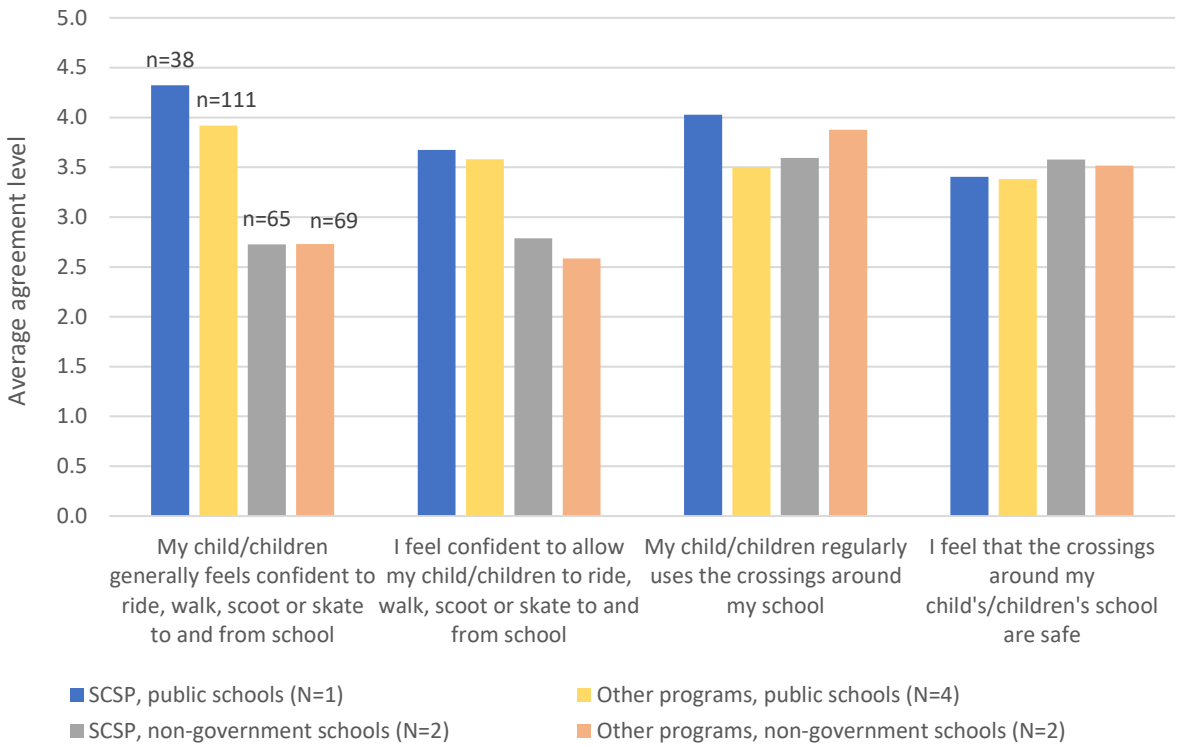

Figure 17. Average agreement level of parents with statements around active travel confidence and safety; the scale is 1-5 from strongly disagree to strongly agree; comparison of schools participating in the SCSP with those participating in other programs; N=number of schools, n=number of students, shown only on the first statement

3.3 Differences between cohorts

Summary of key findings:

- **There were significantly higher rates of active travel for public school students compared with non-government students.**
- Average agreement levels for boys were higher than girls for questions relating to feelings of confidence and enjoyment of active travel.
- 3% more girls reported walking to school and 12% more boys reported riding their bike.
- **Girls from non-government schools had the lowest rates of active travel of all gender and school combinations, and boys from public schools had the highest rates of riding their bikes and scooting/skating than all others.**

As illustrated in the sections above, there were significantly higher rates of active travel for public school students compared with non-government students. The influencers that seem to be predominantly driving this difference are discussed further in Section 3.4 below.

Survey results were also analysed to understand any gender differences in reported active travel rates and feelings around confidence and safety. Some things to note:

- Students who preferred to self-describe or preferred not to say are not presented as sample sizes were low

- Unlike the results presented in previous sections, students, rather than school, were treated as the replicate (i.e., student averages were taken across gender rather than first categorising them into school attended)

Average agreement levels for boys were higher than girls for questions relating to feelings of confidence and enjoyment (Figure 18), with:

- Feeling confident to actively travel to school 0.3 points higher
- Confidence in bike skills and abilities 0.2 points higher
- Enjoyment of active travel 0.2 points higher

Average agreement levels for boys were lower than girls for questions relating to safety measures, though girl agreement was only 0.1 higher than boys for both:

- regular use of crossings
- following safe routes

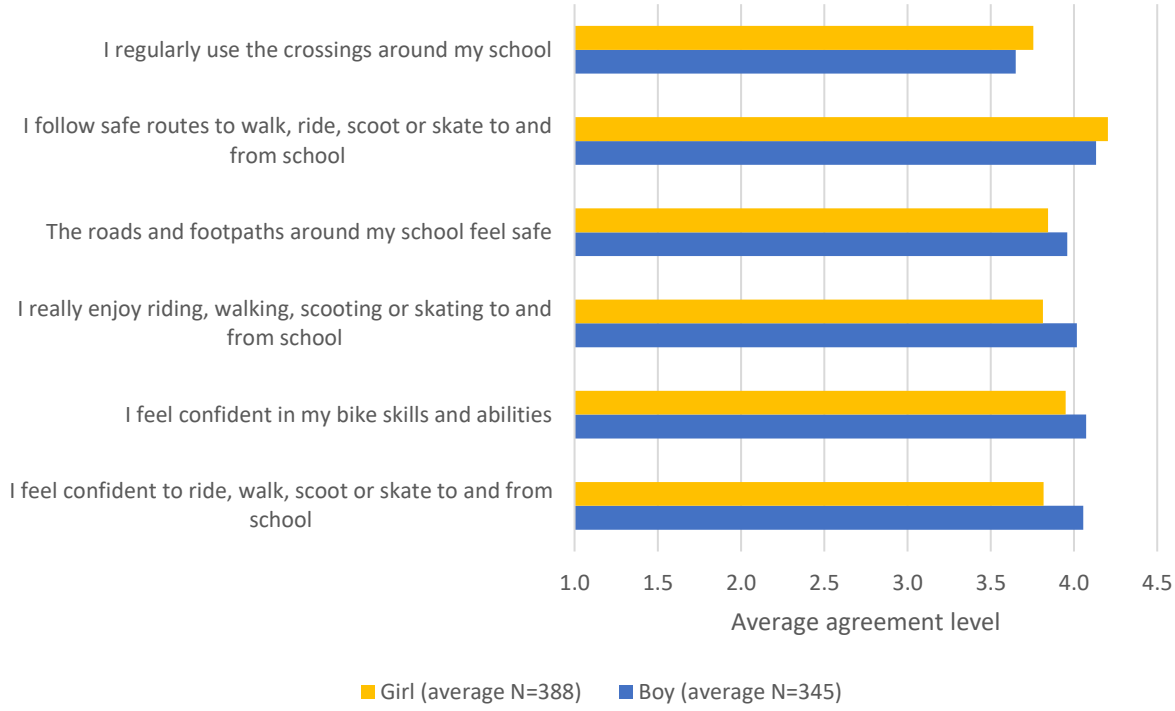

Figure 18. Average agreement levels of boy and girl student respondents with statements around safety, confidence, and enjoyment while actively travelling to school

There were also gender differences among students using different travel methods to and from school (Figure 19):

- 3% more girls reported walking to school
- 12% more boys reported riding their bike
- 2% more boys reported scooting or skateboarding
- **~5% More girls than boys used non-active travel** methods (both catching the bus and riding in a car)

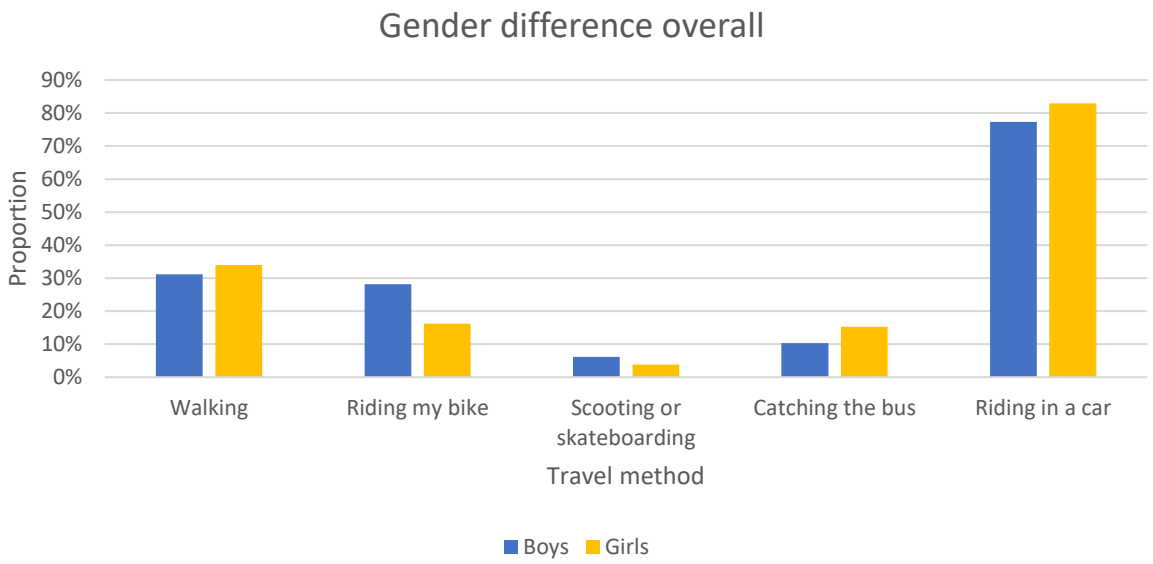

Figure 19. Proportion of girls and boys who said they use different transport methods to get to and from school

Gender differences in travel methods were split by school type to determine if there were any distinctions in the general pattern masked when analysed together (Figure 20). Key findings include:

- **Girls from non-government schools had the lowest rates of active travel of all gender and school combinations**
- Similarly, girls from non-government schools had the highest rates of travel in buses or cars
- Conversely, girls from public schools walked more than any other group, and rode their bikes or scooted/skated more than boys from non-government schools
- **Boys from public schools had the highest rates of riding their bikes and scooting/skating**

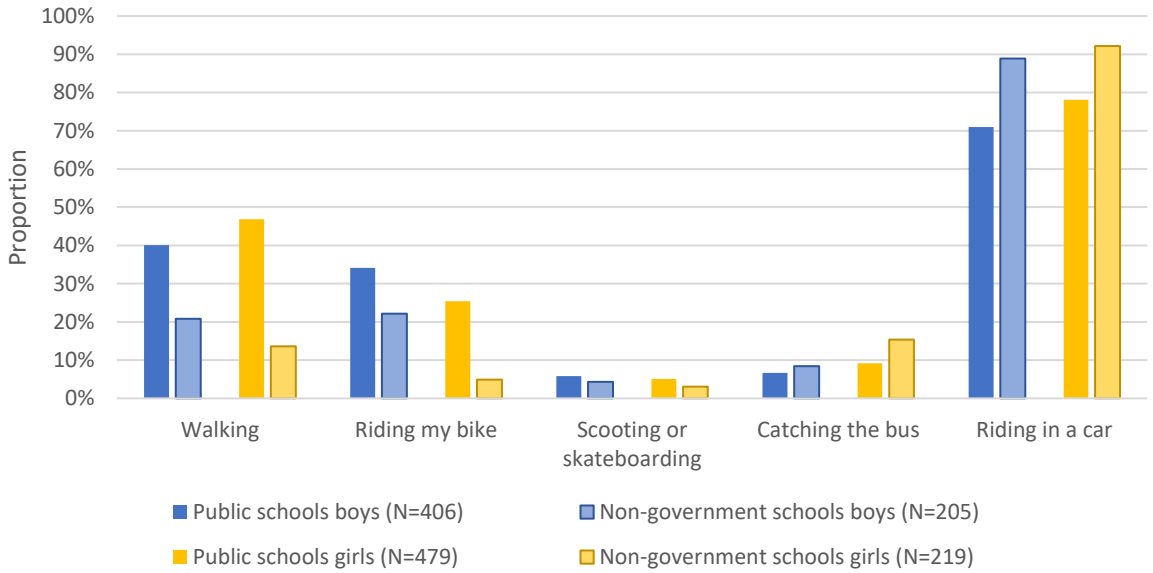

Figure 20. Proportion of girls and boys from public and non-government schools that said they use different transport methods to get to and from school

A higher proportion of public school students reported travelling alone compared with non-government school students, who travelled with their parents/carers more (Figure 21). Other things to note are:

- 8% more public school boys travelled by themselves than public school girls, while there was no difference between non-government school girls and boys
- This pattern was inverse for travelling with a parent/carer, with 10% more public school girls travelling with a parent/carer than boys, but a similar proportion of boys and girls from non-government schools
- A slightly higher proportion of boys travelled with friends than girls for both school types

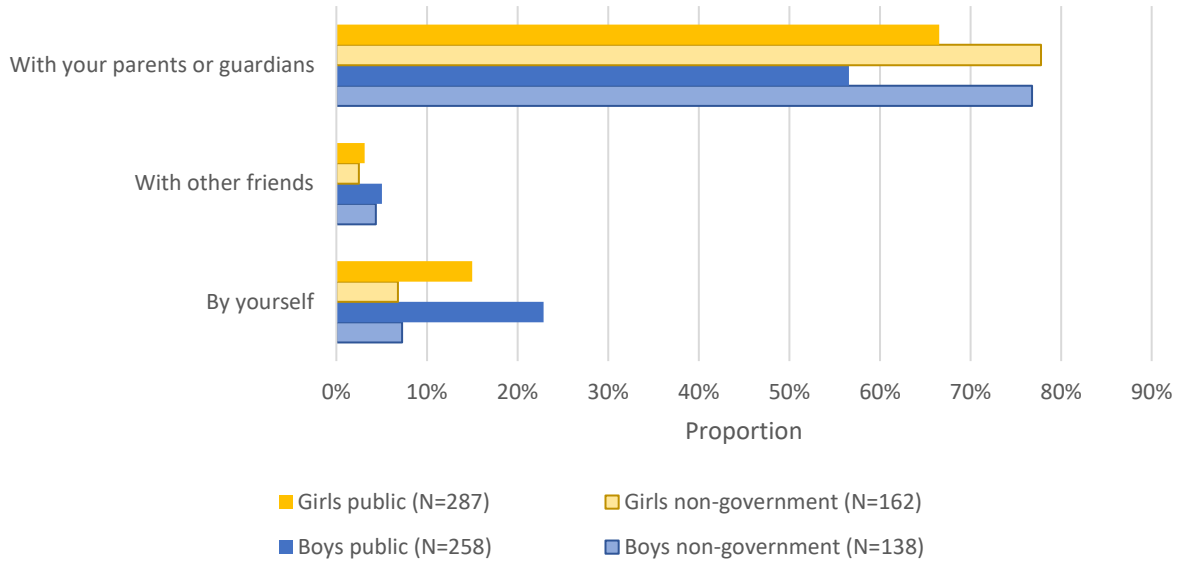

Figure 21. Proportion of girls and boys from public and non-government schools that said they travel to and from school by themselves, with friends, or with a parent/carer

3.4 External factors and influencers

Summary of key findings:

- **Distance from school is the primary overall factor influencing active travel rates**, predominantly (although not exclusively) illustrated through differences between public schools and non-government schools.
- Weather and seasonality limitations (e.g., magpies in spring) were identified as key factors inhibiting active travel by many student respondents and a few parent/carer respondents.
- Proportionally, **boys were more likely to think that active travel was too slow than they were to identify the weather as a barrier.**
- **Girls were almost twice as likely to report that active travel was too tiring or took up too much energy than boys.**

Results from both quantitative and qualitative sources indicate that distance from school is the primary overall factor influencing active travel rates. This key influencer emerged by observing lower rates of active travel at non-government schools where students tended to live further away, compared with those attending public schools. According to survey results:

- For all school types, average number of times students actively travelled to/from school in a week was lowest when students lived more than 5km from school.
- Inversely active travel rates were highest for all school types when students lived within 1km of their school.
- 30% of students (n=89) from non-government schools lived more than 5km from their school, compared with only 11% (n=17) of public school students.
- In contrast, only 6% of students (n=8) from non-government schools lived within 1km from their school, compared with 45% of public school students.

This finding is strongly supported by results from previous evaluations, including the RWTS evaluation. **The report found that distance was a key factor constraining active travel where students live further from the school**, but that there were a range of other factors that influence active travel rates, even when students live nearby. Survey data captured during that evaluation indicated that schools with a higher proportion of students living further away usually had lower rates of active travel, although this was not always the case. Similarly, **the SCSP evaluation found that there were a range of 'perennial' barriers for parents allowing their children to travel actively, most notably the age of the child and the distance they lived from school.** A report prepared by IPSOS using the 2017 Australian Capital Territory and Queanbeyan-Palerang 'Household Travel Survey'[18] found that trips to public schools were generally shorter than non-government schools, with a higher proportion of students from non-government schools being driven to and from school. **This survey found that rates of active travel were significantly higher for government school students, with approximately 1 in 5 students attending a government school walking or cycling, compared with 3.5% of non-government students.**

Comments from student survey respondents provide further information relating to the factors that stopped them from travelling actively (see Appendix 4 for coding summary). 96 students specifically noted that they don't use active travel because they live too far from school, however there were many student respondents who simply stated that they don't ride or walk to and from school, or did not provide a response. Based on the findings presented above regarding distance as a key influencer of active travel rates, it is likely that a high proportion of these students also do not use active travel due to the distance they live from their school.

Students also overwhelmingly identified weather and seasonality as a primary limitation to using active travel, with 201 comments identifying this concern. Slightly more girls identified this as a barrier than boys (20% of all comments from girls compared with 16% of all comments from boys).

IT'S SO COLD! And in summer on the way it's stinking hot. (Girl in Year 5)

Proportionally, boys were more likely to think that active travel was too slow and took too long (24% of all comments from boys) than they were to identify the weather as a barrier. Only 13% of

[18] ACT Open Data Portal (Education Directorate) https://www.data.act.gov.au/Education/ACT School Locations 2017 archived/q8rt

all comments from girls identified the speed of active travel as a barrier, which echoes findings presented in Section 3.3.

It takes longer to get to school, and if I'm already very late that would just [take] me longer to get to school and I would be even more late. (Girl in Year 5)

It is not a very fast way of getting to school. (Boy in Year 6)

Girls were almost twice as likely to report that using active travel was too tiring or took up too much energy than boys (15% of all responses from girls compared with 9% of all responses from boys).

It can take all your energy out of you and it might affect you at school. (Girl in Year 4)

It takes a bit of time and also takes a lot of energy so then it is hard to learn in school. (Boy in Year 6)

A few parent/carer survey respondents also noted that the weather often made active travel very difficult, with some noting that animals could also be a challenge.

Remove the snakes from the underpass. (Parent/carer)

Relocate dangerous magpies … in springtime as my children cannot safely walk or ride to school for those two months every year, and all the alternative routes have dangerous and aggressive birds too. (Parent/carer)

3.5 Unintended outcomes and co-benefits

Summary of key findings:

- Two unintended outcomes were specifically identified through qualitive feedback from teachers and crossing supervisors:
  - One teacher noted that **delivering Safe Cycle helped some students excel in non-academic alternative ways.**
  - **Almost all crossing supervisor interviewees commented on the personal benefits they experienced through their role.**
- Many students identified **the health benefits of active travel**, particularly around getting more exercise and keeping fit.
- Girls were more likely to identify the benefits of being outside, however, boys were more likely to identify the benefits of mindfulness during active travel.
- Students also appreciated the opportunity to be social with their friends and/or family while they actively travelled.

There are likely to be a number of unintended outcomes and consequences as a result of delivering the Active Travel Programs; however, they are difficult to identify. Two unintended outcomes were identified specifically through qualitative feedback collected through interviews with teachers and crossing supervisors.

One teacher noted that delivering the Safe Cycle program component helped some of his students excel in alternative ways and bolster their self-esteem.

There were a couple of kids, who academically were lower but they were good on bikes, so made them feel like they were achieving in another way, we've got kids who participated in mountain biking comps etc. so when they do bike education they're demonstrating fundamentals and teaches the other kids, so that's good for them. (RWTS coordinator)

Almost all crossing supervisor interviewees commented on the personal benefits they experienced through their role as a crossing supervisor.

I've got to know some of the teachers and the people in the office, and I really feel part of that community now. I get a lot of job satisfaction out of it. When the kids acknowledge me, it's just really nice. I don't feel like I'm just standing there like 'here I am with my sign'. I really feel part of it. It's nice and people wave at me as I go past, all the bus drivers will wave at me now. It's just lovely. It's a lovely thing to do. (Crossing supervisor)

The interaction with the kids and parents has been what I really enjoy. I've got to know a few families really well and I get little gifts from them, like Easter and Christmas time. (Crossing supervisor)

While improved student wellbeing and social connectedness are included as intended outcomes in the Theory of Change, results from the student survey relating to these are discussed as co-benefits here. Student respondents were asked to comment on what they enjoyed about using active travel, with **173 students noting that they liked using active travel because it's fun.**

I love walking and riding to school because I love the feeling when the bell rings and you know that you are going to have some fun riding or walking home. (Girl in Year 6)

Further, 154 students identified the health benefits of using active travel, **particularly around getting more exercise and keeping fit.**

That I get exercise and stay fit, that's where I get 60%-70% of my fitness from. (Girl in Year 5)

It's easy and makes me do exercise. (Boy in Year 5)

Girls were more likely to identify the benefits of being outside (26% of all comments from girls compared with 16% of all comments from boys).

I like enjoying the fresh air and admiring the nature surrounding me. (Girl in Year 6)

I like that you can soak In the fresh morning air. (Boy in Year 4)

However, **boys were more likely to identify the benefits of mindfulness during active travel** (20% of all comments from boys compared to 12% of all comments from girls):

It makes me feel calm and to start a good day (girl in Year 5)

I get the chance to be myself and have my own time to get to school (boy in Year 5)

One hundred and four (104) students also noted that they appreciated the opportunity to be social while they were travelling actively, including chatting with their parents, or catching up with their friends.

I like it because I normally walk with my parents or friends, and I talk with them on the way. Like extra play time with them. I like that. (Boy in Year 4)

I can spend time with my friends a bit after school and talk and enjoy on the way. (Girl in Year 6)

4 Lessons

This section summarises suggestions for program improvement as reported by respondents that are not discussed elsewhere in the report. Broader findings relating to the program overall and recommendations for future offerings are discussed in Section 5 below.

There were many comments from parent/carer respondents indicating that they felt there was a lack of adequate bus infrastructure for their children to utilise (see Appendix 4 for coding summary). Most comments related to suggested improvements for dedicated school buses or aligning existing options with school timetables and connecting routes more effectively.

There were 16 comments addressing the need for dedicated school bus services.

Dedicated bus services from suburbs not located adjacent the school. (Parent/carer)

Make actual school bus routes again, to (sic) many reports of predators in our area and I would not feel comfortable in them using a public bus. (Parent/carer)

Fifteen (15) parents/carers noted that existing buses don't connect well, and eight (8) noted they are not always well-aligned with school timetables.

Bus connections that go into suburbs so she can catch a bus without walking 2km by herself. If the bus stop was within the suburb she could combine a bus and walking without major roads or isolated areas which would be much safer. (Parent/carer)

My daughter walks and catches the bus. At beginning of year the timetable changed - she now has to wait 35 minutes for a bus to come (as opposed to 10 previously). (Parent/carer)

Most of the other suggested program improvements from parent/carer respondents directly related to the infrastructure and attitudinal barriers discussed in Section 3.1.2, for example "enforcement of speed limits" or asking for crossings to be installed at particular intersections. Beyond these, there were some other program improvements suggested by parent/carers, including suggestions ranging from "encouraging parent participation" to more specific program activities, such as:

- Weekly ride or walk to school days which are incentivised (for example, collecting stickers)
- Cycling safety education programs
- Free bike check and/or repairs for students
- Increased and improved storage facilities at schools for bicycles and scooters
- Walking school bus or group walking programs, particularly for children who are younger and could include volunteer parents who rotate
- Allocation of identified pick-up points for primary-school aged children in each suburb to wait and catch the bus to school with other children

A number of these activities are already offered to schools through the Active Travel Programs, suggesting that there are opportunities for increased promotion of the offerings. In fact, some parent/carer respondents reported being unfamiliar with the Active Travel Programs and what it entails, and some who were aware of the program suggested investing in increased marketing.

Walk Safely to School Day is a good initiative, good to promote this day a bit more. (Parent/carer)

I think you need to make different types of road safety videos about primary school, put it in social media, digital media and other media platforms. (Parent/carer)

One teacher noted that there was a potential opportunity to increase the incentives available for students when encouraging them to ride or walk to school:

When you're dealing with kids… anything that's fun, I guess what we could do at the school is provide fruit and maybe the bike workshop or something like that. If there's any little added incentive or little bit of fun you could have on the morning. (RWTS coordinator)

Teachers also noted that there would be benefits to increasing the accessibility of the programs and resources, for example, ensuring that the loan bikes are appropriate for students with disabilities, and ensuring that the programs are responsive to the diversity of the school demographics:

The other thing we have here, the area is very multicultural. We also have a large proportion of people who live in units and townhouses. And I wonder with some of them, is it that they don't have bikes? And perhaps they have come from places where they don't ride bikes as much, so maybe the kids don't have bikes. (RWTS coordinator)

5 Key findings and recommendations

5.1 Key findings

The findings from this evaluation illustrate the inherent complexity in addressing challenges such as active travel, and how difficult it is to meaningfully enact sustained behaviour change across populations over time. Initially developed as a preventative health intervention, the program now aims to contribute towards several other priority areas, including climate change and transport and infrastructure outcomes. It is therefore difficult to assess the full program impact from this perspective, as additional important outcomes relating to other priority areas are not also fully captured.

The evidence collated for this evaluation shows that when looked at in combination, there is a positive trend towards increasing active travel rates for students in ACT schools and influencing perceptions of safety. However, it is difficult to disentangle outcomes between program level offerings, demonstrating the strength of the overall approach taken by TCCS to offer various programs addressing different barriers related to active travel.

In summary, overall key findings from the Active Travel Programs include:

- **102 schools across the ACT participated in at least one of the Active Travel Programs between 2012 and 2022**, with most schools participating in at least two of the program offerings.
- **The overall cost to deliver the Active Travel Programs was $9,317,604.** The most expensive program was the SCSP and the least expensive was RWTS.
- **Results from multiple data sources suggest that RWTS is generating the most direct impact on active travel rates compared with the other two programs**. This is perhaps to be expected given the intensive nature of the program, and the intended outcomes relating more explicitly to directly increasing usage of active travel. It is therefore also not unexpected that the direct translation from implementation into active travel rates is not as pronounced for the other programs.
- **A high proportion of student survey respondents indicated they use active travel each week,** however results varied among program participations groups, with schools engaged in RWTS and participating in AS demonstrating the highest rates.
- **Pedestrian counts and traffic volume levels at supervised crossing did not noticeably change from pre-intervention to post-intervention,** however, given the general background of declining active travel rates from ACT-wide data, the maintained level of crossing usage may signify program effectiveness.
- **Overall, results suggest that students and parents/carers generally feel confident to travel actively and that the environment around schools feel safe.** There were no strong indications that specific programs influenced perceptions of safety and usage of infrastructure around school much more than others, however, this was likely a result of confounding between programs. Previous evaluations with clearer baseline and follow-up measures demonstrated strong positive impacts relating to confidence and attitudinal change.
- **There were significantly higher rates of active travel from public school students compared with non-government school students.** While distance from school appeared to be

predominantly driving this difference, it is very likely that other factors independent to distance are also contributing.

- **Distance from school emerged as the biggest overall influencer on active travel rates,** followed by weather and seasonality (as reported by students) and infrastructure and attitudinal safety barriers (as reported by parents/carers).
- **Gendered differences had emerged within the survey sample**, most notably around boys being more likely to use active travel in general than girls, preferring to ride their bikes over walking, and being much more likely to note that they didn't like active travel because it took too long. Girls were also twice as likely to report that active travel took up too much energy.

Table 12 summarises the available evidence presented in this report that supports the key findings above.

Table 12. summary of evidence for key findings

Program component	Student survey evidence	Parent/carer survey evidence	Transport evidence	Staff evidence (teachers, crossing supervisors)	Other evidence
RWTS	Self-reported **active travel rates** are higher than ACT-wide averages in public schools that were engaged with RWTS and AS. Higher percentage of students from engaged public schools **travel independently** compared with non-participating or non-engaged schools. No clear differences in **confidence** between engaged public schools and non-participating or non-engaged schools.	No clear differences in parents/carers' **perceptions** between engaged public schools and non-participating or non-engaged schools.	Overall, RWTS schools have higher **pedestrian counts** compared with non-RWTS schools (consistent across public and non-government schools).	RWTS coordinators felt **confident and equipped** to teach the program.	2017 RWTS evaluation showed participating schools had **higher rates of active travel** attributable to the program and that **active travel rates increased** after participation.
SCSP	Self-reported **use of crossings** around schools was higher in participating schools than non-participating (non-government schools only). **Confidence** for active travel was lower among	Participating public schools **used crossings** more than non-participating schools. **Confidence** for active travel was higher for participating public schools.	No measurable impact on **pedestrian counts** for SCSP schools	Most teachers said students **regularly use crossings** around school. All crossing supervisors believe they are increasing the **safety of the school environment.** Around half of the crossing supervisors had observed a	2019 SCSP evaluation showed that the program had positively impacted **parental attitudes** to safety. And that parents had greater intention/perceived likelihood to **allow active travel** after SCSP implementation.

	participating non-government schools.			difference in **parent behaviour** but noted that parental attitudes remained a challenge.	
Active Streets	Difficult to analyse specific impact of Active Streets as all surveyed schools had participated. **Independent travel** was higher in cases where schools had participated in multiple programs, including AS.	No clear differences to report.	Not able to be examined.	Teachers were generally positive about the **safety of their school environment.**	2017 pilot program summary report found that the overall percentage of students **using active travel** was higher after implementation of AS interventions and there were small but consistent reductions (3%) in **traffic volume and speed.**
Overall Active Travel Programs	For schools that were engaged in RWTS and AS, 45% of students reported **actively travelling**, compared with 39% for ACT-wide averages.	Overall, there was a reasonable level of **confidence** among parents/carers in allowing children to travel actively. Parent/carer **confidence to allow** active travel was lower in non-government schools.	**Pedestrian counts and traffic volume** at school crossings were maintained between time points pre- and post-intervention. RWTS schools had significantly higher **pedestrian counts** than schools that did not participate in RWTS.		Previous evaluations using targeted approaches found strong evidence **to support the effectiveness of all three programs.**

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the key findings, we recommend:

1. **TCCS should maintain ownership of the Active Travel Programs portfolio, while ensuring strong cross-directorate collaboration.** This evaluation has further demonstrated that the programs should aim to contribute towards a range of outcomes and strategic priorities beyond directly increasing rates of student active travel. To this end, input from various directorates should be leveraged as much as possible, including ACT Health and the Education Directorate. There also appears to be an opportunity to build stronger linkages with the Environment, Planning, and Sustainable Development Directorate as one of the wider goals of the Active Travel Programs is to contribute towards the ACT Climate Change Strategy.
2. **Further, TCCS could also consider implementing a more explicit focus on 'systems' within the approach.** A systems-focused approach would help indicate the level and type of contribution that could be expected from the various programs (e.g., AS and SCSP would not be expected to impact rates of active travel as directly as RWTS). There is a substantial evidence base for the systemic barriers and enablers to active travel, and it could be beneficial to draw from this to monitor and understand how the Active Travel Programs continue to influence the system.
3. **Continue offering RWTS as an ongoing investment, while remaining responsive to the specific infrastructure needs of schools.** There is value in continuing to ensure that all schools have access to and are encouraged to engage in RWTS as it is the least expensive program to run and appears to be the most significant driver of active travel rates. However, there is a clear need for one-off infrastructure investments (e.g., through AS) and more intensive resourcing (e.g., crossing supervisors) to be available for schools where appropriate. This will ensure that the transient school population continues to receive the benefits of RWTS, while the school environment is improved and maintained.
4. **Improving parent/carer awareness should continue to be a key component of the program going forward.** Parent/carer awareness and perceptions of safety continue to emerge as a key barrier inhibiting rates of active travel. There is an opportunity to increase the promotion of the Active Travel Programs and their associated benefits to the wider school community and encourage increased parent/carer engagement.
5. **Assess alternative options to address other recurring barriers.** For example, increasing the availability of school bus services would reduce traffic congestion, which may be particularly useful in cooler months when fewer students actively travel to school.
6. **A carefully designed monitoring and evaluation approach should be built into program implementation going forward.** The strongest evidence to date has been collected through pre-intervention/post-intervention measures that are directly tied to appropriate program-level outcomes. This approach should be mirrored in data collection tools for future offerings, in addition to increased monitoring of school participation and engagement information.

Appendix 1 Program logic models

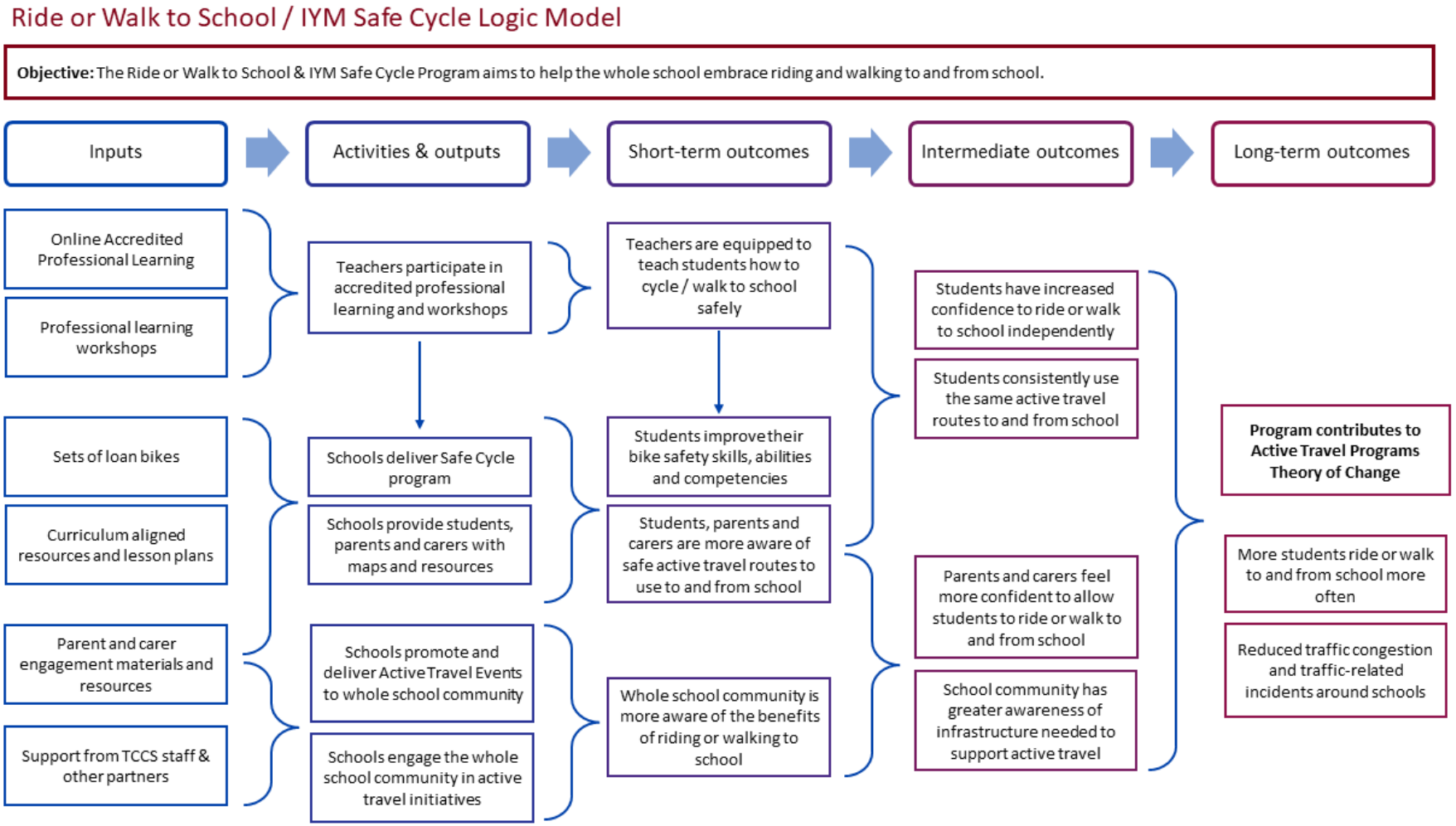

Figure 22. Ride or Walk to School Logic Model

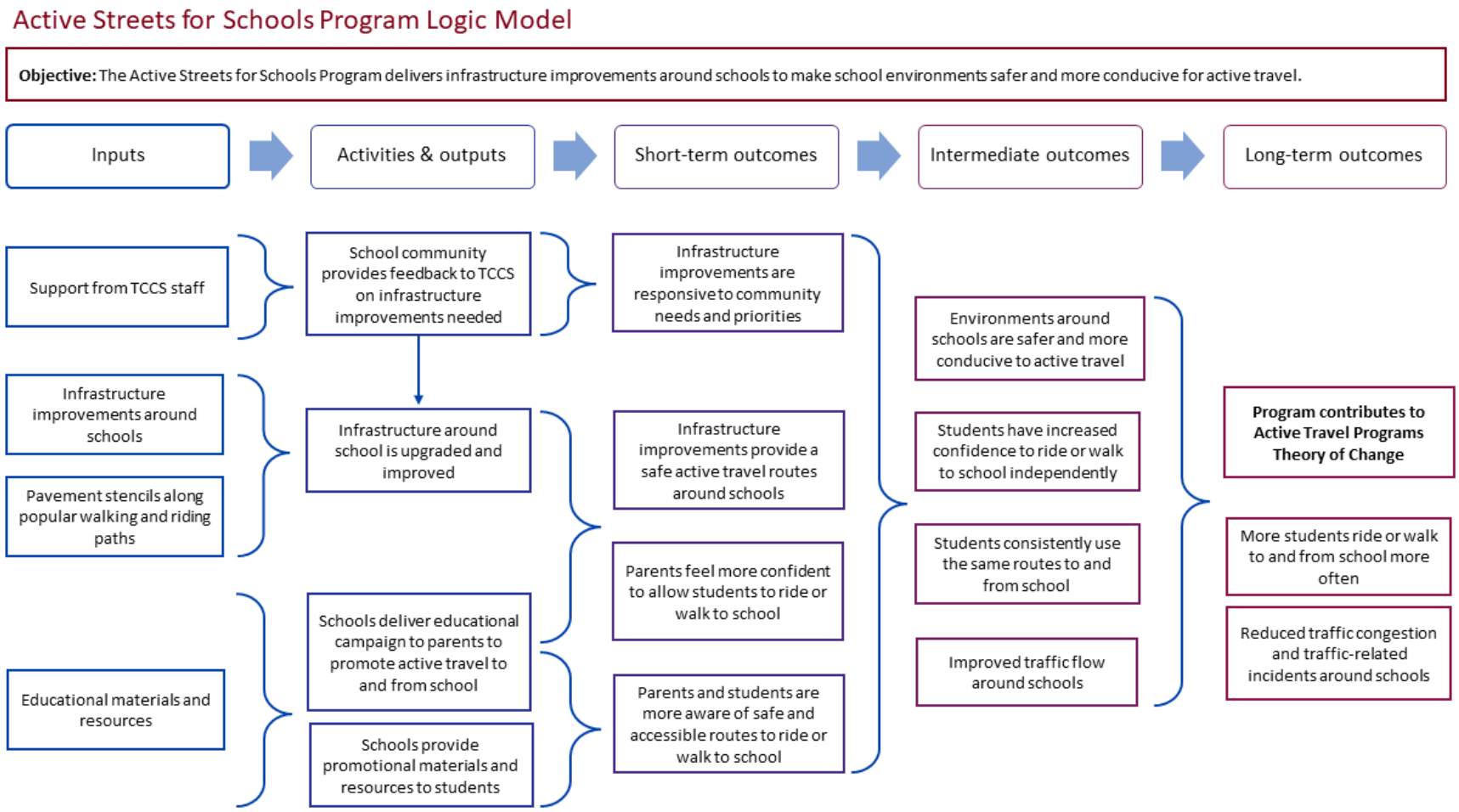

Figure 23: Active Streets for School Program Logic Model

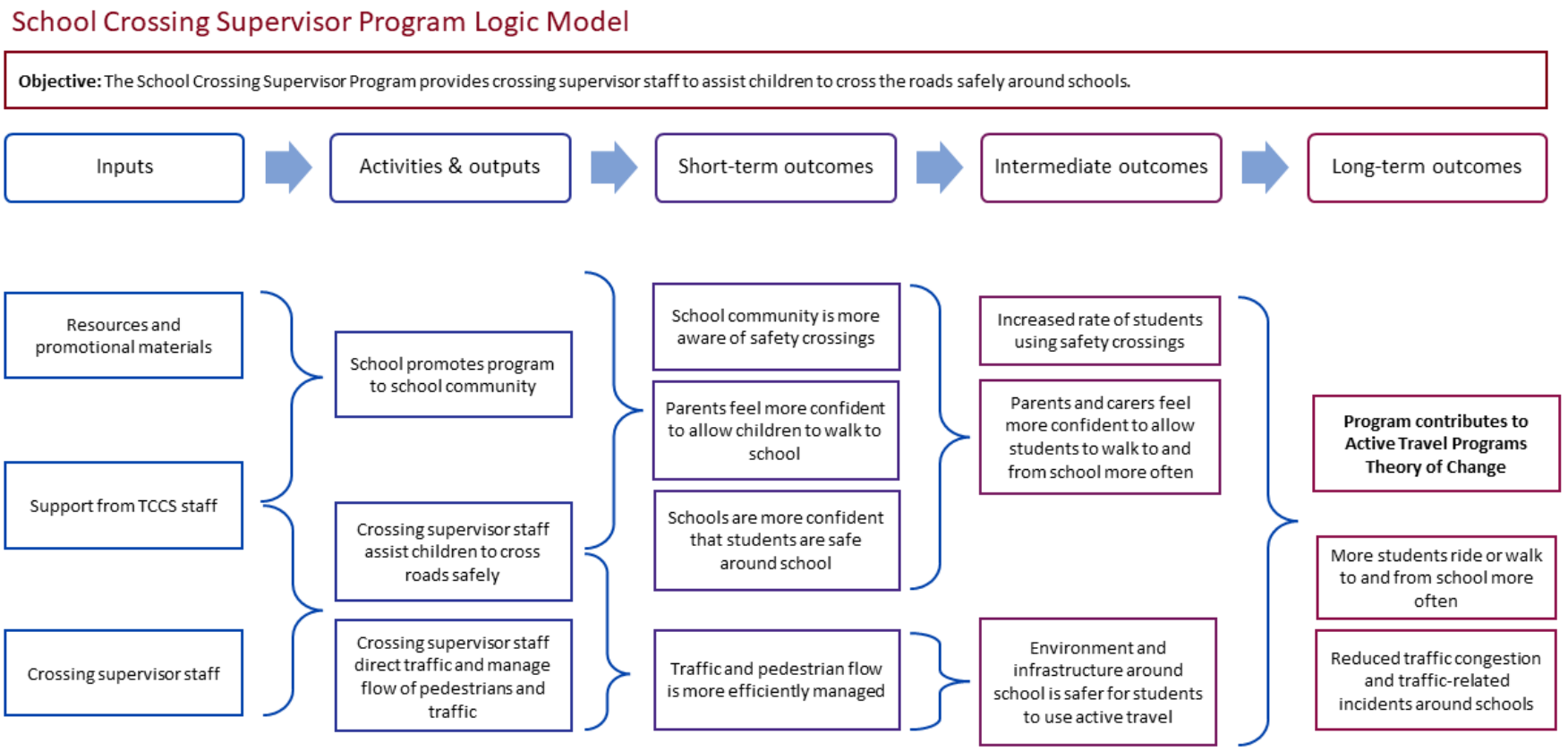

Figure 24. School Crossing Supervisor Program Logic Model

Appendix 2 Survey analysis approach

There were a high number of student and parent/carer survey responses received in mid-2023. However, only schools with 20 or more responses were included in the analysis, reducing the number of schools presented in the results (Table 13).

Table 13. Survey sample sizes

Overall	Total no. of responses	No. schools included in analysis	No. responses included in analysis	Range in sample size per school included
Student survey	1,039	10	879	21–167 students
Parent/carer survey	880	9	283	20 – 46 parents/carers
Teacher survey	16			

Ideally, before and after program comparison data would be available for each school to identify changes in response patterns, holding other school-specific variables constant to give a sound understanding of program impact. Another useful comparison would be Active Travel program participating schools against non-participating schools. As this data was not available, **comparisons among schools participating in different program combinations was undertaken to identify any differential impact individual program offerings are having (Table 14, Table 15). However, this comparison presents some limitations, including:**

- Low sample sizes for each program participation group, amplified by the necessary splitting of public and non-government schools
- Difficulties accounting for school-specific confounding variables such as topography or street width, noting that these confounding variables have a higher impact on results with low sample sizes
- Difficulties pulling out overall impact of the program without non-participation groups (either same school before/after comparison or different non-participating schools)
- Challenges accounting for interacting effects of programs

Data has been presented in two distinct ways to help alleviate some of the limitations and better isolate program-specific impacts.

- Overall data was presented by displaying the different program offering combinations to determine if any combination of participation had a stronger impact.
- Program-specific data was displayed by isolating individual programs and comparing them to other schools that had participated in other programs.

Table 14. Program participation and number of survey responses received from schools included in the parents/carers analysis

School name	School type	No. students	Programs engaged in [19]

[19] Some schools signed up for RWTS but did not meaningfully engage in the program. Some survey analyses are therefore split out into engaged and non-engaged RWTS schools, as this most effectively demonstrates the true impact of the program.

Aranda Primary School	Public	31	AS and RWTS
Maribyrnong Primary School	Public	21	AS and RWTS
Palmerston District Primary School	Public	32	AS only
Giralang Primary School	Public	27	AS only
Majura Primary School	Public	38	SCSP only
Total public schools	**5**	**149**	**3 programs**
Trinity Christian School	Non-government	45	AS and SCSP
Canberra Girls Grammar School	Non-government	20	AS and SCSP
Holy Family Primary School	Non-government	23	AS only
Brindabella Christian College (Charnwood campus)	Non-government	46	AS only
Total non-government schools	**4**	**134**	**2 programs**

Table 15. Program participation and number of survey responses received from students included in the student analysis

School name	School type	No. students	Year levels survey	Programs engaged in
Duffy Primary School	Public	121	4–6	All three
Kaleen Primary School	Public	167	4–6	AS only
Palmerston District Primary School	Public	72	4 and 5	AS only
Ainslie Primary School	Public	68	4	AS and RWTS
Aranda Primary School	Public	101	5 and 6	AS and RWTS
Turner School	Public	45	4–6	AS and SCSP
Total public schools	**6**	**574**	**4-6**	**3 programs**
St Monica's Primary School	Non-government	109	5 and 6	AS only
St Thomas Aquinas Primary School	Non-government	21	6	AS only
Sts Peter & Paul Primary School	Non-government	72	4 and 5	AS and SCSP
Trinity Christian School	Non-government	103	5 and 6	AS and SCSP
Total non-government schools	**4**	**305**	**4-6**	**2 programs**

Outliers

While a survey was distributed to parents of children attending schools that were not involved in the program or its offerings, the majority of responses came from one school to be compared with participating schools. This school was a non-government school with a high proportion of students living close to school, making it an outlier for comparison with participating non-government schools, who tend to live further from school. Given the confounding influence of distance from school, the non-participating school was excluded from analysis.

One public school initially included in analysis had very low rates of active travel, comparable or lower than non-government schools. Telopea Park School is a bi-national French-Australian school, established as the result of an agreement between the Governments of France and Australia. As this school was not representative of public schools and its inclusion was confounding results, Telopea Park School was excluded from analysis.

Appendix 3 Program participation by school

Table 16. Full list of program participation by school

School	RWTS	IYMSC	AS	SCSP
Ainslie Primary School	✓		✓	
Amaroo School	✓	✓	✓	✓
Aranda Primary School	✓		✓	
Arawang Primary	✓		✓	
Belconnen High		✓		
Black Mountain School	✓			
Bonython Primary	✓		✓	
Brindabella Christian College - Charnwood campus	✓		✓	
Brindabella Christian College - Lyneham Campus	✓		✓	✓
Burgmann Anglican School			✓	
Calwell Primary School	✓		✓	
Campbell Primary School			✓	
Canberra Christian School			✓	
Canberra Girls Grammar			✓	✓
Canberra Grammar			✓	✓
Canberra High		✓		
Canberra Montessori School	✓		✓	
Caroline Chisholm Primary School	✓		✓	
Caroline Chisholm School (secondary)		✓		
Chapman Primary School	✓		✓	✓
Charles Conder Primary	✓		✓	
Charles Weston School	✓			
Charnwood-Dunlop School	✓		✓	
Covenant Christian School	✓		✓	
Curtin Primary School	✓		✓	
Daramalan		✓		
Duffy Primary School	✓		✓	✓
Emmaus Christian School	✓			
Evatt Primary School	✓		✓	
Farrer Primary	✓			
Florey Primary School				✓
Forrest Primary School	✓			✓
Franklin Early Childhood	✓		✓	
Fraser Primary	✓			
Garran Primary School	✓		✓	✓
Gilmore Primary School	✓		✓	
Giralang Primary	✓		✓	
Gold Creek School	✓	✓	✓	✓

Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School	✓		✓	✓
Gordon Primary	✓		✓	
Gowrie Primary School	✓		✓	
Harrison School	✓		✓	✓
Hawker Primary			✓	
Holy Family Primary			✓	
Holy Trinity Primary School	✓		✓	
Hughes Primary School	✓		✓	✓
Jervis Bay Primary	✓			
Kaleen Primary	✓		✓	
Kingsford-Smith School	✓	✓	✓	
Lanyon High		✓		
Latham Primary	✓		✓	
Lyneham Primary School	✓		✓	✓
Macgregor Primary	✓		✓	
Macquarie Primary	✓		✓	
Majura Primary School				✓
Maribyrnong Primary School	✓		✓	
Marist College			✓	
Melrose High School	✓		✓	
Merici College		✓		
Miles Franklin Primary	✓		✓	
Monash Primary	✓		✓	
Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School	✓		✓	✓
Mount Rogers Primary	✓		✓	
Mount Stromlo		✓		
Namadgi School	✓		✓	✓
Narrabundah Early Childhood School			✓	
Neville Bonner Primary	✓		✓	
Ngunnawal Primary	✓		✓	✓
North Ainslie Primary	✓		✓	
Palmerston District Primary School	✓		✓	
Red Hill Primary	✓		✓	✓
Richardson Primary School	✓		✓	
Rosary Primary	✓			
Sacred Heart Primary School	✓		✓	
Southern Cross Early Childhood School	✓		✓	
St Anthony's Primary	✓		✓	
St Benedict's Primary			✓	
St Clare of Assisi Primary			✓	✓
St Edmund's College			✓	
St Francis of Assisi Primary School				✓
St John the Apostle School			✓	

St Joseph's Primary		✓	
St Michael's Primary		✓	
St Monica's Primary		✓	
St Thomas Aquinas Primary	✓	✓	
St Thomas More's Primary	✓	✓	
St Thomas the Apostle Primary	✓	✓	
St Vincent's Primary School	✓	✓	
Sts Peter & Paul Primary		✓	✓
Taqwa School	✓	✓	
Taylor Primary	✓	✓	
Telopea Park School	✓	✓	
The Galilee School	✓		
Torrens Primary	✓	✓	✓
Trinity Christian School		✓	✓
Turner School	✓	✓	✓
University of Canberra High School - Kaleen	✓		
Wanniassa Hills Primary		✓	
Wanniassa Primary School	✓	✓	
Weetangera Primary	✓	✓	
Woden School	✓		
Yarralumla Primary	✓	✓	

Appendix 4 Survey comments coding summary

Table 17. Infrastructure safety barriers themed from parent/carer survey comments

Infrastructure safety barrier	Number of comments
Lack of adequate crossings (e.g., zebra crossings)	96
Inadequate footpaths	51
Main roads and/or heavy traffic	41
Lack of bike lanes or bike paths	23
Other	1

Table 18. Attitudinal safety barriers themed from parent/carer survey comments

Attitudinal safety barrier	Number of comments
Drivers disobeying speed limits and road rules	34
Parents creating congestion and poor parental behaviour	20
Lack of supervisors (to enforce rules) or inadequate supervisors	20
Felt safety (e.g., age of child, acceptance of risk)	20
Cars in driveways, blocked paths, blind spots	17
Weather and seasonality	3
Other	2

Table 19. Program improvement suggestions themed from parent/carer survey comments

Program improvement suggestions	Number of comments
Preference for dedicated school bus	16
Buses don't connect well	15
Buses not aligned with school times	8
Lack of public transport	6
Bus stops far from school	4
Cost of bus transport	2

Table 20. Barriers themed from student survey responses

Dislike about active travel	Number of comments
Weather and seasonality (too hot, too cold, magpies)	201

Takes too long	109
Don't feel safe	105
Live too far from school	96
Takes up too much energy	77
Insufficient infrastructure or environment difficult to navigate (e.g., cracks in footpaths, too many hills in the area)	74
Risk of injury is higher	44
Being alone	25
Practical considerations (e.g., carrying heavy instruments, after school commitments)	25
Lack of bike skills, abilities, or confidence	19

Table 21. Enablers themed from student survey responses

Like about active travel	Number of comments
It's fun or I love it	173
Health benefits	154
Enjoy being outside (e.g., fresh air)	119
Opportunity to be social (with friends or family)	104
Mindfulness (e.g., it's peaceful, relaxing)	64
Can be more practical (e.g., getting to school faster)	51
Feeling free or independent	20
Good for the environment	15