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ACTIVITY

It is wonderful to see Sparc measuring the contribution active transport makes to New Zealanders' overall activity levels ("Swinging into action", November 29). Active transport also provides social opportunities and financial savings and can help reduce emissions from private vehicles.

Greater Wellington is committed to supporting active transport and, in a timely complement to Sparc's survey results, adopted the Regional Walking Plan in October and Regional Cycling Plan in December. The actions in these plans include support for workplaces and schools to increase use of active and sustainable transport.

In 2001, it was found that about 20% of journeys to work in the Wellington region were under 2km. These journeys present a great opportunity for 30 minutes' exercise on the way to work.

The 2006 Short Trip Active Mode Research Survey found that in the Wellington region, 41% of adults who took their children to school on a journey of less than 2km walked. These adults get their 30 minutes of exercise while teaching their children healthy habits, independence and road safety.

The travel plan programmes presently work with 830 households, 10 workplaces and, in partnership with local territorial authorities, 18 schools. These programmes encourage 12,000 workplace employees, 20,000 tertiary students and 6600 primary, intermediate and secondary school students to take to their feet, bicycles, buses and carpools for journeys to work and school.

Walking contributes to our wellbeing in numerous ways and is, as the article says, "the ultimate in personal transport".

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