

Cycling to school

Cycling is an ideal form of transport for young people, providing a healthy, cheap and environmentally friendly way to get about, together with a degree of freedom and independence. As cycling is about three times faster than walking, it is perfect for journeys to school which are too far to walk, and is an easy way to keep fit.

Australian governments recommend that young people should have a minimum of sixty minutes of moderate physical activity each day, to keep healthy and help prevent serious illness in later life.

Cycling to school is a simple way for children to incorporate physical activity into their everyday lives. When this replaces car journeys to school the extra physical activity can improve health outcomes. Additional benefits include easing traffic congestion,

reducing greenhouse gas emissions, creating safer environments and improving social cohesion.

It is vital that children can handle their bikes competently, and that they know how to ride safely and with consideration for others. A national cycle training organisation, AustCycle, offers cycling proficiency and skills training for adults and children in all major cities including Canberra. Cycle training is also useful for adults who want to share the enjoyment of cycling with their children.

Pedal Power ACT is an organisation for adults and children who cycle for transport and recreation in the ACT. They work closely with ACT Government on Ride and Walk to School programs and can provide practical advice to schools who want to encourage more cycling to school. Contact: www.pedalpower.org.au

