

healthy schools ALBERTA



Supporting Healthy School Communities!

SPECIAL EDITION ■ ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
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ADVERTISING

Please contact
margaux@everactive.org for rates.



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION refers to all human-powered forms of transportation, in particular walking and cycling. It includes the use of mobility aids such as wheel chairs, and can also encompass other active transport variations such as in-line skating, skateboarding, cross-country skiing, and even kayaking. Active transportation can also be combined with other modes, such as public transit.

– “Active Transportation in Canada: A Resource and Planning Guide.” Transport Canada (Environmental Initiatives Group.)
www.fcm.ca/Documents/tools/GMF/Transport_Canada/ActiveTranspoGuide_EN.pdf



Increasing Capacity for School Active Transportation in Alberta: Ever Active Schools and SHAPE are Merging Efforts

BY: BRIAN TORRANCE, DIRECTOR, EVER ACTIVE SCHOOLS AND LESLEY MCEWAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SHAPE ALBERTA

In May of 2001, two school health initiatives were launched in Alberta. SHAPE's mission was to have every Albertan choose safe, healthy, active modes of transportation on a regular basis, and Ever Active Schools had a mandate to support health and wellness in school communities. Collaboration between the two organizations has always been strong, but a proposed merger will create more awareness and supports to school active transportation efforts in Alberta.

SHAPE and Ever Active Schools do have a common agenda to support student well-being in Alberta. School Active Transportation is one of many aspects within a healthy school community and one that is gaining more support from school communities, school councils, school jurisdictions and the Government with proposed private members Bill 209. Through a comprehensive school health approach, School Active Transportation is a powerful initiative to increase a child's physical activity, reduce anxiety, increase ability to learn and create a sense of community. School Active Transportation also has many social benefits and supports a healthy environment.

Complex social issues do need full collaboration and meaningful partnership from many organizations. To move the needle on increasing physical activity and overall well-being of students, no one organization can tackle it alone and this merger is

a step towards a more comprehensive effort.

Ever Active Schools is a provincial initiative within Alberta and has existing relationships with all 61 school jurisdictions and has directly worked in over half of the school communities in the province. Having SHAPE's Active Transportation and School Travel Planning become an initiative of Ever Active Schools will increase the reach, impact and implementation of school active transportation initiatives.

We are very excited for the next steps and working together to support Healthy School Communities. ■

Lesley McEwan
Executive Director
SHAPE

Brian Torrance
Director
Ever Active Schools

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION



BENEFITS OF ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION (AT):

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY: Physically active forms of transportation show proven links to improved public health outcomes. Purpose-built infrastructure can also greatly improve pedestrian and cyclist safety.

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY: Reduced air pollution; Reduced greenhouse gas emissions; Reduced energy consumption; and, More efficient land use (which can help protect and preserve green space, open space and environmentally sensitive areas)

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL: Studies have indicated that AT infrastructure and amenities can have positive local economic development impacts and produce individual cost savings

COMMUNITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE: AT has many positive impacts on community and individual well-being, social cohesion, community identity, and equality issues

TRANSPORTATION AND CONNECTIONS: With the majority of transit trips beginning and ending with walking, public transit ridership in particular can benefit from an expanded AT network

DATA: INFRASTRUCTURE MATTERS!

People are significantly more likely to report being physically active in their leisure time if they live in neighbourhoods with:

Several free or low-cost recreation facilities, such as parks, walking trails, bike paths, recreation centres, playgrounds, and public swimming pools;

65% were physically active, compared to **55%** in neighbourhoods without these facilities.

OTHER FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE AT:

Levels of street traffic; Designated areas for cycling; Well-maintained sidewalks; and Levels of safety at night.

STATS:

60% of Canadian adults are considered overweight, along with **26%** of Canadian children and youth.

Only **12%** of Canadians' home-based trips (e.g., grocery store, work, school) are on foot or bicycle.

91% of Canadian children and youth and **51%** of Canadian adults are not getting the recommended levels of daily physical activity.

Low physical activity rates result in an estimated **\$5.3** billion per year in direct and indirect health care costs.

About **40%** of hazardous air pollutants in urban areas are caused by the transportation sector.

INFORMATION, DATA AND STATISTICS ALL COLLECTED FROM:

"ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION IN CANADA: A RESOURCE AND PLANNING GUIDE." TRANSPORT CANADA (ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES GROUP). [WWW.FCM.CA/DOCUMENTS/TOOLS/GMF/TRANSPORT_CANADA/ACTIVETRANSPOGUIDE_EN.PDF](http://www.fcm.ca/documents/tools/gmf/transport_canada/activetranspoguide_en.pdf)

"FAST FACTS ABOUT CANADA'S NEIGHBOURHOODS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY." PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF CANADA. [HTTP://WWW.PHAC-ASPC.GC.CA/HP-PS/HL-MVS/FAST-FACTS-FAITS-RAPIDES-ENG.PHP](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/hl-mvs/fast-facts-faits-rapides-eng.php)

"WHAT IS ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION?" PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF CANADA. [HTTP://WWW.PHAC-ASPC.GC.CA/HP-PS/HL-MVS/PA-AP/AT-TA-ENG.PHP](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/hl-mvs/pa-ap/at-ta-eng.php)





Why I Support Bill 209: The Active Transportation Week Act

BY: DAVID SHEPHERD, MLA, CHAIR, STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE OFFICES

As a kid, I loved to walk to school. The morning was filled with anticipation as I made my way along familiar streets to another day of learning with friends. After school, came the promise of snacks and TV with rocks to kick, puddles to stomp and friends to talk with along the way. In fact, most of the happiest memories of my youth were made outdoors – walking, biking and exploring the world around me.

Unfortunately, things have changed. According to the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, only 25% of Canadian parents say their kids, aged 5 to 17, typically walk or wheel to and from school, while 58% say they're typically driven.

At the same time, we face rising health care costs, in part due to increasing chronic disease and obesity – issues research shows can be significantly reduced through regular physical exercise. And since habits formed when young are more likely to stick with us into adulthood, it's important to encourage youth to engage in active transportation as part of their daily lives.

That's why I'm bringing forward the Active Transportation Week Act which mandates two things:

1. That, during the first full week in October, all schools in Alberta hold activities and events that encourage

students walk, bike, or wheel to school.

2. That, every two years, all schools in Alberta conduct an analysis to determine any barriers or obstacles to students being able to walk, bike, or wheel to school.

Across Alberta some schools, boards, and organizations (like Ever Active Schools) have been working to increase active transportation. This bill would bring all other schools on board and help amplify existing efforts with support through Alberta Education.

However, to move this bill through the legislative process before our session ends in December, I'll require the support of my fellow MLAs. If you believe in increasing youth health through active transportation, I encourage you to write your local representative and ask them to support Bill 209, the Active Transportation Week Act. ■



Photo: Belgravia Walking School Bus
Credit: Kim Kelly



IN THE COMMUNITY

Walking School Buses: Healthy, Active Community Builders!

BY: KIM KELLY, MD, PHYSICIAN, HEALTH CHAMPION & MOM

A Walking School Bus is a healthy, easy and fun initiative for school communities to implement.

Why a Walking School Bus? It provides a safe, healthy and environmentally friendly way for your child to get to school. The Walking School Bus is a great way for kids to build relationships with other kids of different ages at their school. It also builds self-confidence, independence and educates kids on road safety.

One surprising benefit of the Walking School Bus was that the children arrived to school on time every morning! This really pleased our Principal. Another benefit included the provision of additional “eyes on the street” which increased the overall safety of our neighbourhood.

There are different ways to operate a Walking School Bus. We chose a central meeting place close to homes and approximately 5 blocks from school. One adult “drove” the bus each day with gentle reminders of road safety along the way.

Some Belgravia students have now participated in the Walking School Bus every day for four years. These “veterans” will transition to “drivers” this year and will be leading the bus for Division 1 students. It is rewarding to see that our little Walking School Bus initiative has created opportunities for student leadership.

Also exciting, is the impact that our Walking School Bus has

had on our school community. By role modeling active transport every day for four years, we have encouraged many other families, students and staff members to walk, run or bike to school. We see far fewer cars in front of our school in the morning compared to four years ago ...and that is real success.

Tips for starting a Walking School Bus:

- Follow a Comprehensive School Health approach
- Build relationships
- Have the discussion at the playground or school council about initiating
- Have a parent lead organize the “drivers” and determine the route
- Have a process for sick “drivers”
- Advertise through the school
- It helps to have a school that promotes student leadership and giving back to the community ■

“By role modeling active transport every day for four years, we have encouraged many other families, students and staff members to walk, run or bike to school.” - Kim Kelly

Photo: Belgravia Walking School Bus
Credit: Kim Kelly





Mindfulness Practices: Walking Your Way to a Mindful State

BY CHESA CORSIATTO, SCHOOL HEALTH FACILITATOR AT EVER ACTIVE SCHOOLS

In recent years, the number of studies on mindfulness within the context of education has increased dramatically. Many studies have demonstrated strong correlations between mindfulness practice and cognitive outcomes such as improved attention and focus(1); social and emotional skills such as ability to regulate emotions(2), and improved behaviour in school(3); and measures of well-being such as managing test anxiety(4) and lower levels of stress(5).

These studies include a range of mindfulness practices and are not specific to mindful walking, yet in the spirit of celebrating and encouraging active transportation, below is a mindful walking activity you can try. This activity can be done on your own, with your children or with your students!

Mindful Walking Activity:

How many times have you arrived somewhere without even realizing exactly how you got there? When we make a familiar journey, to and from school or an activity, we often get lost in our thoughts. Sometimes thinking about things that have already occurred - an argument with your family member over breakfast, or if you remembered to feed the dog this morning. Other times, we think ahead - about the test coming up in first period, or how fun intermural floor hockey is going to be!

Often, when we think of practicing mindfulness, we think of someone sitting cross-legged, eyes closed, quiet and still. It's true, this is one way to be mindful but there are many other ways! Mindful walking is an active practice that asks you to increase your awareness and move intentionally, paying close attention to the act of walking and the environment around you. It allows you to connect with your body and with nature! It's simple and can provide a whole new outlook on your commute. Try this with your children or students as you walk together. >



Here's what you do:

Start by becoming present. Take 3 deep breathes. Ask yourself “how do I feel today?” Take a moment to observe how you feel without judgment. Next, notice how you are standing and make any small adjustments needed to feel balanced.

Now, begin to walk at a slightly slower pace than you would normally take. With every step, pay attention to the way each foot comes in contact with the ground; heel, toe, heel, toe. After a few minutes, slowly allow your observation to expand, beginning to experience how your whole body feels as it moves.

If your mind wanders off into a thought, gently draw it back. Notice again the feeling and sound of your feet hitting the ground.

While maintaining this mindful walking pace, begin to tune into your senses. What do you see around you? Listen for sounds such as the leaves crunching under your feet, or cars passing by or a bird singing in the treetops. Breathe in deeply through your nose, what do you smell?

Continue to notice your body and notice your surroundings until you reach your destination. Once you arrive, take a moment to reflect. How do you feel now? Did the walk feel different than it normally does? Did you notice something new about your environment? Was it difficult to stay present and not drift away with your thoughts? If the activity was challenging, don't be discouraged, that's normal! With a little bit of practice, you will notice that walking mindfully will begin to feel more natural. Try it again tomorrow! ■

References

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2. Napoli, M., Krech, P. R., & Holley, L. C. (2005). Mindfulness Training for Elementary School Students. *Journal of Applied School Psychology*, 21(1), 99-125.
3. Semple, R. J., Lee, J., Rosa, D., & Miller, L. F. (2010). A randomized trial of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy for children: promoting mindful attention to enhance social-emotional resiliency in children. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 19(2), 218-229.
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RESILIENCY
WORKSHOP



SAVE THE DATE

RESILIENCE AS A PATH TO HEALTHY SCHOOL COMMUNITIES: LESSONS LEARNED FROM INDIGENOUS YOUTH

This event is geared towards empowering school teams and providing learning opportunities for teachers and community leaders working with Aboriginal youth. All participants are given both philosophical foundations and practical tools they can use in their work to thoughtfully develop resiliency in youth.

Join us for:

- Nature & Land-based Learning
 - Traditional Games
 - Keynote Speakers
 - & More

Wednesday January 25th, 2017
Delta Lodge, 1 Centennial Drive
Kananaskis, AB

WWW.EVERACTIVE.ORG/RW
#EASRW



SAVE THE DATE

For
The 8th Annual
Shaping the Future
Conference

■ ■ ■

Healthy School
Communities

■ ■ ■

January 26th - 28th, 2017
Kananaskis, AB

www.everactive.org/stf
#EASSTF

*To be
Wisely
Aware*

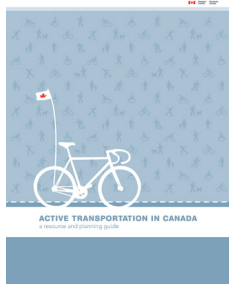


SHAPING
the
FUTURE
2017



RESOURCES SUPPORTING ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Publications



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION IN CANADA : A RESOURCE AND PLANNING GUIDE

This resource provides examples of community processes and current practice and advice about active transportation planning for a transportation planner audience.

Transport Canada
(Environmental Initiatives Group)
www.fcm.ca/Documents/tools/GMF/Transport_Canada/ActiveTranspoGuide_EN.pdf



HEALTHY BUILT ENVIRONMENT LINKAGES: A TOOLKIT FOR DESIGN • PLANNING • HEALTH

Developed by the PHSA Population and Public Health team in partnership with the Healthy Built Environment (HBE) Alliance, this resource is the first evidence-based and expert-informed resource that links planning principles to health outcomes.

PHSA Population and Public Health Team
www.planh.ca/sites/default/files/



HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE PLANNING ACTIVITIES GUIDEBOOK

This resource provides a structured approach for planners and policy-makers to evaluate the potential health-related outcomes of an activity (i.e., a project, plan, or policy) before it has been built or implemented. It also provides links to data sources, local and provincial resources, and examples.

Metro Vancouver
www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/HIA-Guidebook.pdf



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION, HEALTH AND COMMUNITY DESIGN: WHAT IS THE CANADIAN EVIDENCE SAYING? PLANNING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES FACT SHEET NO. 1

This resource is a succinct fact sheet based on a review of recent evidence in Canada.

Canadian Institute of Planners
www.cip-icu.ca/Files/Resources/FACTSHEETS-ActiveTransportation-FINALEnglish.aspx

Links

SHAPE ALBERTA - SAFE HEALTHY ACTIVE PEOPLE EVERYWHERE
<http://shapeab.com/>

SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: HOW THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AFFECTS OUR HEALTH
<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/hl-mvs/be-eb-eng.php>

PROMOTING ACTIVE COMMUTING
<https://sites.ualberta.ca/~active/workplace/trr/resources/active-transport.html>

MOBILIZING KNOWLEDGE ON ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/hl-mvs/pa-ap/mobil-transport-eng.php>

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
<http://www.albertatrailnet.com/for-communities/active-transportation/>

BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
<http://cbpp-pcpe.phac-aspc.gc.ca/public-health-topics/built-environment-active-transportation/>

SAFETY IN SCHOOL AND PLAYGROUND ZONES
http://tsk.capscc.ca/?page_id=237

WORKPLACE WELLNESS: ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
<http://www.huronworkplacewellness.ca/find-health-topic-resources/active-transportation/>




JOIN US!

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2017

Sign up your school, community, workplace or as an individual, and learn more about this event at: **winterwalkday.com** or **shapeab.com**

#winterwalkday | 780.406.8530

 Winter Walk Day  SHAPE

LOCAL EVENT INFO:

Meet At: _____

Walktime: _____

For more information: _____

