# Safe School Streets, Tamaki Makaurau

New Zealand has one of the highest child fatality rates as a result of road trauma in the OECD (Safer Journeys Strategy, 2010-202). While serious traffic incidents around schools are a relatively rare event, congestion and safety around urban schools in Auckland is becoming increasingly problematic as it leads to low perceptions of safety around school gates.

Everyone will have an experience of what happens outside of the school gate, whether from the position of a parent: behind the wheel on a school road, and twenty minutes late to work. Or as a student: witnessing non-compliant drivers at the “lollipop” stops, and dodging traffic queues to make the bell on time.

These experiences have led to low perceptions of safety for the school streets in our communities. For example, 41% of parents at Owairaka School, in Tamaki Makaurau Auckland, think it’s unsafe for students to walk near school entrances. 60% of parents think it's unsafe for students to bike. These perceptions have led to a decline in children walking and cycling to school in Aotearoa.

The Safe School Streets project, led by Auckland Transport, has been a response to the critical need to slow and reduce traffic on school roads, and to promote safe walking and cycling to school.

The Safe School Streets project has used a tactical urbanism approach to designing safety interventions with schools. In practice, this has meant trialing interim designs with the schools, with the aim that they can be tested, measured and altered, to improve designs before they are made permanent.

This design process has been done in collaboration with the school staff and students. Through this collaboration, we have received buy-in from the students, parents and teachers, leading to a stronger sense of community pride in their local neighbourhoods.