

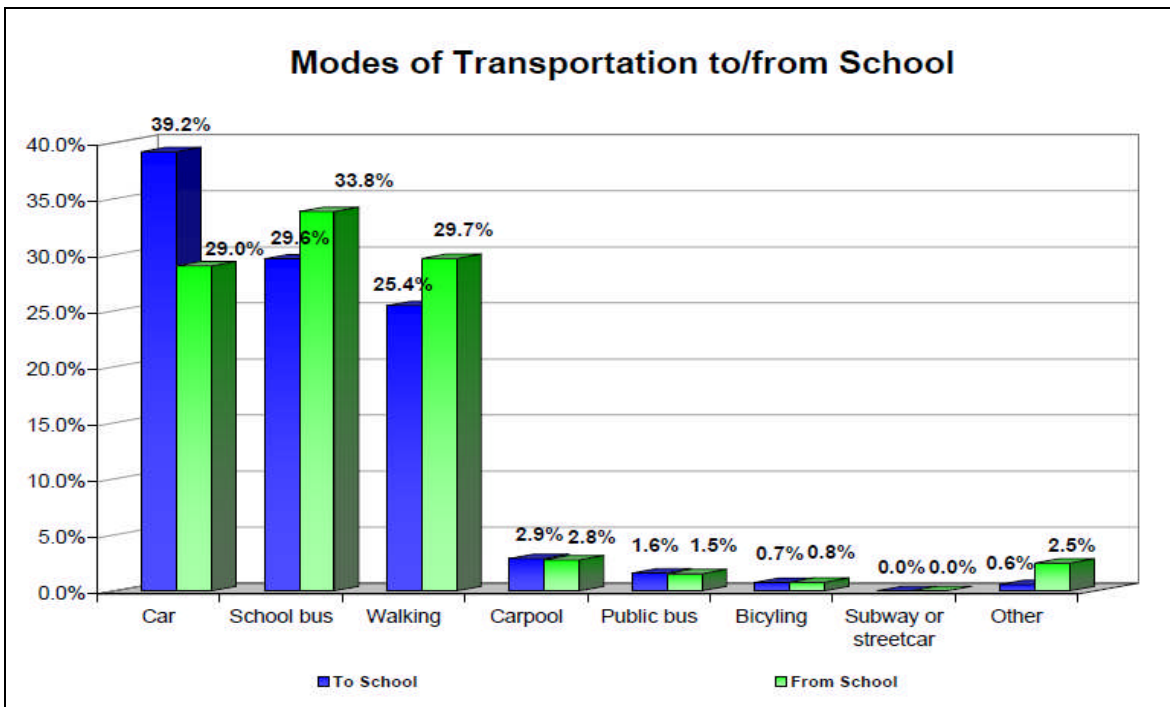


SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANNING

The Province of Nova Scotia 2010 Baseline Family Transportation Survey Results 1091 surveys returned (12 schools)

Travel Modes

- The most common way students travel to school is by car (39.2%), followed by school bus (29.6%) and walking (25.4%).
- In stark contrast, more than twice as many parents (57.9%) reported walking to school as children and only 8.7% were driven in a car. Rates of travel by school bus (32.2%) were similar to current rates.
- There are notable shifts in travel mode in the after school travel period. There is an increase (approximately 4%) in the number of children who walk or take the school bus in the afternoon and a decrease (approximately 10%) in the number who are driven.



Travel Time

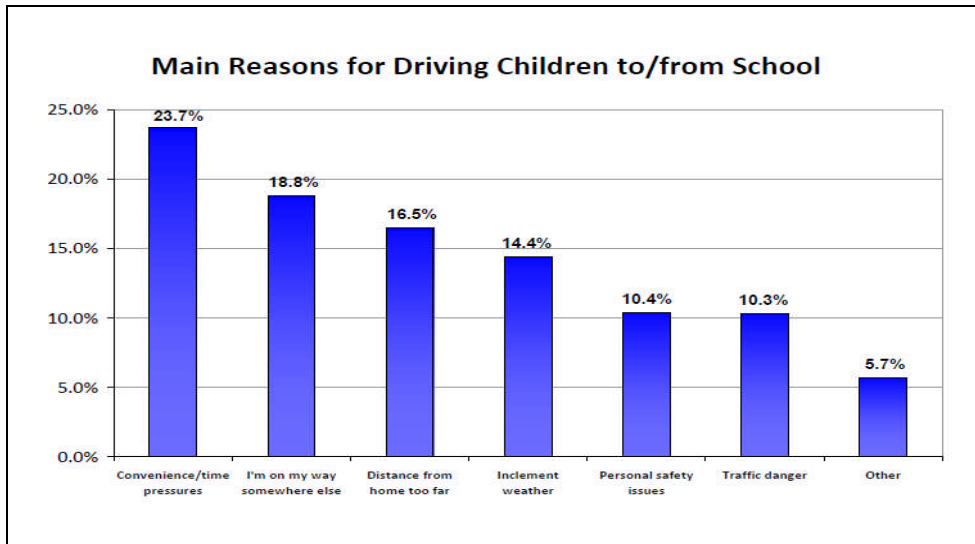
- Over half of students (56.2%) live within 1.5km of the school. 13.1% live less than 500 metres from their school. Drivers live significantly further away from school than walkers; 41.2% of drivers versus 8.4% of walkers live >1.5 km away.
- There are no significant differences in travel time between groups. The vast majority of drivers (87.7%/84.0) and walkers (87.8%/85.0) take <15 minutes to travel to/from school, respectively.



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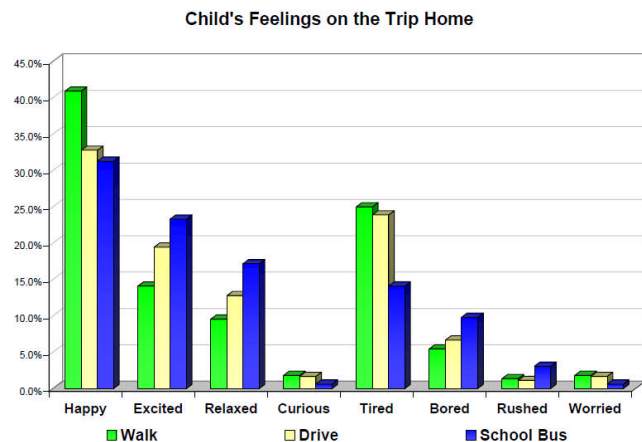
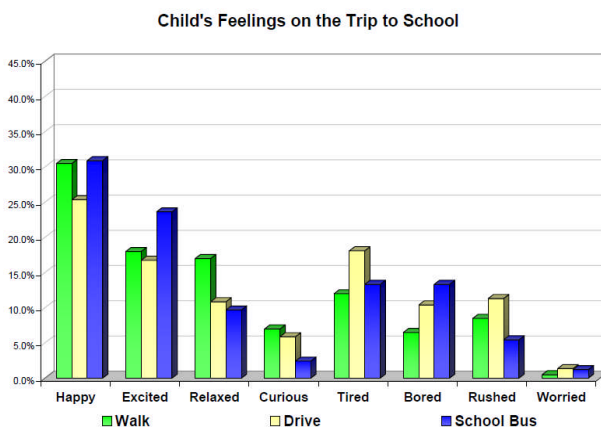
Factors Affecting Travel Choice

- Just over 2/3 of parents agree that their neighbourhood is safe for children to walk to school, and that there are no major barriers to walking in their neighbourhood.
- The most frequently cited problems affecting active school transport are traffic issues (31.3%), unsafe drivers (17.8%), crosswalk issues (10.7%) and sidewalk issues (9.3%).
- The main reasons that parents drive their children to school are summarized below:



School Travel and Well-Being*

- There are visible shifts in reported feelings between the before/after school periods.
- Regardless of travel mode, children most often report being happy on the trip to and from school. Excitement, relaxation and tiredness are also regularly cited.
- Children are generally most likely to report feeling curious, bored or rushed on the trip to school. Those walking or being driven are more tired going home than on the trip to school.



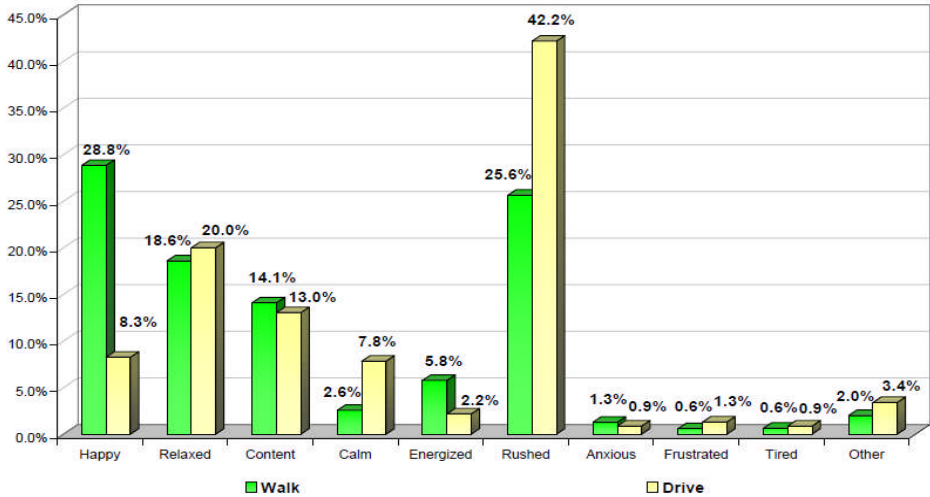
*Note: Not all schools answered this section of the survey. These responses represent roughly 38.7% of survey respondents.



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- Parents who walk with their children are three times more likely to report feeling happy on the trip to school while those who drive their children are almost twice as likely to report feeling rushed.

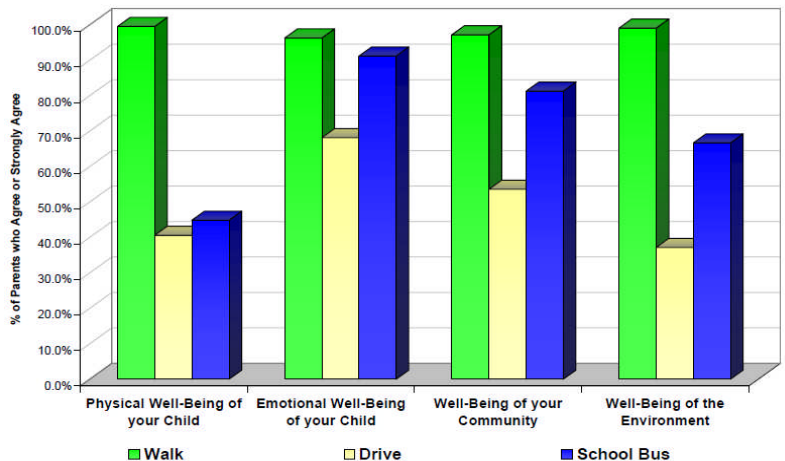
Parent's Feelings on the Trip to School



This graph excludes parents that do not accompany their child to school (33%/0.4%, respectively, of parents whose children walk/are driven). For this reason, parents of bussed children were also excluded.

- Parents whose children walk to school overwhelmingly agree that walking to school contributes to their child's physical well-being, e.g. healthy heart, bones and muscles (99.5%), emotional well-being, e.g. relationship with friends (96.3%), well-being of their community, e.g. getting to know the neighbourhood (97.2%), and well-being of the environment, e.g. less pollution (99.1%).
- Parents whose children do not walk to school are **significantly less likely to state** that their child's travel mode contributes to their physical, community or environmental well-being, in comparison to those who walk with their children to school. This difference is greater between drivers and walkers, and less magnified for emotional well-being.

Does School Travel Mode Contribute to Well-Being?





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Potential for Change

- For parents who drive their children to school, it is most commonly stated that their children would be allowed to walk/cycle to school if they did not travel alone, if they were older and if there were reduced traffic dangers. Improved safety of the travel route placed higher in importance for cycling than for walking.
- Travelling distance ranked next in line behind these other factors.
- Additional considerations for parents to allow their child to cycle to school are a safe place at school to lock their bike, as well as bicycle riding training programs for children.
- Distance from school continues to be an important factor in school travel mode choice; however, its impact may be reduced by improving walkability and cycling accessibility of the travel route.
- **A vast majority of parents (96.9%) are supportive of ongoing School Travel Planning efforts.**

Contact Us

For more information on School Travel Planning in Nova Scotia, contact Active & Safe Routes to School of the Ecology Action Centre at:

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