

PREMIER'S COUNCIL FOR ACTIVE LIVING BULLETIN

Welcome to the Premier's Council for Active Living (PCAL) Bulletin

The purpose of the bulletin is to provide people interested in promoting active living choices within NSW with relevant up-to-date news and research. The monthly bulletins focus upon material applicable to the broad range of NSW agencies represented on PCAL and will be archived on the PCAL website at:

http://www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/resources/monthly_bulletin.html. If you wish to receive the PCAL Bulletin please write SUBSCRIBE in the subject area and email pcal@heartfoundation.org.au.

PCAL Why Active Living Statement

NSW Deputy Premier, the Hon. John Watkins, recently launched the PCAL Why Active Living Statement at the Department of Environment and Climate Change's 'Clean Air, Cool Climate Forum' on 23 November 07. Mr. Watkins spoke of the strong links between a more active community and a healthier environment, "This initiative demonstrates the health, environmental, economic and social benefits of a more active community. It will help government agencies, local councils and the private sector all create more supportive environments for people from all ages and backgrounds to choose an active lifestyle." The Why Active living Statement contains key evidence that demonstrates, apart from the health bonus to the individual, that there are major rewards for a city's environment and liveability when people choose to work or ride rather than drive. The PCAL Why Active Living Statement is now available on our homepage: <http://www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/> or to view a PDF copy: http://www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/PDF/active_living_statement.pdf

Healthy Planet, Places and People

Research Australia has released a report entitled Healthy Planet, Places and People that has examined the impact of climate change upon health. The report notes the links between Climate Change and obesity with both conditions demonstrating our increasing reliance on fossil fuels to propel ourselves around our environment (eg. Cars and escalators). Research is quoted indicating that for each additional hour spent driving, the odds of obesity increase by 6%, while 20% of all motor vehicle weekday morning rush hour journeys are parents dropping children at school. The report concludes with solutions and is available at: http://www.thankyouday.org/content/documents/web_EnviroReportRA.pdf

Cities, Sustainability and Health

The current NSW Public Health Bulletin is the second of two special issues that have reviewed the links between cities and health. The second issue opens with an examination of the relationship between the urban environment, public health and ecological sustainability. Other contributions include; seeing obesity as a systems problem, why time pressure is a health and environmental problem, Healthy by Design and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. The special edition concludes asking can the impact on health of a government policy designed to create more liveable neighborhoods be evaluated with an overview of a WA study to evaluate whether planning policy can influence active transport behaviour in residents of new urban developments. Further information is available at: <http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/226/issue/4094.htm> while details of the first special Public Health Bulletin issue is available in the August edition of the PCAL Bulletin: http://www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/resources/monthly_bulletin.html

'Building Liveable Communities'

A Hunter New England Area Health Service research report has examined the key components in building liveable communities in the Lower Hunter Region of NSW as identified by developers, planners, health and social welfare agencies and the community. A consequent resource 'Building Liveable Communities in the Lower Hunter Region' has been developed to assist the urban planning industry to incorporate health and social outcomes of proposed developments as well as determining the health and social outcomes of proposed developments. A presentation by Karen Gillham, Service Director, Health Promotion, Hunter New England Population Health, providing details relating to the resource is available on the PCAL website at: <http://www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/resources/presentations.html>. A copy of the two documents is also available at: Building Liveable Communities in the Lower Hunter Region: http://www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/PDF/building_liveable_communities.pdf and Creating Liveable Communities in the Lower Hunter Region http://www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/PDF/creating_liveable_communities.pdf.

*URLs represent primary source unless otherwise specified.
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Peter McCue | Manager | Premier's Council for Active Living
Ph: (02) 9219 2438 | peter.mccue@heartfoundation.org.au
www.pcal.nsw.gov.au



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Making Cycling Irresistible

A recent analysis of how the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany have made bicycling a safe, convenient, and a practical way to get around their cities reveals a combination of separate cycling facilities along heavily trafficked roads and traffic calming of most residential neighbourhoods to be key elements of success. Extensive cycling rights of way are also complemented by ample bike parking, full integration with public transport, education and promotional events. In addition to their many pro-bike policies and programs, each country also makes driving expensive as well as inconvenient in central cities through a host of taxes and restrictions on car ownership, use and parking. Moreover, strict land use policies foster compact, mixed-use developments that generate shorter and thus more bikeable trips. The authors conclude, it is the coordinated implementation of this multi-faceted, mutually reinforcing set of policies that best explains the success of these three countries in promoting cycling. See: <http://www.policy.rutgers.edu/faculty/pucher/Irresistible.pdf>

Irresistible Australian Cycling?

A Deakin University researcher has completed the largest and most comprehensive study of the motivations, supports and constraints on cycling conducted in Australia. The results highlighted that unlike in Australia where women cycle less than men, countries with high rates of cycling for transport and recreation have fewer gender differences in cycling. Australia is also considered to have an aggressive driving culture by international comparison. The author concludes a multi-pronged approach is required to encourage cycling in Australia, including; separating motorists and cyclists through improved cycling infrastructure and 'invisible infrastructure; such as speed limits, traffic calming and public awareness campaigns to increase safe driving and cycling culture. For further information see: <http://www.deakin.edu.au/news/upload/221107cyclingstudy.pdf>

Gehl's vision to reclaim Sydney's heart

International urban design expert, Jan Gehl has proposed a range of initiatives to make Sydney's CBD more attractive liveable and sustainable in his report Public Spaces Public Life Sydney 2007 recently submitted to the City of Sydney. The report contains a list of recommendations to help make Sydney a more vibrant, walkable and liveable city under the general headings of; A waterfront city, A green connected city, A better city for walking and cycling, A strong public transport city, A traffic calmed city, A strong city identity, An inviting streetscape, A diverse, safe and lively city. The full report and recommendations are available at:

<http://www.sydneymedia.com.au/html/3449-the-gehl-report--a-blueprint-for-greener-more-vital-connected-cbd.asp>

Measuring the benefits of active transport

A new tool allows individuals, councils and organisations to measure just how much each of us contributes to our own health - and that of the planet - by the simple act of walking to work or school. The Active Transport Quantification Tool, developed by ICLEI in partnership with VicHealth, calculates how increased walking results in savings from reductions in greenhouse gas emissions as well as a range of health and economic indicators. For example, if 1,000 children walk one kilometre to school three times a week, in one year they would prevent 22.9 tonnes of greenhouse emissions, save their families a total of \$75,741 due to reduced spending on fuel and the value of time avoided driving, reduce national expenditure on Type 2 diabetes and coronary heart disease by \$1,604 and \$3,573 respectively and walk a combined total of 120,000km! To access the tool see: <http://att.ccp.iclei.org/front>

No fear: Growing up in a risk averse society

Parents, professionals and decision makers all need to become more tolerant of adversity and accept that misfortune, uncertainty and even a little danger are all essential ingredients of a healthy, happy childhood, according to a visiting UK children's play expert. Tim Gill, previous Director of UK's Children's Play Council, claimed during a recent NSW presentation that 'if children and young people are to enjoy and make the most of their lives, we need to revisit and revise our ideas of what a good childhood looks and feels like and make neighbourhoods and communities more child-friendly. To listen to a podcast of Tim Gill's presentation see: <http://lectopia.uwa.edu.au/lectopia/lectopia.lasso?ut=278&id=78041> and for designing for active living among children details see: http://www.activelivingresearch.org/alr/alr/files/Built_Design.pdf.

More information about healthy and active children in NSW is available on the NSW Healthy Kids website (www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au) which has recently posted nine useful healthy lifestyle fact sheets, with titles such as 'Kids and Getting Active' & 'Reducing Television Times' in a number of different languages at: <http://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/topics/2092.html#factsheets>

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