



Kids in the city

Where have all the children gone? – factors influencing children's independent mobility

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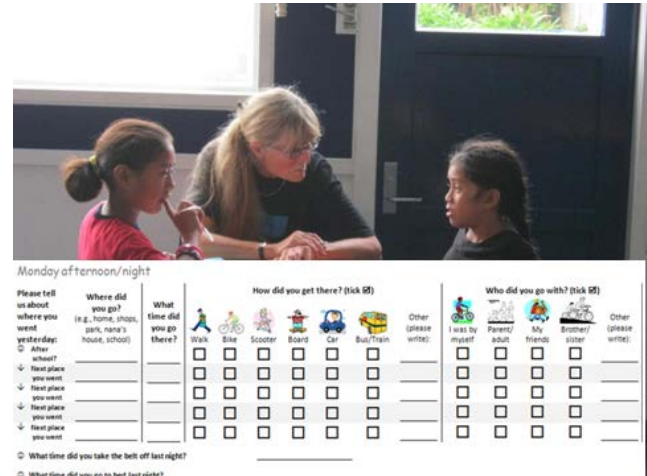
Research context

- Children's independent mobility have declined
- One third of New Zealand children are overweight or obese.

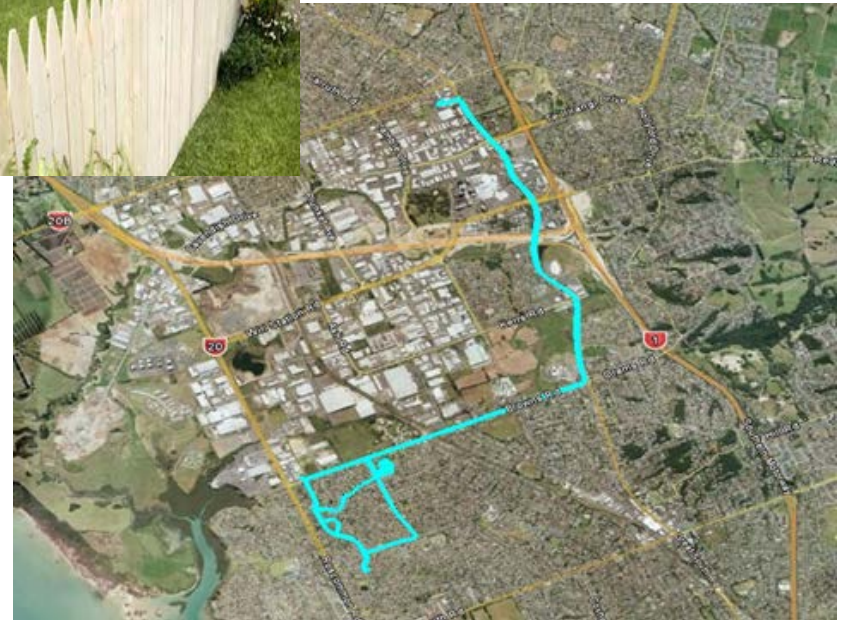
“If you walk around this neighbourhood, like outside of our little complex here and walk around these streets out here, you won't see any kids. And it's teeming with children in terms of, um, population. All of those kids must be in after school programs, or they're at home...or something. I don't know where they all are, but they're not wandering around”



Methodology



Findings



Findings show a huge range in the children's levels of independent mobility and the constraining influences of both parental and children's own fears.

Where did children go?

- On average, kids only made 4 trips per day
- School
- Shops
- Sports
- Informal play
- Social Friends



Do children go independently?

- Of the total 7000 trips, only 2400 were independent trips
- Socializing with friends, informal play and trip to school were more likely to be an independent trip

Trip Purpose	Inner city N = 93	Suburban (mid-decile) N = 55	Suburban (low-decile) N = 105
Social Friends	1.64 (46.3%)	1.02 (37.2%)	1.39 (78.4%)
Informal Play	1.09 (41.3%)	0.84 (28.6%)	2 (65%)
School	5.11 (38.4%)	5.11 (24.85)	4.97 (48.7%)

What influences children's lack of independent mobility?

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Having older siblings
- Car availability
- Perception of neighbourhood cohesion
- Perception of neighbourhood connection
- Length of residence
- Distance to school

	Model 1 Neighbourhood Safety	Model 2 Neighbourhood Cohesion	Model 3 Neighbourhood Connectivity	Model 4 Built environment	Model 5 All variables
Demographic					
Age	.28 (.07 – .49)**	.29 (.08 – .50)**	.27 (.06 – .48)*	.29 (.08 – .49)**	.28 (.08 – .49)**
Gender (female)					
Male	.14 (-.15 – .43)	.17 (-.11 – .46)	.17 (-.12 – .45)	.13 (-.16 – .41)	.18 (-.10 – .46)
Ethnicity (New Zealand European)					
Maori	.65 (.12 – 1.19)*	.58 (.08 – 1.07)*	.55 (.05 – 1.05)*	.34 (-.24 – .92)	.39 (-.19 – .98)
Pacific Island	.51 (.05 – .96)*	.48 (.04 – .92)*	.45 (.01 – .89)*	.29 (-.25 – .82)	.27 (-.26 – .81)
Samoan	.56 (.08 – 1.04)*	.51 (.06 – .97)*	.46 (.00 – .91)*	.28 (-.29 – .85)	.28 (-.28 – .85)
Asian	.19 (-.37 – .75)	.13 (-.42 – .68)	.16 (-.39 – .71)	.11 (-.44 – .66)	.13 (-.43 – .68)
Indian	-.45 (-1.00 – .11)	-.49 (-1.04 – .05)	-.48 (-1.03 – .07)	-.32 (-.91 – .28)	-.43 (-1.03 – .18)
Others	-.22 (- 1.12 – .68)	-.21 (- 1.10 – .68)	-.20 (- 1.09 – .69)	-.27 (- 1.15 – .61)	-.19 (- 1.07 – .69)
Older siblings (No)					
Having older siblings	.41 (.11 – .71)**	.38 (.09 – .68)*	.41 (.11 – .70)**	.42 (.12 – .71)**	.39 (.09 – .68)*
Dwelling type (House)					
Apartment	.43 (-.10 – .96)	.44 (-.09 – .96)	.47 (-.05 – .99)	.29 (-.31 – .89)	.36 (-.24 – .97)
Flat	.20 (-.28 – .67)	.10 (-.37 – .58)	.12 (-.35 – .60)	.14 (-.32 – .61)	.12 (-.35 – .60)
Car availability (Always)					
Never	.75 (.28 – 1.22)**	.80 (.34 – 1.26)***	.72 (.26 – 1.17)**	.66 (.19 – 1.12)**	.72 (.25 – 1.19)**
Sometimes	.50 (.15 – .84)**	.54 (.20 – .88)**	.51 (.17 – .85)**	.44 (.10 – .79)*	.47 (.12 – .81)**
Length of residency	.03 (.00 – .05)*	.03 (.00 – .05)*	.03 (.01 – .06)*	.02 (-.00 – .04)	.02 (-.00 – .04)
Social Environment					
Perceptions of neighbourhood safety	.05 (-.03 – .14)				.04 (-.06 – .14)
Perception of neighbourhood cohesion		.11 (.02 – .19)*			.06 (-.06 – .17)
Perceptions of neighbourhood connection			.11 (.03 – .20)**		.03 (-.08 – .15)
Build Environment					
Street Connectivity				-.06 (-.17 – .05)	-.06 (-.17 – .05)
Distance to school				-.17 (-.32 – -.02)*	-.16 (-.32 – -.01)*
NDAI-C				.34 (-.32 – .99)	.28 (-.38 – .94)
School Decile (Mid/High decile)					
Mid decile				-.51 (-1.05 – .03)	-.40 (-.96 – .15)
Low decile				-.00 (-.61 – .60)	.13 (-.53 – .77)

Places of concerns

	NZ European (n= 56)	Maori (n= 33)	Samoan (n= 38)	Other Pacific (n= 44)	Asian (N=36)	Indian (n=22)
Main Road	1.8	3.0	2.6	2.3	25.0	4.5
Specific street(s)	30.4	12.1	5.3	9.1	27.8	31.8
Walkway/Alleyway/ Remote street	0.0	6.1	5.3	6.8	8.3	0.0
Any place too far	1.8	0.0	2.6	0.0	13.9	0.0
Park, reserve or field	37.5	24.2	34.2	29.5	11.1	13.6
Water - creek/pond/wharf/beach/ jetty	0.0	9.1	7.9	6.8	2.8	0.0
Shops/mall/town centre	1.8	18.2	15.8	9.1	2.8	0.0
Specific building	1.8	0.0	0.0	2.3	8.3	0.0
Casino/gaming place/ party place	0.0	0.0	5.3	0.0	5.6	0.0
Everywhere	3.6	24.2	18.4	11.4	5.6	13.6
Nowhere	23.2	3.0	5.3	9.1	13.9	4.5

Reason for concerns

	NZ European (n= 56)	Maori (n= 33)	Samoan (n= 38)	Other Pacific (n= 44)	Asian (N=36)	Indian (n=22)
Safety Concern (unspecified)	5.4	12.1	21.1	9.1	25.0	13.6
Traffic danger	28.6	15.2	10.5	4.5	33.3	27.3
People danger (stranger, gangster, drunkard, youngster)	35.7	60.6	44.7	45.5	27.8	18.2
Water danger (drowning, mud)	0.0	6.1	10.5	4.5	0.0	0.0
Lack of visibility/secluded	3.6	6.1	7.9	2.3	2.8	4.5
Not a place for children	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.1	0.0
Vandalism/graffiti/drinking bottles/roaming dog	1.8	0.0	0.0	4.5	0.0	4.5

Aspects of improvements

	NZ European (n= 56)	Maori (n= 33)	Samoan (n= 38)	Other Pacific (n= 44)	Asian (N=36)	Indian (n=22)
Better traffic control (e.g., less traffic, more traffic lights, more slow down signs, stronger enforcement of traffic regulation)	30.4	6.1	10.5	18.2	36.1	22.7
More pedestrian infrastructures (e.g., wider footpaths, more pedestrian crossings)	23.2	0.0	5.3	6.8	19.4	9.1
More street lights	16.1	3.0	2.6	4.5	13.9	13.6
More police, security guards and/or neighbourhood watch	14.3	24.2	7.9	6.8	25.0	13.6
Less drinking/loitering in public	8.9	15.2	21.1	4.5	0.0	4.5
People in the neighbourhood (e.g., knowing the neighbours, greater sense of community, more good people, less bad people)	8.9	36.4	23.7	20.5	0.0	4.5
Nothing	10.7	18.2	2.6	20.5	16.7	22.7

Can we reverse the current trend?



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I think if streets were designed for people, you'd just have a richer community, because people are on the streets and they meet each other, and take care of each other.

I think it's a bit of a self-fulfilling prophecy that the less kids are out there, the less visible kids are, the less the city thinks that it is also children's space, the less they're sort of provided for, and the less we're used to looking out for them.

I think if they were all out there, they would all be out there.

Kids in the city



Thank you!

www.kidsinthecity.ac.nz