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| <b>Title</b>     | <b>School travel: why billions spent have failed and what works</b>   |
| <b>Key words</b> | School travel, active travel, safety, sustainable future, behaviour change, mode change, reimagining transport planning, contemporary case studies  |
| <b>Summary</b>   | <p>Travel to school is dominated by private car and this has significant impacts on the environment and communities.</p> <p>Over the last 30 years Councils and Governments have spent billions and tried almost everything to encourage parents, carers and children to walk or wheel to school without much success in many instances.</p> <p>Using contemporary data, information and case studies from around the world this paper discusses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The causes of the problem</li> <li>• Why are we failing and what can be done about this problem?</li> <li>• Schemes that have worked well and others that have not and why</li> </ul> <p>This paper will present schemes that may be able to improve sustainable and safe travel to school. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• healthy school streets initiative from the UK</li> <li>• active travel infrastructure</li> <li>• school streets that are vehicle-free areas</li> <li>• policies that discourage car travel</li> <li>• improving placemaking in school precincts</li> <li>• school travel behaviour change.</li> </ul> <p>The paper will recommend schemes that could make a difference to improving the safety and sustainability of travel to schools in Australia and barriers that may need to be overcome to facilitate their success.</p> |
| <b>Abstract</b>  | In Australia, like many developed countries, school children are mostly driven to school. In Brisbane about 80% of children aged 5 to 12 travel by car to   |

school. High levels of school children being driven to school have occurred for around 30 years.

Councils and Governments have spent billions and tried almost everything (infrastructure, promotions, publicity campaigns, school bus services) to encourage parents, carers and children to walk or wheel to school. Yet, in 2025 around 80% of all journeys to school trips are by private car.

These high levels of travel to school by car is not sustainable as it results in:

- high levels of traffic congestion in school precincts and the overall road network
- real and perceived safety issues
- children being driven to school miss out on active travel and the associated physical and mental health benefits
- local and global air pollution and climate change issues.

Using contemporary data, information and case studies from around the world this paper discusses:

- The causes of the problem
- Why are we failing and what can be done about this problem?
- What schemes have worked well and why
- Which schemes have not worked and why

This paper will present schemes that may be able to improve sustainable and safe travel to school in Australia. These include:

- healthy school streets initiative from the UK
- active travel infrastructure
- school streets that are vehicle-free areas
- policies that discourage car travel
- improving placemaking in school precincts
- school travel behaviour change.

The paper will recommend schemes that could make a difference to improving the safety and sustainability of travel to schools in Australia and the barriers that need to be overcome to facilitate their success.

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**Short Biography of Primary Author**

Roger Green is a transport planner who is passionate about sustainable travel, particularly for school travel. He has worked in Australia for 20 years. Roger always walked to school and rides a bike to work. His son also enjoys the benefits of walking to school.

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**Long Biography of Primary Author**

Roger has significant experience as an active and sustainable transport planner. His work includes numerous planning, design and research projects for sustainable modes including for school travel.

Roger has 30 years of experience in transport planning. He has been based in Brisbane for 20 years and is a Principal and Technical Director for transport planning at Jacobs.

He has delivered many successful projects related to Integrated Transport Planning and School Travel.

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