April 2013

Walk-on-Wednesday in Croydon

Eileen Susan Wrabel  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Elizabeth Carr Fortner  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Isabel Heron Pagliaccio  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

James William Worcester  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.wpi.edu/iqp-all

Repository Citation

This Unrestricted is brought to you for free and open access by the Interactive Qualifying Projects at Digital WPI. It has been accepted for inclusion in Interactive Qualifying Projects (All Years) by an authorized administrator of Digital WPI. For more information, please contact digitalwpi@wpi.edu.
Walk-on-Wednesday in Croydon

Interactive Qualifying Project Report completed in partial fulfillment of the Bachelor of Science degree at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, MA

Submitted to:

Professor Stephen J. Weininger (advisor)
Professor Ruth L. Smith (co-advisor)

In Cooperation With

Peter McDonald, Travel and Transport Planning Officer
London Borough of Croydon

Elizabeth Fortner
Isabel Pagliaccio
James Worcester
Eileen Wrabel

April 25, 2013

____________________________
Advisor Signature

____________________________
Co-advisor Signature
Abstract
This project, sponsored by the London Borough of Croydon, evaluated the Walk on Wednesday program, which encourages primary school students to walk to school at least once a week. It was assessed from the perspectives of school and Council staff, parents, and students using interviews, surveys, workshops, and observations. We found that Walk on Wednesday would be beneficial to Croydon, provided the Council refocuses the implementation process, increases parental involvement, and focuses primarily on schools with a strong staff advocate.
Acknowledgments
Our team would like to thank our sponsor, Croydon Council, for giving us the opportunity to work on this project. We would especially like to thank our liaison, Peter McDonald, for providing us the guidance, advice, and resources necessary for the success of this project. We would also like to thank Hulya Ataoglu for sharing her expertise in working with Croydon schools and for her help in contacting them.

We would also like to thank Anna Portch, Daniel Davis, and Robert Brown for taking time from their busy schedules to speak with us about their work for Croydon Council. Their knowledge and advice was invaluable in understanding how walking to school programs fit with other Council initiatives and how they can be improved in the future.

We would like to thank Grace Ardley, Pamela Jacques, Fiona Tinwell, Jennifer Sinclair, and Cherry Bartholomew for working with us to arrange for our research to be conducted at their schools. We would also like to thank the parents, students, and teachers of Broadmead Primary, Atwood Primary, Parish Church: C of E Junior, Courtwood Primary, Tunstall Nursery, and Keston Primary Schools for their participation in our project.

Finally, we would like to thank Dominic Golding for guidance as we developed our project proposal, as well as our advisors, Ruth Smith and Stephen Weininger, for their advice and feedback throughout this project.

Without the support and assistance of all of these people, this project would not have been possible. Thank you again.

Elizabeth Fortner
Isabel Pagliaccio
James Worcester
Eileen Wrabel
Authorship

This report was developed through a collaborative effort of all members of the Croydon Walk on Wednesday 2013 IQP team: Elizabeth Fortner, Isabel Pagliaccio, James Worcester, and Eileen Wrabel. All sections were developed and edited as a team, with each team member making equal contributions.
Table of Contents

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................... i
Acknowledgments .......................................................................................................................... ii
Authorship ...................................................................................................................................... iii
Table of Contents ............................................................................................................................ iv
Table of Figures ............................................................................................................................... vii
Table of Tables ............................................................................................................................... ix
Executive Summary ....................................................................................................................... x

1. Introduction .................................................................................................................................. 1
2. Literature Review ....................................................................................................................... 3
   2.1 Nature of the Problem ............................................................................................................. 3
       2.1.1 Traffic .............................................................................................................................. 4
       2.1.2 Air Pollution .................................................................................................................... 5
       2.1.3 Health Concerns ............................................................................................................. 7
   2.2 Factors that Influence Walking ............................................................................................... 10
   2.3 Benefits of Walking ............................................................................................................... 13
   2.4 Policies and Programs .......................................................................................................... 14
   2.5 Living Streets Organization .................................................................................................. 18
       2.5.1 Walk on Wednesday ....................................................................................................... 19
   2.6 Safety Concerns ................................................................................................................... 21
   2.7 Problems with the Implementation of WoW ......................................................................... 23
3. Methodology .................................................................................................................................. 26
   3.1 Objective 1: Development of WoW ....................................................................................... 26
   3.2 Objective 2: Perspectives of Program Implementers ............................................................... 27
   3.3 Objective 3: Perspectives of Participants and Potential Participants .................................... 28
       3.3.1 Students .......................................................................................................................... 28
       3.3.2 Parents ........................................................................................................................... 29
       3.3.3 Impacts on the Local Urban Environment ................................................................. 30
   3.4 Objective 4: Recommendations for Croydon Council ......................................................... 31
4. Results and Discussion ............................................................................................................... 32
   4.1 Effect of Location on Walking ............................................................................................... 32
Table of Figures
Figure 1 Number of licensed vehicles in Great Britain between 1950 and 2010 (Department for Transport, 2011B). ................................................................. 4
Figure 2 Emissions History and Transport Forecast 2011 (Department for Transport 2012). .................. 5
Figure 3 The amount of NO2 pollutants in London air in 2008 (London Air Quality Networks, 2013). .... 7
Figure 4 Percentages of children 2-10 years and 11-15 years who are overweight or obese in London between 1995 and 2007 (Greater London Authority, 2011). ....................................................................................... 8
Figure 5 Percentage of 4-5 year old boys (left) and girls (right) at risk of being obese in Greater London in 2009/2010 (Greater London Authority, 2011). ....................................................................................... 9
Figure 6 Percentage of 10-11 year old boys (left) and girls (right) at risk of being obese in Greater London in 2009/2010 (Greater London Authority, 2011). .............................................................................. 10
Figure 7 A: Mortality rates of men compared among levels of fitness. B: Mortality rates of women compared among levels of fitness (Blair et al., 2001). ....................................................................................... 13
Figure 8 The amount of carbon emissions released grouped by trip length and purpose for 2008 (Department for Transport, 2011A). ........................................................................................................ 15
Figure 9 A breakdown of CO2 emissions in the transport sector for 2008 (Department for Transport, 2011A). ......................................................................................................................... 16
Figure 10 Metropolitan Police Crime Map of the Boroughs of London. The balloon marks Croydon (Metropolitan Police, 2010). ........................................................................................................ 23
Figure 11 Reasons students gave for not walking to school by percentage for each school. ................. 33
Figure 12 Percentage of teachers who reported the particular weaknesses in the WoW program........ 34
Figure 13 The proportion of travel methods by distance traveled. Percentages are summed to 100 for each type of transportation. ........................................................................................................ 35
Figure 14 Students responses when asked how they normally get to school, in percentage by school. 36
Figure 15 The percentage of traffic hazards per car for the different schools we observed. .................. 37
Figure 16 Reasons parents gave for not allowing their children to walk to school, in percentage by school. ................................................................................................................................. 38
Figure 17 Parent responses when asked how their child normally gets to school, in percentage by school. ................................................................................................................................. 39
Figure 18 Traffic rate of different schools in number of cars per minute. ............................................. 39
Figure 19 The reasons students gave for why they walk to school in percentage by class year.......... 40
Figure 20 Percentage of teachers who reported the particular strengths in the Walk on Wednesday program. ......................................................................................................................... 41
Figure 21 Percentage of teachers who suggested particular improvements to the WoW program. .... 42
Figure 22 Percentages for students’ preferred mode of transport for each school............................. 42
Figure 23 The walking rate students gave in percentages by school. Where 5, 2-3, 1-2, 0 are number of days. ................................................................................................................................. 43
Figure 24 Frequency parents reported that their child earns a badge by participating in the WoW program. ................................................................................................................................. 47
Figure 25 The percentage of teachers who reported various responses to the question: does Walk on Wednesday benefit your school? ................................................................................................. 48
Figure 26 Percentage of students per class year who reported that they do and do not walk to school on WoW days to receive the badges. ................................................................. 49
Figure 27 Student responses the question: how much more would you walk if you received a badge? The data is shown in percentages by class year. ............................................ 50
Figure 28 The proportion of travel methods separated by distance traveled. Percentages sum to 100 for each distance. ........................................................................................................ 51
Figure 29 The Borough of Croydon (yellow) in relation to the other London boroughs (Metropolitan Police Authority 2012). ........................................................................................................ 51
Figure 30 The percentages of employment in various sectors for Croydon (Croydon Observatory 2013A). .................................................................................................................... 51
Figure 31 An ethnic breakdown from the 2011 census of Croydon, London, and England (Croydon Observatory, 2013B). ........................................................................................................ 51
Figure 32 A map of ethnic clusters within Croydon (outlined), red dots representing white people, blue dots representing black people, and green dots representing south Asian categories (Proto Raptor, 2012). ........................................................................................................ 51
Figure 33 A map depicting income distributions within Croydon (Croydon Observatory, 2013B). ....... 51
Figure 34 A map showing the political breakdown of the wards of Croydon (Croydon Council, 2012A). 51
Figure 35 A breakdown of the different branches that make up the Council of Croydon and their duties. .................................................................................................................... 51
Figure 36 The revenue funding for Croydon in 2010/2011 (Croydon Council, 2012B). ..................... 51
Figure 37 The capital expenditure for Croydon in the year 2010/2011 (Croydon Council, 2012B). ....... 51
**Table of Tables**

Table 1 Percentage of the population projected to be obese for children under the age of 20 years old (Greater London Authority, 2011). .......................................................... 9
Table 2 Casualties by mode of travel for all ages and for children (ages 15 and younger) (Croydon Council, 2013D). ......................................................................................... 22
Table 3 Project objectives, stakeholders, and methods .................................................................................. 26
Table 4 Three categories of schools where we conducted surveys and interviews ............................................. 28
Table 5 Proposed breakdown of age groups for different walking programs .................................................. 55
Executive Summary

In recent years, the government of the United Kingdom has focused on encouraging its citizens to use more sustainable methods of transportation, including walking and cycling. Recent shifts away from active modes of transportation have contributed to rising rates of obesity, increased car use and congestion, and higher levels of air pollution, especially in the city of London. These issues are all interrelated and the government is introducing programs and policies to alleviate them. This project evaluated one such program in the borough of Croydon, the Walk on Wednesday (WoW) scheme. WoW is an incentive program that awards badges to primary schools students for walking to school at least once a week for a month.

Literature Review

Over the past fifty years significant increases in automobile use have contributed to air pollution and decreased levels of physical activity in London. Journeys that used to be made on foot are now often being made by car instead, greatly increasing car emissions which are responsible for a large fraction of air pollutants. This also leads to decreased physical activity that can cause various health concerns. London has seen a rise in obesity rates, especially in children, over the past few years.

To counteract these adverse trends the country has been experiencing, the government has implemented policies and programs designed to reverse these patterns. Transport for London has led London’s effort, with specific goals for modal shift and emissions reduction by providing funding for individual boroughs and non-government agencies, including Living Streets.

The Living Streets organization runs WoW, which aims to help students develop lifelong healthy habits and positive attitudes towards active lifestyles. This project evaluated the program in the borough of Croydon on behalf of Croydon Council, to determine if the program is meeting the Council’s goals.

Methodology

We visited schools that regularly run, have recently started to run, and have never run WoW to help properly ascertain the program’s impact. We collected opinions from teachers, students, and parents to determine how different stakeholders perceive the
program through a variety of methods including: (1) interviews with Croydon Council members and school staff, (2) surveys of teachers and parents, (3) workshops and surveys with students, and (4) observations of the road’s surrounding the schools.

We spoke with Council experts on traffic, health, and schools to understand how the program aligns with the Council’s priorities in those areas. Interviewees such as school administrators and classroom teachers shared their perspectives on the successes and challenges of the program’s current implementation in Croydon schools.

For teachers who were not able to meet with us we created staff surveys that asked open-ended questions similar to those asked during the interviews. We created parent surveys to gauge the effect parents have on their children walking to school. Parent and teacher surveys were anonymous and contained approximately ten questions with a space at the end for additional comments.

The majority of schools we worked with were able to accommodate a visit from us to their school. In these cases, we conducted workshops with all ages of primary school students to determine their opinions of the WoW program. For other schools, we sent them the same surveys we used during our workshops but with instructions on how each teacher should complete the survey of their class.

We observed traffic conditions during drop-off and pick-up hours at our three categories of schools determine how WoW impacts the community and student pedestrians. We analyzed our notes to help us conclude if the current implementation of the WoW program addresses traffic and safety concerns mentioned in our report.

**Results**

An analysis of the data collected through our various methods highlighted several themes about the program and walking to school in general. One of these addresses problems with the current WoW program, but the rest address variables that affect walking rates at schools in Croydon. These variables include: location, traffic, parent, student, and teacher involvement, and the presence of the Walk on Wednesday program.

When analyzing our data we found that students, parents, and teachers are all in agreement that the distance the student lives from school has a large impact on whether or not that student will travel to school via active transport. We also found that a school’s
proportion of students who use public transport is greatly dependent on the location of the school. Our data suggests that there is no apparent correlation between school walking rates, the proportion of students who walk out of the total number of students, and traffic volume or the danger of streets and neighborhoods around each school. This corroborates a claim made in the literature which stated that traffic volume had no significant impact on schools’ walking rates. Throughout our interviews with school contacts, it became evident that there is a widespread consensus that parents are the deciding factors in how children travel to school, supporting findings of a previous evaluation of WoW, conducted by the Wavehill Consulting firm.

One of the most important aspects for a program’s success at an individual school is the support and dedication of that school’s travel coordinator. Anna Portch, Croydon Council Sustainable Schools Officer, has found that networking among these coordinators is crucial to a program’s success. A major goal of this project was to determine if WoW is having the effect in schools that justifies Croydon Council’s funding of it. We found that schools with WoW have higher rates of occasional walkers than schools without it but that schools had various levels of success with the Walk on Wednesday program. Although the Walk on Wednesday program provides benefits, we also identified three difficulties that accompany it. The first is the apparent loss of interest in the badges in students between Year 3 and Year 5. The second was that some schools were hitting ‘walking ceilings,’ where they reach a maximum number of students that can be motivated to walk. Finally, we found that students that live very close to their schools tend to receive a badge every month even though they would normally walk anyway. This is a concern of our sponsor because the Council spends money rewarding children who do not change their normal routine.

**Recommendations**

We have established four recommendations for the Council on how they can improve WoW and other walk to school initiatives in primary schools. These recommendations provide contingencies for the situations of individual schools and the need for continued interest of students, teachers, and parents. The recommendations are (1) to define an ideal school for WoW, (2) to divide the program into age groups, (3) to
establish a network between coordinators at different schools, and (4) to improve parental involvement.

To help ensure that WoW is sufficiently successful in schools where it is implemented, we have developed a set of guidelines for an ideal school for the program. The most important factor is to have an enthusiastic coordinator in the school who can keep the program organized and running smoothly. Showing a need for the program is also a consideration, as schools that already have high walking rates are not in need of the incentivized program that WoW provides. If a school itself is located in an area not conducive to active travel or with many students living farther than one kilometer away, it will be difficult to encourage more walking, and hinder the success of WoW. These guidelines will help Council staff members determine how to distribute funding for the WoW program.

In order for WoW to run as a successful and cost effective program, it requires different implementations for different age groups. We have determined that it would be best for students to be involved in the same program for no more than three years, thus we have created a plan separating students into three age groups with a different variation of a Walk to School program for each (Table i).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Nursery</th>
<th>Reception</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Walking Bears</td>
<td>Walk on Wednesday</td>
<td>Additional involvement in WoW</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We determined that for younger children it would be best to utilize the Walking Bears scheme, a program that rewards students who walk by letting them take a teddy bear home with them for one night if their class had the highest walking rate for the month. Students will use WoW in its current implementation for the three following years. Students in Years 5 and 6 will have some amount of responsibility in the implementation of WoW at their schools.

As a way to keep the enthusiasm of school travel coordinators strong, we recommend developing a support network for them. This would primarily focus on holding regular networking meetings to encourage collaboration and discussion, but would also include plans for one-on-one pairing of schools. Since school travel coordinators are
primarily teachers, they have many shared perspectives and often encounter the same types of obstacles.

Parents make the final decision about how their children get to school, greatly hindering the success of many Walk to School initiatives. We recommend that efforts be undertaken to increase parental involvement and awareness of the program through assemblies, workshops, and options for parents living far away from schools. This effort should not be left to only one organization, but instead should be a collective endeavor, propagated by schools and Council teams throughout the borough.

These recommendations are based on data from Croydon stakeholders, and will be beneficial in addressing the specific school travel goals of the borough. We are confident that if Croydon Council takes our recommendations into consideration the implementation of the Walk on Wednesday program in the Borough of Croydon will improve.
1. Introduction

The government of the United Kingdom is promoting a variety of programs and policies to encourage more people to walk rather than drive. These efforts are intended to address several interconnected problems: excess traffic congestion, carbon emissions, and health issues such as obesity that are associated with lack of exercise. Many schemes, such as Walk on Wednesday and Walking Bus\(^\text{10}\) focus on encouraging life-long commitments to healthy living and sustainable lifestyles for children. Healthy habits developed by children will allow them to make lasting impacts on their own health and the environment around them, by instilling in them the value of using active transport throughout their lives. One of the largest programs in the United Kingdom that encourages children to walk to school is the Walk on Wednesday (WoW) scheme run by the organization Living Streets. WoW aims to prevent childhood obesity and inactivity, while simultaneously reducing the carbon footprint and road congestion caused by daily commutes to school in cars (Wavehill Consulting, 2009, p. 13).

During peak school travel times, approximately a fifth of the vehicles on the road in the UK are involved in the journey to or from school (Wavehill Consulting, 2009, p. 2). Living Streets created WoW with the goal of significantly reducing this statistic. To achieve this goal, this program encourages children to walk to school by offering incentives to those involved. Established in 2005, and evaluated nationally in 2009 by Wavehill Consulting, WoW was found to be quite successful in many respects while also indicating areas that could use improvement. Croydon, an outer borough in the south of London, has been participating in WoW since 2006 and would like to encourage more involvement on the part of its schools and citizens with the program (Appendix A) (Personal conversation with Peter McDonald, 2013). Croydon Council has requested that a similar assessment be completed within their borough in order to evaluate how the program is currently performing and how it might be improved upon. As of yet, they have not conducted a systematic study to assess the program within the borough.

The goal of this Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP) was to evaluate the effectiveness of WoW within Croydon. We assessed the program to determine if it was meeting the current goals set by both Living Streets and Croydon Council. In order to accomplish this
task, we investigated how various stakeholders in Croydon viewed WoW. We surveyed children and parents to determine their opinions of the program. Additionally, we interviewed school and Croydon Council administrators to ascertain the views of those involved in implementing the program. To determine WoW's impact on street congestion and safety, we observed traffic flow outside of schools. In using these techniques, we established a broad perspective of the Walk on Wednesday program and provided Croydon Council with recommendations on how we believe WoW can be improved upon. We also presented alternative options to the program. We also considered whether it is a worthwhile program for additional schools within the borough to employ.

Beyond the direct benefit of addressing the UK government’s concerns, the depth of knowledge we gleaned on the Walk on Wednesday program illustrates additional benefits to students, including opportunities for increased socialization during the walk to school, and better focus and performance in the classroom. Walking not only provides many benefits, it was the first mode of transportation available to humankind, and remains one of the most reliable and least polluting today. Through the evaluation of the Walk on Wednesday program this IQP’s goal was to help Croydon Council encourage more primary school students to utilize active transport.
2. Literature Review

In the United Kingdom, there are many recently established programs that address several interrelated problems. Traffic congestion, as well as the number of licensed drivers, has steadily increased over the past 50 years. As a result, air pollution in the United Kingdom has also increased. With more people driving to their destinations, alternative modes of transportation such as walking and cycling have been increasingly neglected. Over time this has led to increased risk for certain health problems including obesity, diabetes, and heart trouble. Many programs have been developed and implemented to mitigate these problems. The Living Streets organization created one such program: Walk on Wednesday. This scheme encourages primary school students to walk to school at least once a week and aims to encourage these children to form healthy life-long habits. This will in turn help reduce the traffic, pollution, health, and environmental problems arising from transportation as well as help to improve the lives of these children and the communities that they live in. Although this program has been quite successful, many matters must be addressed for its improvement. Croydon Council is concerned that essential aspects may be hindering WoW’s success, even though it has been implemented in Croydon schools for seven years (McDonald).

2.1 Nature of the Problem

Road traffic and congestion are major problems in highly developed countries such as the UK. Traffic from the school commute is a large contributor to the overall rise of road congestion, increased levels of air pollution, and rising obesity rates due to a lack of physical activity. Decreasing car use and increasing the use of alternative modes of transportation could lessen these concerns. Approximately 14% of Croydon’s 86.5 square kilometers consists of parkland, countryside, and open space, giving people in this area sufficient space to spend time outside of residential areas (Appendix A). However, within Croydon there are many steep hills that make it difficult, or simply undesirable, to navigate without the use of an automobile or some form of public transportation. For example, the southern portion of the borough has many roads that run north-south while the more attractive and desirable destinations are distributed east-west without sufficient routes connecting these destinations. With parked cars, regular buses, and steep, narrow streets,
the roads in the southern parts of the borough can be very unappealing to non-regular cyclists. On the other hand, northern Croydon is quite different in that it is mostly residential and many of the occupants of this area live within a reasonable walking or cycling distance of a park (McDonald).

2.1.1 Traffic

Between 1950 and 2010 the number of licensed vehicles in the UK increased from 4 to 34 million (Figure 1). During this same time period, the percentage of households in Great Britain having access to a car increased from 20% to 70%. The National Road Traffic Survey has reported a slight decrease in road traffic between 2008 and 2010 due to the economic recession and increased oil prices, but this decrease is small and forecasts predict a growing volume of traffic over the next few decades. As an example, road traffic in 2035 is estimated to be 44% higher than in 2010. Predictions suggest that congestion measured in seconds lost per mile will increase from 19.2 in 2010 to 32.3 in 2035. The proportion of traffic considered to be in the category of “very congested” is also expected to increase from 8% to 17% (Department for Transport, 2012).

![Figure 1 Number of licensed vehicles in Great Britain between 1950 and 2010 (Department for Transport, 2011B).](image)

Although some traffic trends in London are similar to those seen on the national level, there are many areas with greater cause for concern. As of 2012, 79% of vehicles on major London roads were cars and taxis (Network Performance Traffic Analysis Center, 2012). In London, congestion projections are higher than the national forecasts. Seconds lost per mile in London are expected to increase from 83.4 in 2010 to 140.9 in 2035. This is
more than four times the numbers for all of Great Britain (Department for Transport, 2012).

The Borough of Croydon has developed as a major business center, in large part due to its transportation connections with London and the south of England. Unfortunately, this also means that it attracts large volumes of traffic and suffers from heavy congestion. An increase in public walking to and from work and school would lead to a decrease in road traffic. This is a major factor in why Croydon Council is involved in so many efforts to encourage alternative modes of transportation.

2.1.2 Air Pollution

In the UK, there is a growing concern with air pollution and its harmful effects on people and the environment. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from transportation increased by 13% between the years 1990 and 2009. As of 2009, transport emissions accounted for 27% of the total GHG emissions in the UK and 68% of those emissions were from road travel. There was a small decline in domestic transport emissions from 2007-2009 and predictions suggest that emissions will continue to decline primarily due to improvements in fuel-efficient vehicles (Figure 2). Reducing emissions is integral to lessening pollutants in the air that are harmful to people’s health and the environment (Department for Transport, 2011).

![Emissions History and Transport Forecast 2011](Department for Transport 2012).

Some of the most harmful pollutants released by vehicles are carbon monoxide,
nitrogen oxides, benzene, and butadiene. Carbon monoxide decreases the ability of the blood to carry oxygen throughout the body. Nitrogen oxides, benzene, and butadiene all contribute to the formation of ground level ozone and each has various adverse health effects. Nitrogen oxides are harmful to humans and vegetation, and benzene and butadiene are known carcinogens. Emissions of these pollutants from transport have decreased over the past 20 years due to better emission control technologies and improvements in fuel efficiencies, but there is always more to do to reduce them further (Department for Transport, 2011B). Air pollution in the UK leads to 24,000 premature deaths each year and twice as many people suffer from asthma and lung conditions caused by air pollution now when compared to the numbers from 20 years ago (Walters, 2009). Much of inner London failed pollution objectives for nitrogen oxides as of 2008, with major roadways failing throughout outer London as well (London Air Quality Networks, 2013). Since most areas of high pollution fall along major roadways, steps to reduce traffic in London could also lead to reductions in pollution in the city. Being an outer borough, Croydon experiences less air pollution than inner parts of London, but there are still significant pollution worries along major roads (Figure 3). Less pollution gives advantage to school walking programs as people are more inclined to be outside in cleaner air. This is especially important given the health vulnerabilities of young children that these programs target.
2.1.3 Health Concerns

The harmful effect of automobile use is not limited to the increased pollution it causes; it also negatively impacts people’s lifestyles. There is compelling evidence that suggests that childhood obesity is on the rise partly due to children being driven to destinations like school instead of walking or bicycling to them as had been done in the past.

The youth population is at a greater risk from air pollutants than adults because they have a higher respiration rate. In a study conducted to identify critical windows of exposure for children’s health, it was found that the human respiratory system is not fully developed until an individual is approximately 18-20 years old (Dietert, Etzel, Chen, Halonen, Holladay, Jarabek, Landreth, Peden, Pinkerton, Smialowicz, Zoetis, 2000). Since their lungs are still developing, children are more susceptible to adverse health effects including increased respiratory tract illnesses, asthma exacerbations, and overall decreased lung function due to the inhalation of traffic related pollutants (The American Academy of Pediatrics, 2004). The Policy Interpretation Network on Children’s Health and Environment, funded by the European Commission, studied the relationship between
children’s health and the environment and deemed reducing nitrogen dioxide and engine exhaust as one of the highest priorities for governments (Zuurbier, Lundqvist, Salines, Stansfeld, Hanke, Babisch, Bistrup, Van Den Hazel, Moshammer, 2007). Moving towards more sustainable modes of travel will be an important step in this process.

With recent shifts away from walking and cycling to more sedentary modes of travel, obesity has become a growing concern in the UK. Childhood obesity is associated with many psychological and physical health issues ranging from low self-esteem and lower educational achievement to Type 2 Diabetes. Due to these concerns, local and regional governments in England have made reducing this problem a top priority.

The country has therefore begun utilizing a variety of programs that promote healthy life choices. Many of these programs target traffic congestion and air pollution as well by promoting alternate forms of transportation. Between 2008 and 2010 the percentage of children aged 2 through 10 considered obese increased from 14% to 15% (National Obesity Observatory, 2012).

The situation in London is even more severe. Between 1995 and 2007 the obesity percentages for children in the same age group increased from 22% to 29% (Greater London Authority, 2011). Similarly, the proportion of children ages 11 to 15 that are overweight and obese has also increased (Figure 4). The National Heart Forum projects that by 2050 the obesity percentage for all categories of children under 20 years of age will be above 23% (Table 1).
Croydon is not exempt from these trends. Based on a projection by the Greater London Authority, Croydon was in the upper range for percentages of children at risk of being obese in 2009-10 compared to other boroughs.

![Map of Greater London](image1)

As seen in Figure 5, 11%-13% of 4-5 year old boys and girls were at risk of being obese. For the upper age range of 10-11 year old children, 21%-28% of boys and 15%-21% of girls were at risk of being obese (Figure 6) (Greater London Authority, 2011). London has made efforts to encourage its residents to lead more healthy lives in order to reverse these trends. The Sport and Physical Activity team is a group of Croydon Council members whose goal is, “to improve the health and quality of life of Croydon residents by encouraging regular participation in physical activities” (Croydon Council, 2013C). To accomplish this, the team provides low cost, organized physical activities, including walking groups, to members of the community.
2.2 Factors that Influence Walking

Walking is regarded as an adaptation that differentiates humans from other species, but historical attitudes toward it have often seemed contradictory. On one hand, walking has often had spiritual or religious significance, especially as an activity performed in groups to bring people together. However, walking has also been viewed as mundane; in Britain during the 19th century it was seen as a sign of wealth to be able to travel without walking. These two sides of walking still play an important role today in how people choose to travel (InfoBritain, 2011). In order to increase the number of people who walk, it is important to understand the factors that influence walking habits today. A study in Melbourne, Australia, found that there was a strong correlation between parents who knew many people in their neighborhoods and increased active travel by their children. Although correlation does not indicate causation, one could argue that positive relationships within a community are associated with an increased number of children walking, which could be due to parents being more comfortable with their children walking through neighborhoods with familiar people. The Australian study also discovered that children were more likely to walk at age 11 than at age 9. It concluded that more active commuting was often a way that children expressed their increasing independence. Children who are educated in proper pedestrian skills and traffic laws are also more likely to make decisions that lead to active adult lifestyles (Hume, Timperio, Salmon, Carver, Giles-Corti, Crawford, 2009).

A study conducted in London, Ontario during the 2006-2007 school year, discovered that the likelihood of walking or cycling to school increased with several factors. Among them were length of trips, the usage of land for a variety of purposes, the presence of trees near the street, and gender. The most current studies indicate that distance is the most
important factor when choosing a mode of transportation. Children who have a shorter trip to and from school are more likely to walk or bike there. Likewise, the Ontario study determined that boys are more likely to walk or cycle to school than girls. A greater variety of land use leads to more destinations to which children can walk or cycle at the conclusion of the school day. Trees that are within 5 meters of the road add to the esthetics of a walk or bike ride and provide shade on sunny days (Larsen, Gilliland, Hess, Tucker, Irwin, He, 2009).

The percentage of 5-10 year olds walking to school in the UK decreased from 67% to 48% between the years 1985 and 2008. In 2005, London passed a law allowing children to ride the bus for free, providing them with access to the public transportation system for their school commute. This encourages them to walk some of the distance to school and decreases traffic congestion around the schools. Look who's walking: Social and environmental correlates of children's walking in London, conducted in 2012, was one of several recent studies that looked at how social and environmental factors affect children walking in London and found a few correlations that may help in encouraging more children to use active transport to and from school. Steinbach, Green, and Edwards found that, “Although, for instance, social characteristics such as age, gender, income, and ethnicity have been identified as related to walking to school, associations are not universally found.” For example, a nationally conducted study in the United Kingdom discovered connections with higher income households and lesser amounts of walking to school. However, in Norfolk a different study found that children from more privileged areas were more likely to walk to school than those from more deprived neighborhoods. Thus, it is hard to generalize these characteristics as having an impact on walking habits. The social implications of walking are defined on local levels, suggesting, “that different social factors are likely to help shape transport decisions in different contexts.” For example, urban areas are more likely to be able to provide their residents an effective public transportation system than rural areas. Physical environment is not a significant factor for children choosing to walk in London, likely in part due to the well-developed public transit system in the city. For more suburban areas in outer boroughs, such as Croydon, the physical environment may be a more important factor that has to be taken into account when encouraging children to use active travel to school (Steinbach et al.,
Steinbach et al.’s study examined not only how children travel to school, but also how they travel for non-school trips (weekend and summer months). They discovered that factors influencing the decision to walk vary by purpose of the trip indicating that programs whose goal is to increase walking rates\(^8\), the proportion of a school’s student body that walks to school, need to focus on factors that impact those specific journeys. Children that identify as ‘Black,’ walk longer and further distances than children from other ethnic groups, while they tend to walk less during the summer months and on weekends than do children who identify as ‘White.’ This study also suggested that children from households grossing less than 15,000 pounds a year “walk further and longer than their more affluent counterparts” (Steinbach). The study also identified that traffic volume does not play a significant role in children’s walking habits as children living in areas with high volumes spend similar amounts of time walking to school as children from areas with lower volumes.

Parents of primary school age students have a significant influence on how their child gets to and from school every day. A study of the Active Travel to School initiatives in the United States found that parents who are involved in active travel programs with the school could have a significant impact on the success of these programs. When parents are involved in these initiatives there are social and health benefits for parents, children, and the community. Parents are involved in these programs in order to promote health, improve neighborhood awareness, and deal with safety concerns. Including parents in school travel programs requires some effort, as the individuals will change every few years, and many parents will not volunteer because they either lack the time or prefer driving their child to school. Schools that wish to see more parent involvement need to actively support parents, this includes finding a champion, either staff member or parent, who can organize parental efforts. One of the biggest concerns for parents with having their child walk to school is safety, but parents who volunteer were able to help provide plans to combat this concern (Eyler, Baldwin, Carnoske, Nickelson, Troped, Steinman, Pluto, Litt, Evenson, Terpstra, Brownson, Schmid, 2008).
2.3 Benefits of Walking

Health benefits from being physically active depend on both frequency and level of physical activity, as seen by comparing mortality rates of those with different levels of fitness and activity (Figure 7).

![Figure 7 A: Mortality rates of men compared among levels of fitness. B: Mortality rates of women compared among levels of fitness (Blair et al., 2001).](image)

To an extent, the more fit and active the individual, either male or female, the lower the mortality rate (Blair, Cheng, Holder, 2001). Studies conducted on women’s walking levels, show significant decreases in health risks when they walk 6 or more hours per week (Kitchen, Williams, Chowhan, 2011). Though children aged 4-11 are much less likely to experience the same health problems as middle-aged women, developing healthy walking habits could reduce these risks. Walking to school may also encourage students to exercise more throughout the week. Some studies show that low levels of physical activity can lead to a more active and fit lifestyle. Many families also report that walking to school has encouraged their children to spend more time outside (Living Streets, 2012C).

Studies have shown that getting approximately 60 minutes of physical activity a day can lead to health benefits. Tests conducted in the US, UK, Hong Kong, and Australia found that physical activity also has a positive impact on academic performance in students. A test conducted by FITNESSGRAM® on over 2.4 million Texas students, found that more fit students tend to perform better on academic achievement tests, have higher attendance,
and fewer disciplinary incidents. A separate study of 11,000 elementary school students showed that children who participated in a minimum of fifteen minutes per day of recess had better behavior in the classroom (Active Living Research, 2012). An evaluation by the University College of London on The Walking Buses in Hertfordshire found that by walking to school, children are given an outlet to expend their energy, allowing them to settle into the classroom environment more quickly (University College London, 2005). Walking also improves the students’ attendance and punctuality as well as increasing their readiness to learn (Newson et al, 2010).

Not only will Walk to School programs increase the health of participating students, they may also increase social aspects of the students’ lives. When these children walk to and from school in groups, they interact with those around them, allowing them to stay social and excited about walking with their peers. One of the best ways for people to learn is through social interactions; this also teaches the young children who are participating in WoW how to properly act around others.

The benefits of these programs are evident, yet they still encounter challenges in their implementation. These programs provide concrete benefits to the students who participate, while also improving traffic conditions, two very important concerns of Croydon Council. This project looks at how the benefits seen on a national level actually apply to Croydon’s needs, and if improvements can be made to increase the program’s effectiveness and usage across the borough.

2.4 Policies and Programs

Improving public health and wellbeing is a major focal point of both local and national government endeavors within the United Kingdom. The governments of London and the UK, through policies and programs, have given high priority to the reduction of air pollution, traffic congestion, and childhood obesity, which are attributed to increased personal vehicle use that in turn causes more overall road congestion. As a part of an effort to make the borough more sustainable, Croydon has created a community strategy with a major focus on reducing the annual carbon emission levels (Appendix A). One of the methods for achieving this strategy’s goal is to encourage greater use of alternative forms of transportation.
The national Department for Travel has directed multiple surveys and studies to better focus their efforts to bring about a significant modal shift\textsuperscript{5} to sustainable travel. As discovered by the British Attitudes Survey of 2009, a significant number of drivers would be willing to substitute alternative means of transportation for driving if such options were more readily available. This is partly due to a large proportion of car trips in the UK being shorter than 5 miles (Figure 8).

![Figure 8 The amount of carbon emissions released grouped by trip length and purpose for 2008 (Department for Transport, 2011A).](image)

In 2008 for example, domestic transport accounted for approximately 21% of the United Kingdom's CO\textsubscript{2} emissions. Of this, 55% was from passenger vehicles, which is a significant percentage and in turn is a target area for reduction (Figure 9). With this portion of public travel reduced, the department would be well on its way to accomplishing its goal of reducing 80% of carbon emissions by the year 2050 (Department for Transport, 2011A).

Some efforts made by the national government to reduce vehicle traffic and emissions include promoting and increasing funding for programs that encourage alternative transportation, implementing the Green Bus Fund, and initializing the use of smart ticketing. In 2011, the UK government increased its annual funding to programs that
promote cycling and walking as alternate forms of transportation; Living Streets’ Walk to School Campaign is among them. The Green Bus Fund introduces hundreds of low carbon emission buses in the United Kingdom each year. Smart-ticketing is a system that stores travel information in a microchip rather than on a printed ticket and is scheduled to be in full effect by the end of December 2014 and intendeds to make travel easier over all types of public transportation as the microchip can be inserted into cards or devices such as a mobile phone. With multimodal transportation becoming more accessible and convenient, more people are likely to use public transportation, which will reduce both carbon emissions and traffic congestion (Department for Transport, 2011A).

Figure 9 A breakdown of CO₂ emissions in the transport sector for 2008 (Department for Transport, 2011A).

The Department of Transport and the Department for Children, Schools, and Families, working in collaboration, announced the Travelling to School Initiative in May of 2003. This initiative encourages schools to appoint a School Travel Advisor (STA) and provides funding to local authorities to do so. The job of an STA is to work closely with a school in developing School Travel Plans (STP). The appointing of STAs made slow initial headway. In order to speed progress, an incentive program was introduced in 2004. Schools that successfully sustain an STP are eligible for capital grants to use on pertinent and related improvements needed to employ the plan. Wavehill Consulting discovered that schools that receive this funding and use it for the WoW program are awarded roughly £3,750 (£5 per registered pupil) (Wavehill Consulting, 2009, p. 14).

In addition to the many national programs and policies, there are many local efforts
aimed at reducing traffic congestion and encouraging the use of alternative modes of transit. Due to geographical and social differences among various regions of the country it is much more efficient to establish laws and programs locally (Politics.co.uk, 2013). If these programs meet certain goals, it is often beneficial to reflect upon them and investigate the possibility of using similar programs on a national scale.

Improving transport in and around London is one of the major priorities of the Mayor of London and the Greater London Authority. The Mayor has set a goal for the city to have a 60% reduction of CO₂ emissions by 2025 from 1990 levels (Mayor’s Transport Strategy, 2012B). The 2011 London Plan outlines specific goals for the city over the next 10 years, which includes significant improvements planned for walking and cycling infrastructure. The plan also provides funding for programs that are helping to limit greenhouse gas emissions and congestion on roadways including the congestion charge, Oyster card, and Barclay’s Cycle Hire and Cycle Superhighways. The congestion charge is a daily charge on drivers within central London between 7a.m. and 6p.m. on weekdays designed to shorten the length of journeys and to encourage the use of public transportation within the City of London (Politics.co.uk, 2013). The Oyster card is a smart card usable on nearly all forms of public transportation. For children, there are Oyster card options that allow them to take most forms of public transportation at little or no cost (Transport for London, 2013B). Barclays Cycle Hire, often referred to as “Boris Bikes,” established in 2010 by London Mayor Boris Johnson, allows members to rent a bicycle from a designated station that they are then able to ride to another docking station, where they can return the bicycle for a small fee. Barclays Cycle Superhighways are bicycle paths that offer safe routes between outer and central London (Transport for London, 2013A). Over the next few years there are plans to extend cycle accessibility schemes to the outer boroughs (The London Plan, 2011).

As of 2010, 24% of trips in London were made entirely on foot. The Mayor would like to increase this level of walking in the city because of its wide range of benefits. Walking is free, reliable, environmentally friendly, and positively impacts people’s health while also reducing heavy demands on other transport methods that lead to congestion and delays. To achieve the Mayor’s goal, there are plans to improve the walkability of London streets, including improving sidewalks (referred to as pavements in the UK),
tackling the fear of crime, and introducing Legible London\textsuperscript{3} road signage (Mayor’s Transport Strategy, 2012A). Plans to plant 10,000 additional trees along the streets and increase the number of trees in parks will improve the walking atmosphere in the city and should increase walking rates (The London Plan, 2011). The London Plan provides the funding for many of the transport initiatives in Croydon and other boroughs, including the Walk on Wednesday scheme.

Non-government programs have sprung up from the national focus on reducing traffic congestion and finding sustainable energy alternatives. One such program is Sustrans, a charity that encourages the use of energy conscious ways of traveling. Sustrans, supported both by government grants and substantial funding from the national lottery, considers walking and cycling to be the future of sustainable transportation; however its focus is on cycling. One of their main initiatives is the National Cycle Network, which functions to connect the United Kingdom with the use of cycling and walking accessible transport routes. Currently, 75\% of the people in the UK live within a reasonable distance of this network (Sustrans, 2012). Sustrans has a “Links to Schools” program, which works with local authorities and schools to create reduced traffic and traffic free routes for children to walk or cycle to school (Sustrans, 2006).

Many of these programs, including Walk on Wednesday, target children at an early age. This is because, “Intervention in the early years is important for developing the behavior and cognitive patterns that will be set for later in life” (Greater London Authority, 2011, p. 43). These programs hope to change the eating and exercise habits of children early on so that they will grow up to be healthy adults that raise their children with similar habits. Walk on Wednesday promotes walking to school as a way to increase the exercise primary school students receive on a daily basis (Greater London Authority, 2011).

\textbf{2.5 Living Streets Organization}

Living Streets (2001-present), formerly known as the Pedestrians Association (1929-2001), was formed by a group of citizens who were concerned with the “seemingly unchecked rise of the motor-car and the spiraling numbers of pedestrians being killed or seriously hurt on Britain’s roads” (Living Streets, 2012C). Throughout its existence, this organization has achieved many goals including campaigning for the introduction of both
the driving test and the Highway Code. They also were the first to successfully install crosswalks (Zebra crossings) in the UK. Recently, Living Streets has created and implemented programs across the country to encourage UK citizens to be active and walk more. Two main programs, “Walking to Work” and “Walk to School,” aim to keep people healthy and fit by encouraging them to add walking to their daily routines (Living Streets, 2012C). Living Streets is both a registered charity and a registered company that is dedicated to creating safe and attractive streets around the United Kingdom. It strives to make walking the automatic choice of transportation for reasonable distances. Data revealing that cars were being used increasingly for journeys that had previously been made on foot spurred on Living Streets’ efforts. For example, in 2003, Rowland, DiGuiseppi, Gross, and Roberts, found that the annual walking distance by children had fallen 28% since 1972 largely as a result of children being driven to school rather than walking. This caused increased concern about declining physical activity among London’s youth and the risks associated with health problems later on in life.

Living Streets started their Walk to School campaign in 1995. Their “vision is that every child who can walk to school does so” (Living Streets, 2012D). This campaign encompasses programs that inspire students within the UK to walk to school. Each program caters to a specific age group and works to meet their unique needs. Over 1.6 million children across the country have participated in the Walk to School campaign and are now active walkers to school each year (Living Streets, 2012C). In addition to walking to school, this program also encourages parents and children to make walking a part of their daily routine (Living Streets, 2012B).

2.5.1 Walk on Wednesday

Walk on Wednesday (WoW), also known as Walk Once a Week, is one of the platforms under the Walk to School campaign and has been running since 2005. It encourages students in primary schools (ages 4-11) to walk to school at least once a week as an alternative to other modes of transportation. This program rewards children who walk to school at least once a week for a month with a WoW collectible badge. Students who have no choice but to come to school by car, bus, or public transport are encouraged to walk the final leg (approximately 10 minutes) of their journey to school in an initiative known as Park and Stride (Living Streets, 2012B). Another option for these cases is to set
up a walking club or activity that gives these students an opportunity to earn their badges. Living Streets strives to make the program accessible to all.

WoW has been implemented in approximately 10% of primary schools within the country (Living Streets, 2012A). As of 2009, there were 1,895 schools in England participating in WoW (Wavehill Consulting, 2009, p. 4). An independent study, run on the schools that have implemented WoW, found that one in five children started to walk to school because of the program. The study also discovered that schools that participated in the program had on average, a 10% higher walking rate than the national average of 50% (Living Streets, 2012B). Teachers have reported that WoW is easy to run and students who partake in it have an easy time understanding the scheme and have a true desire to be a part of it (Living Streets, 2012B).

Living Streets contracted Wavehill Consulting in May of 2009 to perform an additional evaluation of WoW. The consulting firm conducted their assessment with 23,450 children across 961 different classes. Their evaluation found that the program had seven main positive outcomes for the communities: healthier children, increase in active travel, less traffic congestion, increased shifts away from car and bus use, decreased pollution and CO₂ emissions, community unity effects, and behavioral patterns away from car use for short journeys (Wavehill Consulting, 2009, p. 12). By encouraging more students to walk to school, WoW is providing many benefits to the students and schools involved. Countless studies, performed on the mental and physical benefits of being active, show the level of exercise that is required in order for these benefits to be observed.

Living Streets’ intention is to help the communities throughout the UK improve their living conditions in any way. The WoW program provides an opportunity to incorporate the students’ journeys to and from school with every day curriculum in such areas as math, science, and physical education. This not only further promotes the program to students, it also encourages interactive classroom assignments. Similarly, Living Streets promotes art to students by hosting a yearly public contest for students to design the next year’s Walk on Wednesday badges.

Each year, a new theme is chosen and a national competition is held where participating students design new badges (Living Streets, 2012B). During the competition, which is held every year, eleven badges are chosen as winners to represent each month of
the school year. Approximately 28% of students who participate in WoW (128,000 students) submit a piece of original artwork for entry into the contest. The purpose of holding this competition is to get the children excited about the program. Students with winning artwork receive a handful of prizes including a year’s supply of resources needed to run the program for their school (Living Streets, 2012E). By allowing students to participate in their school’s WoW procedures, a higher percentage of students will be likely to participate resulting in a more successful program, as seen in case studies at schools where students had a say in developing the plan; some examples include creating logos and posters as well as making presentations and evaluating surveys (Newson, Cairns, & Davis, 2010).

Wavehill performed a cost-benefit analysis of the WoW scheme. Their model calculated a cost to benefit ratio of 0.32, indicating that for every 32p of cost there is a resultant £1 of benefits. They converted the traffic, pollution, and health benefits to monetary values, and used this to derive the cost to benefit ratio (Wavehill Consulting, 2009, p. 28-29). This ratio shows that WoW is successful in providing significant benefits at low cost.

The benefits of the WoW program are evident, yet it still encounters challenges to its implementation. The program provides concrete benefits to the students who participate, while also improving traffic conditions, two very important concerns of Croydon Council. In one evaluation, 26 of 30 case studies performed found that incorporating a walking program in schools will decrease car use for education transportation by almost a quarter (Newson et al, 2010). This project examines improvements that can be made to WoW or other travel initiatives to better fit the borough’s specific needs.

2.6 Safety Concerns

Although the Walk on Wednesday program reduces traffic to and from schools, the state of safety precautions that accompany children walking to school are a point of concern. The Wavehill Consulting evaluation found that approximately 5% of the students do not walk to school due to fears about safety. Parent inability to walk to school with their child was also a reason for why students did not walk to school (Wavehill Consulting, 2009, p. 43). As the WoW Parents guide states, “Many parents of older children at primary school
would like to let their children walk to school by themselves or with friends but are understandably worried about safety on the roads” (Living Streets, 2012A). Croydon had approximately 1,200 road related accidents that occurred in 2011, with 320 of them involving pedestrians or cyclists. Sixty-five of those accidents involved a child under the age of fifteen (Table 2).

Table 2 Casualties by mode of travel for all ages and for children (ages 15 and younger) (Croydon Council, 2013D).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of Travel (All Ages)</th>
<th>Fatal</th>
<th>Serious</th>
<th>Slight</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrians</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedal Cycle</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2W</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Vehicle</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>1122</td>
<td>1231</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of Travel (Child)</th>
<th>Fatal</th>
<th>Serious</th>
<th>Slight</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrians</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedal Cycle</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Vehicle</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, 20% of the pedestrian and cyclist accidents that occurred in Croydon in 2011 involved a child in secondary school or younger (Croydon Council, 2013D). In addition to road safety concerns, crime and dangerous environments are also worries for parents. The Metropolitan Police department lists Croydon as ‘average’ for crimes involving violence against the individual compared to the rest of the London boroughs (Figure 10). With an increased number of students walking to school due to these programs, the concern for child safety increases (Metropolitan Police, 2010).
According to the National Travel Survey, the primary concerns of parents with regard to their children walking to school are dangers from traffic, fear of assault, lack of convenience, and long distances between home and school. Reducing traffic congestion and providing low traffic school routes are ways that these parental fears could be assuaged (Steinbach et al., 2012).

2.7 Problems with the Implementation of WoW

Although WoW has been very successful, various stakeholders have expressed concerns about the program’s current implementation including retaining children’s interest, encouraging parent involvement, and concerns with safety. Throughout this project, we assessed whether or not these concerns are specific to Croydon and its residents and determined ways to alleviate them. WoW has had a difficult time attracting schools outside of the greater London area, in part because much of its initial funding was through Transport for London. To expand further, WoW needs to promote its low entry costs, numerous benefits, and ease of implementation. There is a perception among schoolteachers and staff that the program is expensive to run, when in actuality, £320 would be enough for most schools to run the program for a year (Wavehill Consulting, 2009, p. 7). An evaluation performed on a similar program to WoW, The Walking Buses, found that many schools ultimately decided to discontinue the use of the program due to a
lack of interest among children and volunteers, inclement weather, and a lack of desirable incentives (University College London, 2005).

One of the key elements to WoW’s success is its use of badges as incentives for the children. Once schools decide to participate in WoW, there have been problems for administrators and school travel advisors with ordering and distribution the badges, as they must separate them into appropriate numbers for each class by hand. If WoW could improve their material distribution system, it would be more appealing to schools and local governments. Other issues have arisen with the lack of durability of the badges; in some cases the badges have fallen apart after very little use. Since the badges are a major reason some children walk to school (19% of those surveyed by Wavehill) it is important to have durable incentives that appeal to them. Wavehill found that a common suggestion was to have stickers as incentives for the program because they can be given out to children more frequently and do not fall apart as easily (Wavehill Consulting, 2009, p. 8).

Schools already using WoW also expressed some difficulty with keeping children interested in the program. Wavehill found that introducing new and exciting aspects into a program would get younger students more involved; however many schools are not doing so. Suggestions that the Wavehill commission received in their surveys included creating competitions and events beyond a single school, setting distance goals with real world places, having different prizes and incentives, and integrating the program into the classroom curriculum. There were also suggestions to use a central web based tracking system to allow children to track their progress and compare it with other classes and schools. Such a system could also keep track of regional and national distance totals and is just one example of an incentive to keep children interested in the program as they age (Wavehill Consulting, 2009, p. 11).

Another concern with WoW is its ability to keep children in their last few years of primary school interested in the program. In a follow-up interview regarding the Walking Buses Program, it was clear that students left the program because they outgrew it (University College London, 2005). By the end of primary school, children are old enough that badges are significantly less appealing, as is walking to school in general. Finding different incentives and having online tracking options would help keep the older age group engaged in the program (Wavehill Consulting, 2009, p. 9). Weather is also a
deterrent for children walking to school. Students from all age groups have expressed their aversion to walking to school in the rain or snow (University College London, 2005).

Some parents who no longer drive their children to school feel a decreased connection to them (University College London, 2005). Because of this WoW would also like to find ways to get parents more involved in their child’s journey to school. The Wavehill evaluation found that many children travel to school the same way their parents travel to work, keeping some children who want to walk to school from doing so. In order to improve, WoW must encourage parents to get more involved in the walk to school, which will provide benefits to the whole family (Wavehill Consulting, 2009, p. 10).

The Council of Croydon is working to decrease pedestrian casualties by upgrading crossings to either ‘Zebra’ or ‘Pelican’ crossings. This upgrade involves adding crosswalks and traffic lights to intersections deemed more dangerous due to high traffic volume, traffic speed, and greater personal injury statistics for pedestrians (Croydon Council, 2013E). However, this is an expensive process that severely limits the number of upgrades the Council can make each year. This increased involvement in resolving these traffic related needs demonstrates the Council’s growing interest in keeping the streets of their borough safe and enjoyable to use. Participating in WoW is one more indicator of the borough’s commitment to addressing transportation and health concerns. Currently in 2013, 31 Croydon primary schools are participating in WoW which is a significant increase from the 10 participating schools in 2005 (McDonald). The borough is committed to the WoW program, but maintaining school participation can be challenging. Walk on Wednesday also presents a significant cost per child and the borough is concerned that the program may not be sufficiently cost effective. This team’s evaluation of the current implementation of the existing program will help identify ideas and strategies for increasing and maintaining participation in the future, or devising other walk to school strategies the borough could implement.
3. Methodology

The goal of this project is to assess the effectiveness of the Walk on Wednesday program in the Borough of Croydon. We have four primary objectives to help achieve this goal: (1) trace the development of WoW in London and Croydon, (2) evaluate the effectiveness of the program from the implementers’ perspectives, (3) evaluate the program from the perspectives of the participants and its impact on the local urban environment, and (4) provide recommendations for improving the implementation of WoW and suggesting other programs that could be used to increase sustainable transport rates in Croydon schools. We have interviewed members of the community that are essential to the WoW program, including Croydon Council members and school faculty, to help us better understand the development and view of the program as seen by the implementers. We gathered information from participants using classroom workshops with students and surveys that were sent to parents. Observation of the schools in Croydon and the traffic around them allowed us to assess WoW's impact on the local urban environment and community. We analyzed all of this data and considered it in light of current research in order to provide useful recommendations to the Council.

Table 3 Project objectives, stakeholders, and methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Development of WoW</td>
<td>· Council staff</td>
<td>· Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· School Administrators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Perspectives of Implementers</td>
<td>· Council staff</td>
<td>· Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Teachers/administrators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Perspectives of Participants and Community Impact</td>
<td>· Parents and students</td>
<td>· Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>· Workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>· Observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Recommendations for Improvements</td>
<td>· Council</td>
<td>· Data Analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1 Objective 1: Development of WoW

To gain a better understanding of the development and origins of the Walk on Wednesday program in Croydon, we interviewed council staff involved in the implementation of WoW as well as staff working on related fields regarding the concerns
and motivations surrounding the program. This included experts on travel, health, and active lifestyles. The information we obtained from these interviews helped us develop an understanding of the situation in Croydon so that we could better apply the material from our literature review. Our sponsor liaison, Peter McDonald, the Travel and Transport Planning Officer, identified these staff members. Each of the forty-five minute, in-person interviews included topics relating to the history and development of WoW and active travel in Croydon. These topics were specific to the interviewee’s area of expertise and/or association with the program. A pair of team members, a lead interviewer and a note taker, conducted each interview. In addition to taking notes, and with the permission of the interviewee, our interviews were recorded and later transcribed by members of our team.

We created a script with a provisional set of questions, reviewed and approved by Peter McDonald, for each interview with questions tailored to suit each individual interviewee. Each interview began with a preamble that explained who we are and the purpose of our project, and ended with us asking the interviewee if they would allow us to record and/or quote them. We gave all interviewees the opportunity to look over quoted material taken from these interviews prior to their inclusion in our findings. For interviewees with very limited availability, we sent out an email with questions attached and asked that they answer the questions provided.

3.2 Objective 2: Perspectives of Program Implementers

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the program from the viewpoint of the implementers, we conducted a series of interviews with school administrators, teachers, and council officials involved in implementing the program (Appendix B). These interviews were conducted following the protocols described in Objective 1. From each school that participated in our research, we requested interviews with the teacher who coordinates the WoW program as well as the head teacher. This list included three types of schools: those that participate in WoW regularly, those that have recently started participating, and those that have never participated. We intended to have a fourth type, schools that have recently stopped using WoW, but we were unable to get in contact with any schools that would fit this category. For teachers with limited time, we provided a survey with questions that covered the same topic areas as the interviews. These surveys contained
open-ended questions that were later coded, and our sponsor approved all the questions before the surveys were distributed. With the information gleaned from these interviews, we looked for recurring concerns or positive views of the program. We also noted any suggestions for its improvement and compared material collected from teachers with information from our literature review to determine whether it corroborated or refuted the theories from our research.

3.3 Objective 3: Perspectives of Participants and Potential Participants

Our team collected a significant amount of data from Croydon students and parents by using a combination of workshops and surveys described in the following sections. We gathered this information from a selection of Croydon schools that fit into the three categories mentioned in Objective 2. All collaborating schools were organized and compiled into Table 4.

Table 4 Three categories of schools where we conducted surveys and interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regular</th>
<th>New</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atwood Primary School (visit)</td>
<td>Broadmead Primary School (visit)</td>
<td>Parish Church C of E Junior School (visit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodcote Primary School (sent materials)</td>
<td>Keston Primary School (sent materials)</td>
<td>Courtwood Primary School (visit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunstall Nursery and Children's Centre (sent materials)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3.1 Students

In order to more completely understand the views of the students, we used classroom workshops and surveys. We only utilized surveys when a school could not accommodate a visit from us (Woodcote Primary, Keston Primary, and Tunstall Nursery Schools). In these cases, teachers conducted the surveys with their individual classes, and at other schools we held classroom workshops (Atwood Primary, Broadmead Primary, Courtwood Primary, and Parish Church: Church of England Junior Schools). The head teacher or lead contact at each school received detailed plans, questions, and topics for both workshops and surveys for approval before any students became involved. By holding these workshops and surveys we intended to gauge the students’ opinions on different
topics surrounding the program and walking to school in general. Most of the questions were closed-ended with set answer choices to allow for comparable data and to remove the need to code open-ended responses from children. Although, there were some open-ended questions relating to the types of rewards the students are interested in receiving for walking, which allowed students to share their ideas with us.

We designed workshops for one classroom at a time, though the specific format was adapted to fit each school’s individual needs. At one school, Broadmead Primary, we spoke with the entire school over the course of two assemblies following a format similar to the single classroom workshops. At every other school we visited, two members of our team conducted each workshop ensuring that a teacher or school official was always present. We began each workshop by introducing ourselves and describing how student feedback would be useful to our research. The classroom visits focused on different topics depending on the type of school (Appendix C). We asked students questions with specific answer choices and had them raise their hand to indicate their preferred choice in a ‘hands-up’ style survey, similar to the ones used in the Wavehill evaluation (Wavehill Consulting, 2009, p. 66-72). At the end of these sessions we allotted time for discussion of the Walk on Wednesday program and for the students to ask us questions, allowing us to gain further information about students’ perspectives.

At applicable schools, teachers administered the student surveys, recorded the number of responses for each question, and returned the completed forms to us. These surveys had a short introductory section about our project group and our goals. The questions asked at the three different types of schools are presented in Appendix C and are the same questions we used when visiting the schools in person. One exception to this was Tunstall Nursery, where the school considered the students too young to participate in surveys. Instead, teachers from each class year completed our teacher survey.

3.3.2 Parents

Generally, parents decide whether their children walk to school and have a variety of opinions regarding health, safety, and the advantages and disadvantages of participating in WoW. We sent backpack surveys home with students from the schools we visited, as well as cooperating schools that we were unable to visit, that parents completed and sent
back. Before children brought these surveys home, parents were notified of the surveys via text, email, or letter (Appendix D).

The backpack surveys were similar in format to those for students, with a brief introduction of our project and a statement noting that completion was voluntary and that the surveys were anonymous. This preceded a number of closed-ended questions regarding the parent’s views of WoW, safety concerns for their children, transportation to and from school in general, and a section at the end for parents to leave additional comments (Appendix E). Our sponsor liaison, Peter McDonald, and the head teachers from each participating school revised and approved these surveys. Teachers received paper copies of the surveys and instructions to send them home with each student. The return date was also included on each survey. Teachers then collected the returned surveys and gave them to the head teacher, from whom we collected them.

We tabulated and analyzed the responses to the closed-ended questions graphically. We looked for specific trends in the replies to the general comments section and coded them based on these trends, which entailed grouping the responses by recurring opinions. The parent surveys gave us insight about factors that affect whether children walk to school and what the effect of the Walk on Wednesday program has on these factors.

3.3.3 Impacts on the Local Urban Environment

In order to determine the impact that WoW has on the local urban environment, we observed traffic around Croydon schools during drop-off and pick-up hours. These observations, made at schools representing the different categories that we investigated (Broadmead Primary, Atwood Primary, Courtwood Primary, and Parish Church C of E Junior Schools), allowed us to see what effect WoW has on school traffic. A contact at each school suggested the optimal time period for our observations, during which we counted the total number of cars that passed the school, as well as the number of cars that dropped students off or picked them up. We also recorded the number of cars that performed illegal or dangerous maneuvers, including stopping in the middle of the road or on the yellow zigzag lines, making three-point turns, and speeding (Appendix F). We analyzed data from our notes in order to establish the volume of cars present as well as the extent of illegal maneuvers on different days at different schools. From this data, we attempted to
determine what WoW’s impact is on the amount of traffic around schools that use it as well as the traffic trends at schools that do not. This data helped us determine if the current implementation of the WoW program addresses concerns mentioned in our literature review.

**3.4 Objective 4: Recommendations for Croydon Council**

We provided recommendations for the improvement of the implementation of WoW in Croydon by using trends and common themes found within our data. All of the information we gathered provided insight and connections to the literature we researched. We evaluated all of the organized data, as well as notes from interviews, meetings, and observations, in order to look for commonalities across the views of different stakeholders.
4. Results and Discussion

This chapter describes the results of data gathered through our various methods in support of the research described in Chapter 2: Literature Review. Approximately 1,500 students and 25 teachers participated in our study, and out of approximately 900 parent surveys sent out we received a 19% return rate. These response levels, along with data from our other methods, allowed us to suggest trends that we then assembled into various themes highlighted in the following sections. Due to the time we were able to spend at each school, we sometimes did not have sufficient time to ask every question we had prepared. An example of this is Broadmead Primary, where we held two assemblies of approximately 240 students. Due to the large size of these assemblies, we were unable to record accurate tallies of the student responses to our questions. For this reason, we did not include Broadmead Primary’s student data in our analysis of the results but instead referenced it when formulating our reoccurring themes. We also found that many of the concerns from Wavehill’s evaluation have already been addressed in the implementation of WoW. Our themes are the basis of our recommendations to Croydon Council.

4.1 Effect of Location on Walking

The location of a school and the distance that students live from that school has a large impact on the success of programs such as Walk on Wednesday. Since WoW promotes sustainable transportation, catchment area, public transport routes, and the area surrounding a school can have a large effect on these transportation rates.

4.1.1 Distance from School

The distance a child lives from school has a large effect on their participation in the Walk on Wednesday program. This is because WoW strives to motivate children to use active transport to get to school, but if the distance they have to travel is too far, it is not plausible. Our surveys asked students what the main reason they do not walk to school is. As seen in Figure 11, the most common reason students gave for not walking to school is that they ‘live too far away.’
Figure 11 Reasons students gave for not walking to school by percentage for each school.

From this graph, it is clear that students feel that distance plays a large role in whether or not they can walk to school. When teachers listed weaknesses of the program, ‘some students live too far away,’ was the second highest response given (Figure 12). We also saw this trend in our interviews. The Head Teacher, David Morgan, and Deputy Head Teacher, Linda Hibbert, of Parish Church C of E Junior noted that students’ distance from school is a major factor that impedes walking at their school. Mr. Morgan elaborated that Church Schools tend to have students that live farther away, with the average Parish Church C of E Junior student living approximately 2 miles from school. Ms. Hibbert noted that this is, “quite a distance to walk especially with the little ones in the morning and at the end of a busy day.” Jennifer Sinclair, the Healthy Schools Coordinator and Year 3 teacher from Courtwood Primary School, stated that there are about five children per class in her school who live too far away to be able to walk with an average class of approximately thirty students.
When comparing two questions asked in the parent surveys we found a correlation between how their child normally gets to school and the distance their house is from it (Figure 13). This figure shows that approximately half of the families surveyed who walk, live within 0.5 kilometers of their child’s school. This proportion steadily decreases to approximately 3% of walkers living at a distance greater than 2 kilometers. When assessing the responses of parents who drive their child to school, almost the exact opposite trend is present, with responses starting from around 4% and increasing to nearly 50% as the distance from the school increases.
In analyzing the data for children who use public transport, it is apparent that the relative majority of those in this category live in the range of 1 to 2 kilometers from their school. From this, one can conclude that this distance is close enough to the school as to not deter families from wanting to walk, but it is far enough to make it impractical to use active transport for the entire journey.

We found that students, parents, and teachers are all in agreement that the distance the student lives from school has a large impact on whether or not that student can get to school via active transport. This also has a large effect on whether or not that student can participate in the Walk on Wednesday program. In order to address this, some schools have implemented the Park and Stride program discussed in the Literature Review which allows students to be driven most of the way and then dropped off a few blocks from school where they then walk the remainder of the trip (Living Streets, 2012B). Although some schools have already implemented the Park and Stride program, others have yet to be informed. An increase in the use of Park and Stride would reduce the congestion around school drop-off zones, while also allowing students that live further away to participate in the WoW program.
4.1.2 Effect of Location on Public Transport Use

The location of a school has a large effect on whether or not public transportation is an accessible form of travel to and from that school. While active transportation and car use is more affected by a student’s distance from school, public transportation depends on whether or not there are bus, tram, and/or train stops in that area.

![Figure 14 Students responses when asked how they normally get to school, in percentage by school.](image)

As seen in Figure 14, the average walking rates of the surveyed schools is approximately 45%. Although there is no significant difference in walking rates, the use of public transport methods varies greatly between these schools. One example of this is Parish Church C of E Junior, which is the only school with students responding that they take the tram, which we attributed to the school’s close proximity to a tram stop. Similarly, both Parish Church C of E Junior and Atwood Primary are close to bus stops (Figure 14). Since using public transportation reduces car dependence, schools with sufficient access can incorporate its use into their implementation of WoW. Grace Ardley, the WoW Coordinator for Broadmead Primary, has found that this allows more opportunities for students to earn a badge while also encouraging the use of public transportation. Although a program such as WoW can influence walking rates, a school’s public transport rate is greatly dependent on the location of the school.
4.2 Effect of Traffic on Walking

In order to gain a better understanding of the dangers on the road outside of schools, we observed traffic patterns surrounding each of the schools we visited. Using the data collected from these traffic observations, we calculated the percent of dangerous maneuvers made by dividing the total number of dangerous traffic maneuvers by the total number of cars passing by the school. We used this data to forecast which of the schools we visited had the highest risk for child safety on the roads.

![Bar Chart]

Figure 15 The percentage of traffic hazards per car for the different schools we observed.

Figure 15 demonstrates how dangerous the roads can be near the schools we observed during drop-off and pick-up times. With a calculated percent of cars making dangerous maneuvers ranging from over 20% to approximately 5%, it is apparent why a large number of parents expressed concern for road safety.
Figure 16 Reasons parents gave for not allowing their children to walk to school, in percentage by school.

Figure 16 shows some of the concerns parents have with their children walking to school. This graph indicates that parents are concerned about their children having to cross too many busy intersections and having to walk along streets that are too busy. Parents’ concern for road safety is understandable because 20% of road related accidents involving a pedestrian or cyclist occurring in Croydon, in 2011, included a child under the age of fifteen (Croydon Council 2013E). A limitation to our data is that ‘distance that families live from the school’ and ‘student age’ were not preset responses to the survey question used to generate Figure 16. However, ‘other’ was an option, and multiple parents took this opportunity to write one of these in as their response. If these were preset responses the results might have differed.
Figure 17 Parent responses when asked how their child normally gets to school, in percentage by school.

Figure 17 shows the walking rates for the schools that we surveyed from the parents’ perspectives. When compared to Figure 15 and Figure 16, it is clear that there is no significant correlation between observed traffic danger and the schools’ walking rates. Likewise, there is no observed relationship between walking to school and traffic rate (Figure 17 and 18).

Figure 18 Traffic rate of different schools in number of cars per minute.

This figure shows the traffic rate at the four schools we observed. Since parents are concerned about the safety of the roads their children walk on, it would make sense that a
school with the highest volume of traffic would have the lowest walking rate. Steinbach et al. made a claim that children who lived in areas with high traffic volumes spend just as much time walking to school as children who lived in areas with lower volumes (Steinbach et al, 2012). Although we did not observe enough schools to make a claim of this magnitude, our data re-affirms Steinbach et al.'s claim. We also found a similar lack of trends when comparing walking rates to the level of road and neighborhood danger present near each school (Figure 16 and 17).

4.3 Effect of Parents involvement on Walking

We used various interviews and surveys to learn about the role parents play in their children’s walking habits. As discussed in our Literature Review, Wavehill Consulting stated that many children travel to school the same way that their parents travel to work (Wavehill Consulting, 2009, p.10).

![Figure 19 The reasons students gave for why they walk to school in percentage by class year.](image)

This figure illustrates that 91% of nursery school students responded that they walk to school because their parents walk with them (Figure 19). On the other hand, in Year 6, only 9% of students listed that as a reason for why they walk to school. This shows that parental influence is more apparent in children of a younger age.

Throughout our interviews with school contacts, it became evident that there is a widespread consensus that parents are the deciding factors in how children travel to
school. For example, in the interview with Pamela Jacques, WoW Coordinator and Year 6 Teacher from Atwood Primary School, she made a statement about parental influence: “I think the people you’ve actually got to convince is the parents, not the children.” Ms. Ardley also believes that parents are the most important factor for encouraging more children to walk to school. She has found that some, “just cannot be bothered” to walk to school and others drop off their child on their way to work. Ms. Jacques stated, “I just think it is all part of good parenting as well... if we can encourage the parents to promote this with their children, then I think it has a really positive effect on those children.”

A parent driving their child on their way to work was the second greatest factor students cited for why they do not walk (Figure 11). This corroborates another concern of Ms. Jacques, which was the lack of availability parents had to walk their children to school. When Atwood Primary surveyed their students’ parents, they found that parents who work do not tend to make time to walk their child to school, but instead drop their child off during their morning commute.

Figure 20 Percentage of teachers who reported the particular strengths in the Walk on Wednesday program.

Mr. Morgan stated, “I personally think it is down to parental choice and the fact that they will come, drop off their kids, and then go to work, and we couldn’t break that pattern.” Although Figure 20 shows that increased family involvement was mentioned as a strength of the program, the contrasting response of ‘cannot convince parent to walk,’ shown in Figure 12, was mentioned as a weakness by 47% of teacher responses. When teachers
were asked how to improve the program in their school, 50% of them responded that parent awareness needs to increase (Figure 21). They also recommended educating parents and students on the benefits of WoW, validating that parents’ unwillingness to participate is a significant weakness in the program.

![Bar chart](image)

**Figure 21** Percentage of teachers who suggested particular improvements to the WoW program.

Due to the fact that parents have a large impact on whether or not their child walks to school, it important to work with parents in order to increase school walking rates. Ms. Jacques also shared this idea, indicating that schools must adapt for what works best for the parents. To do this, Atwood is running the program as Walk Once a Week rather than Walk on Wednesday to give parents the option to choose what day works best for them. Ms. Sinclair from Courtwood Primary is concerned that it might be difficult to change the parents’ behavior, but that they might be more receptive if it was only once a week, especially if the Park and Stride program is incorporated. Robert Brown, Manager of Croydon Council’s Sports and Physical Activity team, said, “There is not kind of a silver bullet or a one answer to it [parent involvement]. But there is no reason why we couldn’t link in to our program and encourage parents and do family walks and that sort of thing to try and assist it.” This creates an option to consider for increasing parent involvement; which would be to utilize Croydon Council’s Sports and Physical Activity Team, possibly in collaboration with other Council initiatives, to encourage parents to inspire children to be more active, specifically in their journeys to school.
4.4 Effect of Student Involvement on Walking

Getting students involved and interested in walking is crucial to the success of any walking to school program, and starting children off with healthy habits at a young age is a way to ensure that they continue with them throughout their lives. As stated in the literature review, “Intervention in the early years is important for developing the behavior and cognitive patterns that will be set for later in life” (Greater London Authority, 2011, p. 43). Ms. Ardley has her Junior Road Safety Officers give regular presentations to help encourage other students to walk to school. Similarly, Ms. Jacques, has help from her Year 6 students in promoting walking to school and in delivering the WoW badges to those who have earned them each month. Both of these teachers have found that this encourages the younger students to be more active in the program, since they tend to look up to the older students.

Keeping student preferences in mind is important when making decisions to maintain student interest in the program. When we asked students how they would prefer to get to school, over 50% chose some form of active travel rather than by car, public transport (Figure 22).

Comparing Figure 22 and Figure 14, a disparity is evident in how children would prefer to get to school and how they actually do, validating once again, that parents play a large role.
in their child’s journey to school. When children feel that their voice is being heard, they generally respond better and with more participation. Daniel Davis, Croydon Council Improvement Officer: Health and Wellbeing Department of Children, Families, and Learning, noted that when children have more influence over what is going on in their schools, they are more involved and more content with the changes that take place. He suggests that schools ought to, “give them a voice” in order to make them feel more involved with the program.

This “voice” can be given to students in many ways. The Junior Road Safety Officers program is one way to incorporate the older children into the process by allowing them to hold presentations on different road safety topics. This will in turn educate the younger children on how to walk the roads safely. The Walking Bears program is geared toward the younger age group and allows each child to feel a sense of responsibility when it is their turn to care for the bear. This feeling of responsibility would keep these children interested in walking to school until they reach the Year when the program changes (Personal conversation with Hulya Ataoglu, 2013).

4.5 Effect of Teacher Involvement on Walking

One of the most important aspects to a program’s success at an individual school is the support and dedication of that school’s travel liaison. For every school that runs Walk on Wednesday, it is imperative that there be a coordinator in the school to oversee the program. The coordinator of a school’s travel initiatives has an effect on the program, as was found in the study of Active Travel to School initiatives in the United States (Eyler et al., 2008). This often falls to one of the school’s teachers, which can be quite a burden on top of regular school responsibilities. According to Ms. Jacques, dividing the responsibilities can only go so far, “You actually want somebody who’s in overall charge,” to keep the program well organized within the school.

Anna Portch, Croydon Council’s Sustainable Schools Officer, often works with school teachers and has learned some important strategies for keeping them engaged with local authority initiatives. In the work that she does, networking between the teachers is crucial to a program’s success, “[You] need networks so they [the teachers] can talk to other people in similar roles.” Allowing teachers to have a discussion in a group setting would
give them the opportunity to compare and swap ideas while also helping to solve each other’s problems. Ms. Portch also notes that teachers are more inclined to listen to other teachers due to their similar positions as opposed to outside parties. A host should be there to help answer questions that teachers cannot answer themselves.

Although Ms. Portch believes that this network would be very helpful, she stated that there are “two levels” needed in order to make sure the network work properly. The first is that the individual teachers must be self-motivated when it comes to participating in the network. Second, the network meeting must be “enjoyable and helpful.” If the meetings are boring or the information is not what the participants want to know, they will not make time to attend. Ms. Portch also stresses that the time and location of the network meeting is very important. Since Croydon is so large, the host must choose a central location for the meeting in order to make it possible for representatives from all schools to attend. If there is no budget to have the meeting during school hours, Ms. Portch suggests it should be held around 4 p.m. so that all of the teachers have time to make the commute to the meeting while at the same time not cutting too much into their personal life. If a network is created and run in such a way that it accommodates the teacher’s busy schedules, it will be beneficial to the teachers running the WoW program, their schools, and the program as a whole.

4.6 Impact of the Walk on Wednesday Program

One of the major goals of this project was to determine if WoW is having the effect in schools that justifies Croydon Council’s funding of it. We found that schools with WoW had higher rates of occasional walkers than schools without it. We also found that some schools had mixed results from the Walk on Wednesday program, and that some age groups were more interested in the incentives offered.
Figure 23 shows that the number of students who walk to school 1 to 2 times a week is significantly higher in Atwood Primary and Keston Primary, likely due to the presence of WoW in these schools, which may cause students who normally do not walk to make the effort to walk at least one time in order to receive the badge at the end of the month. Since the increase in student walking rate is only in the ‘1-2’ times a week category, it is clear that the incentives have a major effect.

To determine how the incentives affect walking rates, we asked students at schools that run WoW why they walk to school. We determined from our data that Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 had significantly more students respond that they walked for the badges compared to Years 3 through 6. Since the incentives are one of the key elements of WoW, loss of interest in walking for the badges in later years is a problem with the program (Figure 19). Although we were able to get data from students of every class year, a constraint of this data is that some years have responses from multiple schools while others only have responses from one.
Figure 24 Frequency parents reported that their child earns a badge by participating in the WoW program.

When parents answered how often their children received badges, approximately 55% of Broadmead Primary parents, 32% of Atwood Primary parents, and 13% of Tunstall Nursery parents responded that their child never receives a WoW badge (Figure 24). When comparing this figure to the walking rates at the depicted schools (Broadmead Primary-70%, Atwood Primary-21%, Tunstall Nursery-42%), it is apparent that WoW has the highest percentage of participants at Tunstall Nursery, which awards badges to approximately 85% of its students; while Broadmead Primary and Atwood Primary reward only about 40% of their students with badges. The variance in these percentages indicates that WoW does not have the same amount of success at all schools.
At schools with Walk on Wednesday, we also asked teachers if the current program benefited their school. We provided them with three choices: Yes, No, and I would need more information first. Figure 25 shows that 44% of these teachers said outright that the program provided benefits, indicating that while some teachers believe that the program is running successfully others are realizing some of its limitations. This, along with the data from the parent and student surveys, shows that WoW has some benefits to the schools that are currently operating it, but it is not without its difficulties. Fine-tuning the program would address concerns of continued interest and exciting incentives would further the program’s benefits.

### 4.7 Problems with WoW

Although the Walk on Wednesday program provides benefits to the students, schools, and communities it is run in, there are difficulties that accompany it. Three major concerns in the implementation of the program include: a loss of interest in the incentives for the older students, schools reaching “walking ceilings”, and the rewarded of students for completing their daily routine. These concerns were brought to our attention through the interviews, surveys, and classroom workshops we conducted at the schools.
4.7.1 Badges as Incentives

The first concern is the apparent loss of interest in the badges among students between Year 3 and Year 5. When surveying students at schools that use WoW, we asked, ‘Do you walk to school on WoW days just to receive the badges?’ The decreased number of students answering that they walk to receive a badge could be attributed to participation in the program for more than three years (Figure 26). If no modifications are made to hold their attention, students at schools that participate in WoW may lose interest in the incentives. The Wavehill Consulting evaluation found a similar trend indicating that incentives need to change with time to keep students’ interest and involvement in the program strong (Wavehill Consulting, 2009, p.11). One way to reinvigorate this interest could be to change the Walk to School program every couple of years, so students would not have the time to become bored with the incentive.

![Figure 26 Percentage of students per class year who reported that they do and do not walk to school on WoW days to receive the badges.](image)

The figure shows an increased interest in the badges for students in Year 6, possibly due to these students having the option of being Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSOs) (Figure 26). Each school’s head teacher appoints these officers who are responsible for “encouraging road safety awareness” (Leicestershire Country Council, 2012). Although not all students in the Year 6 class are JRSOs, having classmates that support the WoW program and safe walking may be causing the increase in interest.
In order to better understand how effective the badges are as an incentive, we asked students whose school does not run the WoW program how much more they would walk if they were to receive a badge. In Figure 27, the purple, blue, and red bars can be combined because all of the students in these categories would be eligible for a badge if WoW was to be implemented at their school. Additionally, one cannot clearly see a trend across the class years for students who would not change their walking habits for a badge as an incentive.

4.7.2 Walking Ceilings

The second concern we came across in our data was that some schools were hitting “walking ceilings,” when a school that has been running the Walk on Wednesday program for a while reaches the maximum number of students that can walk. Ms. Jacques from Atwood Primary, a school that has been running WoW since 2009, mentioned that her school has made efforts in the past to encourage more students to travel to school using active modes of transport, but hit a “ceiling” of roughly 375 children who regularly walk to school out of the total 500 students. She has found that this number has stayed relatively constant throughout the past three years. This is a concern for her because she sees this as a maximum number of students who walk and does not know how to increase Atwood's walking rate beyond this point. Although none of the other schools we visited had run Walk on Wednesday as long as Atwood, many teachers from those schools stated that some
students just cannot be convinced to walk, indicating that their schools will also eventually hit a “walking ceiling”.

4.7.3 Rewarding Students That Already Walk

The Walk on Wednesday program was put in place as an incentive program to motivate students to walk to school using badges. Although the program has seen success in increasing student walking rates in some schools, a challenge has arisen with who receives the badges. Since some students live very close to their school, they receive a badge every month even though they would walk anyway. Figure 28 shows that 94% of students who live within 0.5 kilometers of their school reported that they normally walk to school, while less than 10% stated that they normally take a car. The opposite is true for those who live farther than 2 kilometers away, as 84% reported that they are driven compared to 9% that walk (Figure 28).

Ms. Ardley stated that she feels that the program rewards children who would walk even without offered incentives, as many children live very close to the school. A teacher from Keston Primary wrote in an answer on our survey that, “children who live close by will always earn a badge, with no special effort.” Many other teachers expressed the same concern in their interviews or surveys. The badges have been found to be a favored incentive, but the question still arises, is it worth giving out badges if many of the students
receiving them would have walked anyway? Although the data and the number of teachers we were able to interview in the short period of time we had are not statistically significant, we do believe this is something that needs further evaluation.
5. **Recommendations**

In evaluating our data, we have established four primary recommendations to present to Croydon Council. These include a description of the qualities that make up an ideal school for WoW, a plan for a variety of programs among different age groups, a network for school coordinators, and resources to increase parental involvement and interest.

### 5.1 The Ideal School for WoW

The Walk on Wednesday scheme is not an ideal program for all schools, as they should meet certain criteria in order for WoW to run effectively. Due to the variance in the qualities of schools across Croydon, only those that most closely resemble an ideal WoW school should run the program. Therefore, we recommend that Croydon Council only provide funding to schools they deem closely resemble the ideal school described in the following section.

Arguably, the most important factor in Walk on Wednesday’s success is the presence of an enthusiastic school coordinator who is willing to devote extra time to ensure the program’s success. Both Peter McDonald and Ms. Jacques (4.5) have mentioned this point on separate occasions. The Council should verify the presence of a dedicated coordinator in a school before it is considered for WoW funding.

The walking rate of schools prior to using WoW is the second most important factor in determining whether or not funding the program is cost effective. A major concern of our sponsor is that WoW often rewards the students who already walk to school, although the purpose of providing schools with badges is to encourage those students who do not normally walk to do so (McDonald). Since the national average walking rate is 50%, a school with a walking rate below this would be an ideal candidate to run the WoW program. A lower initial walking rate at these schools would ensure that the program has a greater chance for success.

Students whose families live farther than 1 kilometer from school tend to walk significantly less than those whose families live within 0.5 kilometers; or even those who live up to 1 kilometer away, as can be seen in Figure 13 in section 4.1.1. This is why ‘average travel distance,’ should be considered when deciding which schools to provide...
WoW funding to. However, if a school with a higher average travel distance has a nearby area suitable to be a Park and Stride location, it could still be eligible to run WoW as children whose families live farther away can still participate.

School location is the last factor we consider to be important in defining the ideal WoW school. Since a major concern parents have with allowing their children to walk to school is safety, the model school for WoW should not be located on a dangerous street or intersection. Some examples of these dangers include children having to cross roads with multiple lanes, roads without Zebra crossings, and roads with blind turns. It should also not be in an area that is difficult to travel by use of active transport such as on a hill or surrounded with insufficient sidewalks. School officials who know the surrounding area of the school could determine these factors. Although, these official’s views may be biased due to the different desires they have for improvements for their school. These desires may affect their ability to make an accurate assessment of the dangers around their school. For example, if a teacher expressed that it was their school’s goal to receive a Zebra crossing, they may report that their school is more dangerous than it actually is, while a teacher who wants to implement WoW might express that there is less danger around their school. Thus, having a Croydon Council official perform a follow up assessment will counteract some of this bias.

Taking all these factors into account, each Croydon school has a set of ideal criteria that they should meet before the Council can consider them to receive funds to run Walk on Wednesday. Some of these elements are less critical for the success of WoW, however, having a passionate school coordinator and a low initial walking rate are crucial. Additional considerations that favor a school’s inclusion in the WoW program are a suitable Park and Stride location, sufficient access to public transportation to assist students with farther travel and unappealing terrain, and other options that the Council deems acceptable.

**5.2 Different Programs for Different Age Groups**

One of the most effective ways to keep children’s interest in programs that promote walking to school is to add variety and occasionally renew the enthusiasm of those involved. Our recommendation to accomplish this is to implement different Walk to School programs in three age groups (Table 5).
The first few years of a student's academic career are vital to forming habits, whether healthy or unhealthy. Because of this, it is very important to have some form of walking program in the early years of Nursery, Reception, and Year 1. In talking to current students in these years, as well as teachers, we found that a program such as Walking Bears would be more successful at this level. This program would work well in combination with the already existing Children's Traffic Club, which teaches young students safe travel fundamentals (The Children’s Traffic Club, 2013).

When analyzing the data from our student surveys, we found that fewer students were participating in the Walk on Wednesday program for the badges after their third year of involvement with the program (Figure 26). However, these same students responded that they liked the badges as incentives. We can conclude from this data that although these students are interested in the badges, they have grown bored of receiving them over the years. Because of this, we recommend that WoW begin at Year 2 and end at Year 4 or 5.

Year 6 students are the oldest in primary school and walking programs for them should be used as a transition period into secondary school. We recommend that students in this year take on some responsibilities in the operation of WoW in their schools, as Pamela Jacques does with her Year 6 class at Atwood Primary (4.4). These responsibilities could include counting the number of students who walk to school each day and distributing badges at the end of each month. This will not only keep the older students interested in walking to school, but it will also encourage a larger number of younger students to participate as well. Offering various incentives for different age groups will keep children interested in walking throughout their years in primary school.

### 5.3 Coordinator Networking

The Walk on Wednesday coordinator is crucial in achieving behavior changes in students and parents. This coordinator needs to have enthusiasm and passion for the program for it to achieve success. Oftentimes, this person is a teacher with many other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Nursery</th>
<th>Reception</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Walking Bears</td>
<td>Walk on Wednesday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Additional involvement in WoW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
responsibilities to attend to, and that can make it difficult for them to run the program alone. Introducing regular networking among other active travel coordinators will allow for a pooling of ideas and an environment conducive to problem solving.

To encourage an exchange of ideas we recommend holding regular networking meetings for school travel coordinators. At a meeting that we attended for WoW contact teachers, we noted that teachers were interested in how others were implementing the program. They were able to brainstorm ideas together about how to solve common or individual problems with the program in their particular schools. When asked at the end about having more meetings of this type in the future, all of the teachers present said they would be interested in attending more networking sessions. In an interview with Ms. Portch, we learned that she has found networking to be an invaluable tool for energy and sustainability coordinators in the schools that she works with. She feels that teachers respond best when talking to other teachers, because they have a shared perspective on programs, initiatives, and education and have often encountered similar issues and can help one another. Organizing a meeting once a term or once a year for active travel coordinators would allow them the opportunity to improve programs in their own schools through exposure to an influx of outside ideas.

In addition to encouraging networking meetings for teachers, Ms. Portch also suggested the possibility of a school partnership system to improve travel programs in schools that are struggling by pairing them with schools that have successful travel initiatives. It would be preferable for these paired schools to be in close proximity to each other to make it easier for the teachers. The goal would be to have the two coordinators converse once a month and cover specific topic areas related to sustainable travel methods. These meetings would continue for a set number of consecutive months as to not place a long-term burden on the teachers. The coordinators can share advice and ideas with the expectation that at the end of the time period both of the schools will have more successful travel initiatives than before pairing. Networking of this type would give teachers more one-on-one advice and help, and may be more manageable for teachers without the time to make it to a large group meeting.
5.4 Parental Involvement

Many of the stakeholders we have contacted during our research have indicated that one of the largest factors in changing the behavior of children is changing the behavior of their parents. A study conducted on the Active Travel to School initiatives in America implies that parental involvement is crucial in changing the travel behavior of school children (Eyler et al., 2008). Various teachers corroborated this opinion. Finding ways to incentivize parents is essential for any program with the goal of sustaining more active travel to school.

Several of the teachers that we spoke with stated that lack of parental involvement and cooperation was a huge detriment to WoW’s success in their schools. At every school, there was at least one teacher who confirmed the importance of parental participation if a walk to school program is to succeed, including schools that do and do not use the Walk on Wednesday program. Some of the teachers suggested that holding workshops with the parents to discuss the benefits of walking could persuade them to change their behavior. The study of Active Travel to School initiatives found that many parents are not involved because of a lack of time or a preference for driving their child to school, but that there were significant benefits when parents did become involved (Eyler et al., 2008). Encouraging parents to walk the last portion of a school commute with their child is one approach to accommodate parents who have no other option but to make the journey by car.

To increase levels of active travel to school, the Council needs to develop resources to help schools improve parental cooperation levels. These resources can include: materials to use in workshops with parents, information and facts about the benefits of walking to school, options for parents who live too far away for their child to walk the entire commute, and ways to encourage working with the PTA or parent governors. These tools can be available for all schools, and do not need to be restricted to those that run the WoW program.

The options presented in this chapter are only recommendations for the Council created to help with the improvement of the Walk on Wednesday program in Croydon schools. The final decision on whether or not to use any of these suggestions lies with the Council. Since we were unable to investigate schools that have recently stopped running
WoW looking into schools of this type could give new insight into the program’s implementation. Future research into other walk to school programs for the Borough of Croydon would allow the Council to find options that may be more cost effective and/or suit more schools’ individual needs.
References


Appendices

Appendix A: Sponsor Description

Croydon became an official London borough in 1965. It is located 17 km south of the City of London, and is a major business, financial, and cultural center within the greater London area (Figure 29).

Figure 29 The Borough of Croydon (yellow) in relation to the other London boroughs (Metropolitan Police Authority 2012).

Croydon is the most populous borough in London and the fifth largest by area. It has a total area of approximately 86.5 square kilometers, including more than 3,000 acres of parkland, countryside, and open space. The population of Croydon has increased by 8.4% from 330,587 in 2001 to 363,400 in 2011 (London European Partnership for Transport, 2013) (Croydon Observatory, 2013B). Croydon has an unemployment rate of 29.3% as of June 2012. Croydon’s employment rate is higher than that of both London and Greater England. Average weekly earnings in Croydon were £558.5 (Croydon Observatory 2013A), which is higher than the average for England but lower than that for London.

Figure 30 The percentages of employment in various sectors for Croydon (Croydon Observatory 2013A).
Croydon's employment is split between various sectors, with 45% of the working population being in managerial, professional or technical occupations. Secretarial and administrative work, services and retail, and manual labor make up 27%, 15%, and 13% respectively (Figure 30) (Croydon Observatory 2009). Twenty-six percent of Croydon’s population is under 20 years of age, and a total of 52,891 students attended 89 primary and 21 secondary state funded schools in 2012 (London European Partnership for Transport, 2013).

Croydon is one of the more ethnically diverse boroughs, ranking 12th overall in the proportion of the population that belongs to an ethnic minority. Data from the 2011 census shows that 45% of Croydon’s residents are from black or minority ethnic (BME) groups, which is higher than both Greater London at 40% and the country of England as a whole at 15% (Figure 31).

![Figure 31 An ethnic breakdown from the 2011 census of Croydon, London, and England (Croydon Observatory, 2013B).](image)

Croydon is home to speakers of over one hundred different languages and has seen increases in all categories of minority ethnic groups over the past decade. The largest increase in percentage has been in the mixed race group, which grew by 94.3% over the past ten years (Croydon Observatory, 2013B).
Most of Croydon’s ethnic minority population is clustered in the northern part of the borough, (Figure 32) which also has the greatest income deprivation (Figure 33). The thirteen most northern wards of the borough are in the lowest 30% for income generation in England (Croydon Observatory, 2013B).

This ethnic and income divide is also reflected in voting patterns with the more affluent south voting for Conservative councilors and the less affluent, more ethnically diverse
north, voting for Labor councilors (Figure 34). Croydon is composed of 24 electoral wards that elect 70 total councilors every four years. Currently, there are 33 Labor party and 37 Conservative party councilors (Croydon Council, 2012A).

The governing body of Croydon is the Council of Croydon. It is broken up into three main branches each with its own specific duties: the executive, committees, and scrutiny (Figure 35). The 70 elected council members provide oversight and determine policies for the borough, while the rest of the approximately 10,500 staff are responsible for various services, including schools, roads, trash removal, and parks (Croydon Council, 2013). The Council’s objective is to make Croydon an enterprising, learning, creative, connected, sustainable, and caring city (Croydon Council, 2010). The Council spends approximately £900 million a year providing services to the communities of Croydon in order to meet these goals (Croydon Council, 2013).
In the year 2010/2011 the total revenue for Croydon was £297.6 million. Fifty percent of the borough’s income (£149 million) came from the Council tax (Figure 36), which is a tax on all homeowners based on the value of their home. The rest of the revenue came from business rates and government grants at 35% and 15% respectively.

Business rates are taxes on businesses that do not go straight to the Croydon Council, but are reapportioned by the central government based on need. Government grants are additional funds also distributed by the central government based on population and needs. The Council allocates its funding in three main areas: housing (17%), corporate services (30%) and education (34%) (Figure 37) (Croydon Council, 2012B).
Part of Croydon's community strategy over the next few years is to make the borough more sustainable, with specific focus on reducing carbon emissions (Croydon Council, 2010). The continuing development of the Walk on Wednesday program will further this goal as well as help reduce childhood obesity rates in the borough which are 10% for children ages 4-5 and 23% for children ages 10-11 (Child and Maternal Health Observatory, 2012).
Appendix B: Interview Questions for Council Staff

Daniel Davis, Croydon Council Improvement Officer: Health and Wellbeing
Department of Children, Families, and Learning:

2. How long has the Healthy Schools program existed in Croydon?
3. Why was the program implemented in Croydon?
4. How do schools become Healthy Schools certified?
5. What is your role in the Healthy Schools certification program?
6. How do you think the Healthy Schools program has helped children in Croydon?
7. How do programs like WoW help schools with certification?
8. How would you change WoW to promote more of the health benefits of walking?
9. What do you think are the most important tools for encouraging children to have more active lifestyles?

Robert Brown, Manager of Croydon Council’s Sports and Physical Activity Team:

1. What does the Active Lifestyles team do in Croydon?
2. What is your role on the team?
3. What strategies does the team use to encourage more active travel in the borough?
4. What do you see as the biggest obstacle in encouraging active lifestyles in Croydon?
5. How does the team promote active living in children?
6. Do you think WoW is a beneficial program in promoting lifelong healthy habits in children?
7. How would you use active living as a focus to provide incentives for children to use active travel?
Appendix C: Interview Guide for Teachers

Schools that don't have the Walk on Wednesday Program

We are students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts. We are conducting research with the Borough of Croydon to evaluate the effectiveness of the Walk on Wednesday program in the borough and suggest improvements for its implementation. In this interview we have some questions we would like to ask about regarding WoW and encouraging children to walk to school.

With your permission, we would like to record this interview, is that acceptable? Also, do we have your permission to quote you directly in our final report?

Anything that we use in our report coming from this interview would be subject to your review and approval, and nothing will be included without your permission.

Questions

1. Does your school have a School Travel Plan?
   a. What is your involvement in it?
   b. How does this affect your school’s sustainable travel rates?
   c. If not, does this school promote walking or sustainable transport to its students?
2. Along those lines, does this school promote exercise and healthy eating?
3. What is your knowledge of the Walk on Wednesday Program?
   a. Does this school have any history with using the program?
4. What is the student walking rate at this school?
5. Do you think this could be improved by implementing WoW in this school?
   a. Why or why not?
6. In your opinion, why does this school not use the Walk on Wednesday program?
7. What modifications would make the program more appealing to your school?

Recently there has been a decrease in the number of students walking to school....

8. What do you believe are the reasons some students do not walk to school?
9. On the other hand, why do you think that other students do walk?
10. Approximately how far does the average student live from school?
11. To what extent does the distance a student lives from school affect whether or not they walk?
12. Do you think the roads surrounding the school are safe enough for the children to walk to school?
   a. Following up on safety, do you believe that the pavements are too narrow?
Schools that have the Walk on Wednesday Program

We are students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts. We are conducting research with the Borough of Croydon to evaluate the effectiveness of the Walk on Wednesday program in the borough and suggest improvements for its implementation. In this interview we have some questions we would like to ask about regarding WoW and encouraging children to walk to school.

With your permission, we would like to record this interview, is that acceptable? Also, do we have your permission to quote you directly in our final report? Anything that we use in our report coming from this interview would be subject to your review and approval, and nothing will be included without your permission.

Questions

1. Does your school have a School Travel Plan?
   a. What is your involvement in it?
   b. How does this affect your school’s sustainable travel rates?
   c. If not, does this school promote walking or sustainable transport to its students?
2. What is your role in the Walk on Wednesday Program at this school?
3. How long has this school been participating in the Walk on Wednesday program?
4. How does WoW benefit this school?
5. How does this school keep the program interesting for students and teachers?
6. What is the student walking rate at this school?
   a. Do you believe that the Walk on Wednesday program is improving the walking rate at this school?

Recently there has been a decrease in the number of students walking to school....

7. What do you believe are the reasons some students do not to walk to school?
8. On the other hand, why do you think that other students do to walk?
9. Approximately how far does the average student live from school?
10. To what extent does the distance a student lives from school affect whether or not they walk?
11. Do you think the roads surrounding the school are safe enough for the children to walk to school?
   b. Following up on safety, do you believe that the pavements are too narrow?
12. What modifications would make the program more appealing to your school?
Appendix D: Guides for Classroom Workshops and Student Surveys

Surveys for schools that run Walk on Wednesday

We are American students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts. We are conducting research in cooperation with Croydon Council on how children in the Borough of Croydon get to and from school.

Please note the number of student responses for each question in the space provided.

1. How do you normally get to school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Cycle</th>
<th>Car</th>
<th>Scooter</th>
<th>Bus</th>
<th>Tram</th>
<th>Train</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. How many days a week do you play sports outside of school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>1 or 2 days</th>
<th>3 or 4 days</th>
<th>Everyday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Do you enjoy: playing sports, playing outside, and walking?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. How many days a week do you walk to school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>1 or 2 days</th>
<th>3 or 4 days</th>
<th>Everyday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Why do you walk to school?

- Parents walk with me
- My brother(s)/sister(s) walk to school
- My house is close to school
- I walk with my friends
- For the WoW badges

6. If you don’t walk to school why not?

- There are a lot of cars on the road
- My parents drive me on their way to work
- I am not allowed to walk alone
- The school is too far away
- I don’t want to

7. To get to school would you rather

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Cycle</th>
<th>Be driven</th>
<th>Scoot</th>
<th>Use a bus</th>
<th>Use a tram</th>
<th>Use a train</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For further information please contact Peter McDonald via email at peter.mcdonald@croydon.gov.uk or call 020 8726 6000 Ext. 62765
8. Do you walk to school on Walk on Wednesday days to receive badges?

| Yes | No |

9. Do you like having the Walk on Wednesday Program at your school?

| Yes | No |

10. Do you like getting the badges every month?

| Yes | No |

11. What is your favorite part of the Walk on Wednesday Program? (Please write in 5 of their responses and the number of students who would walk to school for that reward, students can vote for more than one reward)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. What are some ideas of you would like instead of badges. (Please write in 5 of their responses and the number of students who would walk to school for that reward, students can vote for more than one reward)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Surveys for schools that do not run Walk on Wednesday

We are American students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts. We are conducting research in cooperation with Croydon Council on how children in the Borough of Croydon get to and from school.

Please note the number of student responses for each question in the space provided.

1. How do you normally get to school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Cycle</th>
<th>Car</th>
<th>Scooter</th>
<th>Bus</th>
<th>Tram</th>
<th>Train</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. How many days a week do you play sports outside of school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>1 or 2 days</th>
<th>3 or 4 days</th>
<th>Everyday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3. Do you enjoy: playing sports, playing outside, and walking?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4. How many days a week do you walk to school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>1 or 2 days</th>
<th>3 or 4 days</th>
<th>Everyday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

5. Why do you walk to school?

- Parents walk with me
- My brother(s)/sister(s) walk to school
- My house is close to school
- I walk with my friends

For further information please contact Peter McDonald via email at peter.mcdonald@croydon.gov.uk or call 020 8726 6000 Ext. 62765
6. **If you don’t walk to school why not?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are a lot of cars on the road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parents drive me on their way to work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not allowed to walk alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school is too far away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t want to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. **To get to school would you rather**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scoot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a tram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a train</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. **Would you walk to school more if you received a reward?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I already walk everyday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lot more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would not change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. **What type of reward would you like to get for walking to school?** (Please write in 5 of their responses and the number of students who would walk to school for that reward, students can vote for more than one reward)

10. **Have you ever heard of the Walk on Wednesday Program?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For further information please contact Peter McDonald via email at peter.mcdonald@croydon.gov.uk or call 020 8726 6000 Ext. 62765
Appendix E: Parent Notification Letter

In the coming weeks, there will be surveys sent home with students for parents to fill out regarding a research project being conducted by a team of American University students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Massachusetts. These surveys will be anonymous and voluntary. Your feedback will be very beneficial to their research. The students will also be observing the traffic surrounding the school either during the beginning or conclusion of the school day. They will be identifiable by their Croydon Council ID badges.
Appendix F: Parent Surveys

Parent surveys for schools that run Walk on Wednesday

This survey is anonymous please do not write your name. We are American students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts. We are conducting research in cooperation with Croydon Council on how children in the Borough of Croydon get to and from school.

Please circle the answer on each of the questions that is closest to how you feel.

Please send this survey back to school with your child by _________________

1. How does your child normally get to school?
   - They walk
   - They cycle
   - They are driven
   - They scoot
   - They take the bus
   - They take the tram
   - The take the train

2. Does your child enjoy playing sports, playing outside, and walking?
   - A lot
   - A little
   - Not at all

3. How often does your child play sports, play outside, and walk outside of school?
   - Never
   - 1 or 2 days a week
   - 3 or 4 days a week
   - 5 or 6 days a week
   - Everyday
4. Approximately how far do you live from your child’s school?
   - <500m
   - 500m - 1km
   - 1-2km
   - >2 km
   - other ___________________

   [1 mile = 1.6km]

5. Do you allow your child to walk to school? (if yes skip to question 7)
   - Yes
   - No

6. If you do not allow your child walk to school, why not?
   - They might not be safe in the neighborhoods they have to walk through
   - They would have to cross too many busy streets
   - The pavements are too narrow
   - There are too many busy intersections
   - Other ____________________________

7. Are you aware your child’s school participates in the WoW program?
   - Yes
   - No

8. How often does your child earn a badge from the WoW program?
   - Every month
   - Most months
   - About half of the months
   - Rarely
   - Never

Feel free to use the space below to write down any additional comments or concerns

For further information please contact Peter McDonald via email at peter.mcdonald@croydon.gov.uk or call 020 8726 6000 Ext. 62765
Parent surveys for schools that do not run Walk on Wednesday

This survey is anonymous please do not write your name. We are American students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts. We are conducting research in cooperation with the Croydon Council on how children in the Borough of Croydon get to and from school.

Please circle the answer on each of the questions that is closest to how you feel.

Please send this survey back to school with your child by ____________________

1. How does your child normally get to school?
   - They walk
   - They cycle
   - They are driven
   - They scoot
   - They take the bus
   - They take the tram
   - The take the train

2. Does your child enjoy playing sports, playing outside, and walking?
   - A lot
   - A little
   - Not at all

3. How often does your child play sports, play outside, and walk outside of school?
   - Never
   - 1 or 2 days a week
   - 3 or 4 days a week
   - 5 or 6 days a week
   - Everyday

4. Do you allow your child walk to school? (if yes skip to question 6)
   - Yes
   - No
5. If you do not allow your child walk to school, why not?
   - The neighborhoods they have to walk through are dangerous
   - They would have to cross too many busy streets
   - There are not sufficient pavements
   - There are too many busy intersections
   - Other _______________________________

6. Approximately how far do you live from your child’s school?
   - <500m
   - 500m - 1km
   - 1-2km
   - >2 km
   - other __________________________
   [1 mile = 1.6km]

7. Have you ever heard of the Walk on Wednesday program?
   - Yes
   - No

8. The WoW program strives to get students to walk to school at least once a week to reduce the amount of congestion on the roads, decrease air pollution, and increase the amount of exercise students regularly partake in. Does this sound like a program that you would be interested in your child’s school participating in?
   - Yes
   - No
   - I would need more information first

Feel free to use the space below to write down any additional comments or concerns.

For further information please contact Peter McDonald via email at peter.mcdonald@croydon.gov.uk or call 020 8726 6000 Ext. 62765
### Appendix G: Observation Criterion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation Criterion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speeding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocking Traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stopping on Crosswalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Dropped off in Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn Around in Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost Accidents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passing Cars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle Slowing Traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop in Yellow Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop for the Crosswalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive in Other Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking – Obstructing Traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Dangerous Maneuvers Simultaneously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running Turning Light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running Turning Light (People at Crossing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix H: Transcripts of Interviews

Pamela Jacques, WoW Coordinator and Year 6 Teacher, Atwood Primary School
Friday, March 22nd, 2013, afternoon
Key:
Pamela Jacques
Interviewer

Does your school have a school travel plan?
Yes. We do.

Okay, and what is your involvement with it?
I wrote it.

Can you describe a little bit of the process when you wrote it?
Yes. I mean it was written, I’m trying to think, I think it was 2008. Not 100% sure, but around there. We acquired healthy school status in 2007 and at that point it wasn’t a requirement for healthy school status but it was recommended. So within the year, we got the School Travel Plan together and it was a reasonably demanding process because it wasn’t things we’d really had to think about in huge amounts at that stage. We thought about getting children involved, we thought about having massive parking issues in the school for the staff let alone the parents. So it was looking at our community, looking at the way children came to school. Getting involved with the governors, talking to the governors about various issues to do bits. So it was looking at our involvement in the community to see how children travelled to school and also things that had to do with linking it to physical activity in healthy school scheme. Because obviously it’s part or their physical activity each day or you would hope it might be. So it was quite a procedure, putting it all together and writing it, and then, updating it. Because you have to update it every year. And we’ve had a number of changes to our school site and parking and various issues that we’ve had to affirm. Implementing security gates, different gates and that sort of thing. It all sounds very trivial but actually, you have to keep making sure it’s in there. Otherwise it’s out of date and not appropriate.

How do you feel that your STP affects your school’s sustainable travel rates? Walking and cycling and scooting?
As much as I would like. I mentioned yesterday at the meeting that we kind of, we hit almost like a ceiling of 375 roughly children walking to school on a regular basis out of the 500 we have. But it dips during the winter. Although I think children try to. And we had a big campaign on cycling and we got the cycle pods, although as you can probably see there is not very many out there today. But we had a big input on cycling. We took it quite seriously at that point. Right, let’s see if we can really encourage them to travel differently, to scoot to school or to cycle to school. We had lots of cycling lessons from the cycle instructor. And we really promoted that quite strongly. But unless I’m doing it all the time, it kind of slips. And in the actual fact, one of the things I’m finding, because I have a number of other roles in school, is that actually, and it was in the meeting yesterday, I kind of had...
this moment where I went, you know what, I really do need to pass this to someone else who has the enthusiasm and time that that lady from Rockmount has to do. Because she was brilliant, but I don’t have the time to do all that. I do it with the support of some of my Year 6 pupils. She has, and I don’t mean this rudely, but she appears to have the time to do it. Which I don’t. And I felt really inadequate. And I think it needs another re-injection of enthusiasm and vitality into it. When we were having a big campaign on cycling a couple of year ago, it had a massive effect and it really had a lot of children cycling. We had lots of cycling lessons going on. We saw parents cycling, which is great. I still see 2 consistently cycling, obviously some of our population has changed because they have moved on to a senior school. But one of the other things the parents very much wanted from me when I wrote the travel plan, because we sent surveys out to them, saying what would you like, what do you think lowers the issue of traffic in the area, and the risks to their children from the traffic, because at 8 o’clock in the morning, between 8 and 9, it’s really busy. And I wanted the traffic crossing changed to a puffin crossing. So it had that kind of intelligence to not change the lights until people have finished crossing, which I think you get with a puffin as opposed to a pelican. There is a mini round-a-bout just down the road, where some of our children have to cross. There is a road about a quarter of a mile up there in that direction where a lot of our children come that way and either need to cross or come around. And a lot of people use it as a short cut to a senior school that's up there. Lots of people use it that way. So it gets really crowded and a bit hazardous and a lot of them are saying to me, “Could you get a Lollipop Lady up there, could you get this crossing change, could you get that mini round-a-bout changed?” And I’ll try, but you know, we hit the moment where money ran out. Because our travel plan went in, they were like “Oh, yes. You want this, you want this, and you want this. And then we hit kind of 2009 where everything started caving in on us and there was no more money. So that sucked. The kind of thing you’re looking for.

So you said, that for one teacher it is very overwhelming to organize all of this, would it be possible to have multiple teachers running this at the same time? So you don’t have to put so much effort into it?

You could. But I think you actually want somebody who’s actually in overall charge. I mean I was doing it and tried to get the enthusiasm going and I teach the oldest pupils in the school, so that’s good, they’re very helpful and very supportive. But inevitably, you have to check things, you have to do things, and I will hold my hand up honesty and say we trust children to say you’ve walking to school once a week, because we do once a week rather than on Wednesdays. And I haven’t got the time to go out like that lady and stand out there and encourage. Cause they do it on Wednesdays, we do it any day of the week, whichever fits in with your family. Cause that was one of the issues we discovered form surveys. Parents were going, “I work, I don’t have time to do it except on Fridays, cause I don’t work Fridays.” And that’s fine. We’ll do it once a week rather than on Wednesdays. I think you could possible share it out. I have to say, our staff are really busy people. They do an awful lot. We are a school that does a massive amount. We are involved in a lot of things. We are a very musical school. We have choirs, we have 70% of the children learn a musical instrument, so there is all kinds of music lessons going on. We have a lot of sport going on. There are all kinds. I do the drama in the school. It’s lovely to be part of this but everybody’s just. There are times when we’re all kind of caught falling on our feet going, is
it Friday, oh thank goodness for that! Because it’s quite fever pitch and our Head is a workaholic. He’s a driven man, he really is very, very busy. And I suppose that engenders the staff who are all doing pretty similar things. We’re all very busy. So yes they could share it, but I also think it might actually be better with one person just controlling it, and running it their way. That’s kind of my view. It’ll be sad to let it go because it was very much the thing I started and got going but you have to just realize at some point, no. I mean you could have some of the teachers sharing the giving out of the passports and things like that. I don’t know the badges and that sort of thing. The bear, I was thinking about walking bear because we opted for that and it might be nice to have a Keystage 1 teacher maybe leading that with somebody else. That’s a possibility I think.

In regard to, Wow here, what role do you play?

I am in charge of it. I set it up and each year I do assemblies on it. I talk to the children about it and about the fact that we do if children travel on the bus, if they cycle, if they scoot, we count them as not coming to school in a car so basically they get a badge. We set it all up, we talk to them about it. We talk to the staff and say we are going to come around if you could double check with your class who has done walking once a week and then my year 6 children with the badges, which they love doing...But yes I tend to run it and control it with my Year 6 helping me.

How long has Atwood run Wow?

I was trying to think about that. I think we started it in 2009. We started doing it then.

How do you think it benefits your school and your school environment and the children?

I think that the obvious benefit is it starts them off to a really good start to the day because they are being physically active. And I also like the fact that they might be talking to somebody as they walk to school. I’m passionate about that. I really think it is so important. One of my other roles in school, is I’m responsible for all the children with special educational needs. So every child in the school who has a problem no matter how big or small, comes under my responsibility. And I’m very, very passionate about speech and language. About the fact that it’s so important for children to talk to and listen to. Is one of my big things. And I love the thought they might be walking on the road, going what’s that, why’s that there? I just think walking along with your child, or somebody else’s child, your having a conversation which I think is a really good start to the day. Rather than sitting in a car with the adult who’s driving the car choice on the radio or nobody actually engaging in a conversation. Plus the physical activity. And yes it will rain sometimes and yes it will snow sometimes but that’s part of living in this country and you have to learn that you’re going to have to do that sometimes. And you get physically equipped for it, you wear the right clothes, you have the right kind of stuff on I think that’s part of development for those children. That yes you come with a spare pair of shoes that day if it’s going to be wet or something I just think its all part of good parenting as well. And I think if we can encourage the parents to promote this with their children, then I think it has a really positive effect on those children. They don’t learn to speak unless somebody speaks to them. And also, the other thing I get excited about, general knowledge. We have a really good national curriculum in schools. But I am as you can probably tell, a very talky teacher and I like
children to ask questions. Unless they get the opportunity to go, “What’s that bird? Why is that doing that?” general knowledge is getting lost in our national curriculum these days because there’s just not time for a chat session with your class. We used to have time to do that. It’s got squeezed out. Because everything else is so important. So if they’ve got someone they can talk to about “What’s that bird, where’s that lorrie going, what does that say there?” then again, I think that’s really, really positive.

How does Atwood keep the students and teachers involved in keeping WoW going?

My Year 6 pupils will do assemblies maybe once a term. We sometimes, we have an aim to do it more frequently but there is often other things going on so we try and aim to do once a term and my our theme after Easter will be, hopefully the weather is improving and you can cycle and you can scoot and we can do all of that kinds of things. We try to take a theme each term. I try to in January, we did one that kind of around road safety and how dark nights, dark mornings, be very careful, wear something bright. Whoever is with you, be careful that you’re with them. And I remind them that they can get their badge for walking once a week. If you are walking from Waitrose, which you probably saw, it’s not that far up the road...It’s getting them [parents] committed to the idea. We do it through assemblies. We do it when they go around once a month with the badges. I think the younger children look up to the older children very much. So I try and do it through them more than through the staff, whom I know are very busy with lots of things. So we are trying to do it through our year 6 pupils, in promoting it to them.

So you told parents that they could park at Waitrose and then walk the rest of the way?

Yes, that was one of the things that came as a result of trying to update the travel plan. We didn’t do it the first year we did it, but in talking to them about Walk to school, because we have a sort of link with Waitrose, they help us with some things, sometimes sponsors a little thing right here. They said oh they are very happy, inevitably they want people to park there and then go shop. It’s kind of a Park and Stride. It’s about a quarter mile. There is a bus top there by the round-a-bout. No more than a 5 minute walk, 10 if you are going really slowly. Unfortunately we don’t have any side roads that are really convenient for us. And because we only have parking spaces for about 28 cars, we have a staff around 50. We made a decision that the teacher assistants and the dinner supervisors agreed that they would park offsite, because they all felt the teaching staff should park on site since we’re the ones with the bag full of books and the laptops and equipment. The teachers park on site and the staff parks off site. So the most convenient road, which is literally right across the road, is where half our staff is parked. And there aren’t that many other convenient side roads to park on. So Waitrose is probably quite handy because you are only allowed to park on one side of the road and then the mini round-about is another main road and that gets quite busy. So it’s quite tricky to find a decent side road to park at a reasonable distance around here. So Waitrose option is a good one.

What would you say is the student walking rate?

We’ve got 375 children, that’s kind of the average walk out of the 499 children we've got. [And is that once a week?] That’s once a week. Yes. That’s a reasonably consistent
number. I mean sometimes it dips, but that’s the average over a year. But I can’t seem to get it above that. And that’s been roughly the same for about 3 years.

**Do you have children that walk to school every day?**

Oh yes. Oh absolutely. We have children who walk every day because they live reasonably near and they walk every day. We have children who will cycle every day. But we also have a consistent number who, well in fairness to their parents, we do have a core group who live a distance away. They were in the area when they started the school, and they’ve moved. But they want to keep coming to the school so obviously their parents are driving them here. Because there isn’t the right transport link and so we have a small group who are coming from a fair distance away and inevitably they are going to drive them here.

One of the issues that this program is kind of having is that it might be rewarding those children who would walk to school anyways. Do you have any sort of ideas or way of making sure those students who are making the effort…?

We do surveys every year. And I try to, I mean it is part of the Travel Plan that you need to and we were an accredited school. We are on level 3. I do have the information from that but I must admit, I don’t go heavily into that to actually go, well done you actually are making a concerted effort to walk once a week. Because we haven’t got that as a set of data that I could consistently produce for anyone and the survey once a year that comes out, I haven’t followed that up. And that might be something for someone to go over and look into. We have asked them in the survey how far away they live from school. And I have to say that a majority of them agree, that they live within half a mile of the school. But there is a reasonable number who don’t. A lot of them live in this area. We are a popular school. We are massively oversubscribed every year. We take 60 and last year we had over 300 people apply for the places. A lot of people try to live within this area and then once they get into the school, they look to maybe move on at some point and so then they are further out.

**Do you believe that the WoW program increased your school’s walking rate?**

I think it had a very powerful effect early on. And as I said I think that’s why it needs an injection and I think the bear might very well do that for the younger children. But yes I think it definitely had a really positive effect early on. I think, one I don’t know if they could do it but the charts and the passports just kept on coming out and it’s kind of been a bit the same. And the bear might just be that fresh approach to it for the younger children. I don’t think it would work with the older children.

**Going back to the ceiling thing with the 375 students, we understand that some students live too far away, but do you think there would be a way to break the 375 students ceiling or is it just that they are so far it’s not possible?**

I think there’s a group, that we could definitely, improve it, get that number a bit higher. But I think the people you’ve actually got to convince is the parents not the children.

**The teacher from Broadmead said the same thing. Does this school do anything to convince those parents?**
We have done in the past, I have to confess this year I haven’t done a lot. Last year I did, sent out a letter asking them about walking bus. We were quite keen to start one of those up, when we got this whole system going. They were adamant there was no way they were going to let their child walk, some of them, not all of them. But they mentioned they would not let their child walk with somebody else looking after them. That it would either be them or nothing and that they couldn’t do it, their child wouldn’t walk. And that really fell on deaf ears, we really didn’t get anywhere with that. But I think there is scope for improving I think there is scope in asking or ideas. Maybe asking them, “What would persuade you to let your child walk to school? Or walk from Waitrose or whatever.” I think there is a bit of scope. I think it is the parents we need to convince rather than the children.

So there is a slight safety concern having one parent watch a whole group of kids? 

Yes, and we wouldn’t do that. I mean obviously we would make sure the ratio was right and there were parents who were prepared to do it. There were enough parents going no, I’m not having that. The Head at that time didn’t want to push it any further. Too much resistance.

Do you have any idea on what basis they were against it?

The traffic worries them. I think the major concern that has come out of the surveys in the last few years...is the traffic. The traffic worries them the most. Because it does get really busy and people get impatient. It must be frustrating for people who are not parents driving. My son travels from this area to leatherhead every day. And he loves the school holidays, he says, “Oh it’s so much better without the school run going on.” He gets there about 15 to 20 minutes quicker, when it’s the school holidays. And I think there’s a concern over danger to their children, risk to their children. And I understand that, but I think they are going to have to grow up and move on and when they start going to secondary schools, for a lot of them...Our local secondary school, there is crazy parking.

The traffic that is really bad between 8 and 9, does that have to do with parents dropping their children off?

I think probably. Because you have Gresham up there, on the same road as us less than a mile away. So you have people driving up there coming here to us, and then you have Riddlestown, which is our closest secondary school. And you have people going to .... There are a lot of schools within a mile and a half of each other.

So parents who are worried about traffic are the ones causing the traffic?

Absolutely! They can’t take an objective view to say, “If I stop driving, this would improve the situation.” We have noticed in the last 4 years, the increase of numbers of both parents working and we have an increasing number of single mothers these days. We used to get a lot of mothers coming in to do sewing and cooking and things. We don’t get near the numbers we used to. Because they are working. Because things are squeezed and tight and expensive. So we have greater numbers of parents going to work. And so I would imagine they are working in Croydon. Some of them might not be but Croydon would be they would be dropping them here and driving on in, is my guess. That’s my guess.
What modifications would you think might make the program more appealing to your school and maybe change that to also how have you modified the program to fit your school?

We don’t use the wall charts. Because my staff just found it unmanageable. We give out the passports, and the children enjoy the passports. That lady said she liked them on a monthly basis. I don’t do that. But that’s kind of done to my manageability. I haven’t got the time and I can’t take my pupils away from what they are learning to say do that. So we have left that, in a sense that we have asked the class teachers to talk to and keep their class in check. So I’ve modified it down to a very streamlined version of it. In terms of class teachers talking to them, discussing with them do you walk? And that peer pressure of a child going “Oh yes I walk.” I think there is reasonable group of children who are honest. I mean my class, very honest about it. I think the bear might be a good modification for the younger ones. Whether there is something that could reinvigorate the older children, I’m not sure what that is but something to reinvigorate them.

At Broadmead, we asked the question what could the program give you, a lot of them mentioned like a party or a picnic, for the class that had the most walkers. A lot of children also said certificates and medals.

Medals maybe, I mean we have a behavior policy in school which we’ve started because we’ve noticed behavior, it wasn’t awful, but we prided ourselves on behavior at Atwood was very good, and we just felt it’s slipped a bit, so we brought in a behavior policy and they get certificates for that. We have sunshine days and you get a stamp on a card every day that you’ve behaved appropriately. And if you get 20 consecutive sunshine days, you get a sunshine certificate. So I don’t think certificates would necessarily be something they would like. But a medal might well be. Because that would be different, that would be fun. I mean they do love collecting the badges. They love having the badges, even my oldest ones like the badges. But a medal might be different.

So yesterday you met with other teachers to talk about WoW, does that happen often?

No. To be fair, we used to discuss this at the healthy schools network. We’d have a meeting once a term in Croydon and obviously because it was a link, we would sometimes discuss issues related to travel. But the department for healthy schools was drastically pruned last year and even more drastically cut in the last 6 months because the lead guy is leaving at the end of the month. Now it’s kind of dwindling down. The mayor holds a celebration event, but it was on a date, where something else might be happening at your school. Then you end up not going.

I was wondering if you found yesterday’s meeting interesting?

Undoubtedly it was. It was interesting.

We were thinking as a recommendation it might be beneficial for school teachers to meet up like that and talk about things that work, thing that don’t and that sort of thing.

I think you are right. Because just catching up... is actually quite interesting. I think that is a good thing.
(She asked us about our final project)

The bit that worries me, is the people who drive through red lights. And it's changing, and they're "Oh I can just get through." And it starts beeping for the green man, and there will be children who think it is safe to cross. And adults, we think to double check, oh they are all stopping {cars} but a child will trust that green man.

**What about the neighborhoods surrounding the school?**

They are okay. You'll have that one manic driver, but generally they are okay.

**And the pavements?**

Yes there are pavements around here everywhere. [And they are a reasonable size?] Yes they are a reasonable size, yes. I do have concerns that mini round-a-bout down there. Because you are at a T junction. And just up that way, it is used as a cut through for people going up that way. And people will dash across. So yes, I do have some worries and as I said I put them in the Travel Plan and we were hoping for some improvements but then we hit the point where they money ran out.
S: We are students from Worcester polytechnic institute in Massachusetts in American and we are here conducting an assessment of a program called walk on Wednesday are either of you familiar with this program?

M: Yeah

S: So Fiona when we spoke with her last week she told me that she tried it but it struggled to happen here for things.

M: Yeah

S: Ok so that is kind of why we are here to ask questions of you and any of the teachers to get their feedback to see why or why not. So my first question is: does your school have a school travel plan that you are aware of?

M: Yeah we have a school travel plan.

S: Ok

M: It needs a bit of updating but we do have a travel plan.

H: I think Fiona is in the process of updating it isn’t she?

M: Yeah

H: But I think it’s not there yet.

M: No, so we have one but it needs updating.

S: Ok do either of you have any involvement within that school travel plan or is that mainly Fiona’s assessment?

M: It’s mainly Fiona and the children and the governors I mean we see it towards the end when it is almost ready but we don’t do it right from the beginning.

S: Ok kind of along those lines does Parish Church promote sustainable travel rates within students of walking and transportation and such?

H: We try to don’t we? We I don’t know if you know this but we have 4 JRSOs, Jr. Road Safety Officers, And one thing that we have done in the past is that we’ve tried to you know, they have done assemblies and they have done presentations on encouraging walking or
getting public transport and not coming by car so we have on occasion tried that haven’t we?

M: Yeah the biggest issue that we have is that because we are a church school and we offer geographical places and foundation places church places, the people that have the church places can come from a little bit further away so it is impractical for them to walk. And lots of parents combine the school journey, in their car with them going to work so they drive, they drop their kids off and then they go to work. So to find another alternative way for them to approach school in the morning we haven’t found.

S: That’s a trait we have seen along this

M: Yeah

S: Similarly does this school promote healthy eating and exercise?

H: Yeah

S: In what ways would you say?

M: We make a big thing about the fact, saying we are a healthy school. We work hard with in PE about exercise, we have skipping rope as a class and we have additional sort of times for exercise as well. We have taken over our own catering in school now so we have a handle on all the food that’s eaten at lunch time, the cooked food, because were cooking it, not me personally, so we are trying to improve the level of healthiness in the food that we serve that’s in a balanced diet. Plus the fact that we encourage people who don’t have a school dinner but pack lunch to have a balanced meal in their packed lunch. So the mid-day supervisors will look after people who only bring chocolates.

S: Yeah I saw a sign that says no sweets. Is that just in that area?

H: Yeah

M: Yeah that’s just when they are eating up there during the day.

H: Yeah but we do say for snacks that if they want to bring a snack for lunch time, you know, at morning break to bring fruit or something like that not chocolates.

M: Yeah they cannot eat chocolate or crisps at play time.

H: Yeah similarly when it’s a child’s birthday a parent might want to send in sweets but we encourage them not to do that. There is a trend now that some parents actually buy a book for the class as a mark of their child’s birthday rather than sending in sweets.

S: That’s interesting. So sort of switching gears in regards to the walk on Wednesday program what is your knowledge of that program?

M: Well it’s about encouraging parents and children to get out and walk and therefore be a little healthier. It’s about trying to support that if you can with things like walking bus, you know where we provide either a volunteer as a parent or teacher assistant, and the walking bus will leave from this spot and whatever time it is and so instead of parents coming to school to drop their kids off they can go to where they know the walking bus people will be and then they drop the kids off there and then an adult, or those adults, will then walk the kids together in a long crocodile or something to school.
S: Is that something that you have tried in the past or just something that you are aware of?

M: No. Informally we tried it a bit, one of our teaching assistants Sarah did it a bit. She was more like a modern day pied piper because she just happens to come up the hill and she just sort of groups lots of people together and got them going while not on an official basis. That is part of what we are considering because the school is expanding from September were adding more pupils and one of the options because the local residents say there is already to many cars people could come to the bottom of the hill instead of driving up the hill. If they could come to the bottom of the hill then maybe we could all organize walking buses that leave every 5 minutes or something at the bottom of the hill so that people can then trust their kid to us rather than just coming up the roads and then going on. The trouble is people also use this road sort of as a ... or a cut through so they like to come up because they are cutting through and then going off into the next bit of Croydon, because if they don’t come this way then they got to go round the bottom of Croydon.

S: Is that a big problem in the mornings and in the afternoon with the congestion?

M: Ugh it is a nightmare.

H: Yes

M: Absolute nightmare

H: It is not just the congestion it’s the parking, it's the safety aspect as well because the parents will come up the hill and they will stop the car in the middle of the road and sort of throw the children out. So children are getting in the road and coming out. Similarly they will come up and wait in the road and open the doors and let the children in to get in.

M: We tried leaflets; the JRSOs have leafleted parents before Christmas or just after Christmas?

H: Just after Christmas

M: Just after Christmas one morning they all made these safety signs right in the road and the pavements giving them out to the drivers that stopped saying that park carefully, drive safely. We encourage traffic wardens. Parking enforcement officers because the police no longer deal with parking they have given it to local authority. Though we did have the police up here last week checking on things and even he said it was dreadful.

H: Yeah you know you don’t just got our school you got the infant school as well there is also the high school at the end of the road so you got three very big schools and very small road, and then its only one way from that part there on to up this hill so you know you got two way traffic coming up and down here with parked cars and it's really difficult.

S: What would you say the walking rate is at Parish Church if you had to guess percentage wise?

H: I don’t know

M: It’s about 40 probably.

H: Is it that high
S: Ok do you think implementing a program such as WoW, in conjunction with a walking bus would improve this rate?

M: Well you would like to think so yeah.

H: I think the thing is with the walk on Wednesday program because you got all the incentives of the little badges and things like that I think sometimes that could be a little carrot and it will help to get people on board.

S: Yeah we have seen a lot of younger kids year 2 and 3 really responding to the badges and as they get older it loses the appeal.

H: Yeah

S: Do you think that there is a reason why when you tried walk on Wednesday it didn't work? Is it because of the hill is it just no one is interested?

M: I don’t know that you could put it down to; I personally think it is down to parental choice and the fact that they will come, they will drop their kids off and then go to work and we couldn’t break that pattern.

H: There is also I think there are some parents anxieties around their child walking to school whether it’s on their own or whatever and its countering those anxieties, it’s the minority but I think that it is still something that is there.

S: Yeah especially with the dangers of the road outside of the school.

M: Yeah

H: Exactly yeah

S: So recently in on a national level there has been a decrease in the number of students that do walk to school. Do you have any opinions on why you think this is? Just on a broader basis? Is it again with the parents?

M: I think it’s a lifestyle.

H: Yeah it’s the busyness of life, you know I think there is so much for people to do, whether its people not as organized in the morning to get up a little bit earlier to set out a little bit earlier are on some last minute.

S: Yeah, so about how far does your average student live from school? There are some that come from further?

M: Oh some come from an incredible distance, one person comes from Biggen Hill which is about 10 miles away cause they used to live close then they move away but they still want their child to come here till they go to secondary school.

H: Some are a bit closer like 5 miles.

M: I suppose the average is about 2 miles.
H: Yeah, and you got ones you know who are literally on the doorstep straight across the road.

**S: You think that is a factor you would say for students choosing to walk here?**

H: I think 2 miles is quite a distance to walk especially with the little ones in the morning and at the end of a busy day. And you know it’s night and day. You know less than a mile I think is probably doable.

M: Yeah

H: But two miles is a long way.

M: And there are issues about the roads around. I mean the last time we had the big input into the travel plan we did actually get the Council to put another crossing point further down on Ebson road. It’s not a Zebra crossing but it is another crossing point with another traffic island in the middle so people can get half way and then have a safe place to stop and then move on. That’s in one direction, the other direction you’ve got to go underneath an underpass to then get out under the park and then go to one of the other areas where people live and again some parents are not very keen on letting their child walk through the underpass because it is smelly and dirty and you never quite know who is hanging about there.

M: So the makeup of the area doesn’t allow easy walking, there are always roads to cross and to cross safety you have got to go along and go with the green man and go along.

H: And there are no crossing patrols anymore are there?

M: No the lollypop people have gone, too much money.

**S: Yes we have heard about that. With the safety issues of the roads up here, the pavements, are they wide enough do you think or are they too narrow for children when they are walking?**

M: Generally they are alright; the pavements are affected by cars parking up onto the pavement.

**S: Picking children up, they park up on the curb?**

H: Yes

M: Oh yes

H: So that narrows it a bit.

M: So close to school things parking on the pavement are an issue.

**S: Right, I mean we took one of the buses right up to Wadden road and it wasn’t a far walk, do a lot of students take the bus home in that way?**

H: Yeah some of them do, some go home on the tram as well.

M: Yeah on the tram.

**S: I mean there is always that option because I know it can be difficult when the area comes to walking to school or cycling or things in that way.**
M: We don’t really have the option of cycling because they got to have passed their cycling test, their proficiency test, and where as we used to have it in school time they now don’t run it anymore so the children have to get their test qualification outside of school on the weekends or something or the holidays.

S: In order to cycle?

M: In order to cycle because we can’t let students cycle unless they have passed their proficiency test.

S: Ok, is that the same with scooting?

H: No I don’t think it is because the thing with a scooter is it tends to be the parents will bring them and the children just scoot along on the side.

M: And then the parents will then take the scooter home or away with them.

H: Yeah

M: Very few times we have had to look after a scooter in school.

H: Yeah only a few times once or twice.

S: Alright well do you have any questions for us?

M: Well so you are writing all this information up as part of what?

S: Well were actually surveying a few different schools and trying to interview a few key people at those schools that have some knowledge of WoW or travel plans and were trying to just assess how well the program works and try to see if there are any improvements that we could offer to the Council. And see if we could get it to be more effective in schools.

M: See I think if we were a school in the middle of a housing estate or something were its all easy accessible then you could see how it would all work, but where we are being fragmented and the position of the school those are all factors which mitigate against its success.

S: Another one of the problems that we are looking into is that this program tends to reward the children who would already be walking to school.

M: Yeah

H: Yeah

S: Because those who you say live right next door are constantly walking to school every day normally so

H: Well that’s it for somebody who lives across the road it’s a ten yard walk you know and it is every day for them but what you want to do is you want the ones that live further and do make the effort to change the way they travel to school.

M: Always trying to the parents well don’t drop them off right at the school gate drop them off at the bottom of the hill and let them walk the first and last part. I mean you change your habits a little bit. One or two people do but it’s hard to get people to change.
S: Is there a place down there at the bottom of the hill where parents could easily park and walk up?
H: No, well they still have to pay.
M: Well if they leave their car they have to pay because it’s all metered.
S: Yeah
H: So from that point of view it’s easy just to drive up just to stop for how many seconds and then drive off.
S: OK, I mean there was a school we were visiting that has an arraignment with a Waitrose that is .3 or 4 miles down the road where they allow the parents to park there just for the mornings.
H: Yeah
M: Ok
S: Is there something around here that
M: No, everything mitigates against us I think.
H: Because of the position we are, because we are very close to the town center, the roads are metered. Unless you have got a parking permit because you are a resident you have to pay to park in the roads because it’s trying to discourage people clogging up the streets around. So you have to pay to park. So again that is another factor.
S: I understand it can be difficult, any other questions for us?
M: No I don’t think so.
S: Ok
Jennifer Sinclair, WoW Coordinator and Year 3 Teacher, Courtwood Primary School

Tuesday, March 26th, 2013, morning

Key:
Jennifer Sinclair
Interviewer

Does your school have a School Travel Plan currently?
Yes.

What is your involvement in that?
Well, I’ve started doing it this year. So, last week when we had that meeting, was the first time I’ve really learned anything about it. We got the award last year, the travel plan last year, we got the certificate for it last year.

Did you start doing that or was somebody else...
Someone else was doing it, another member of staff was.

What made you want to hop on that?
I was forced to by the teacher. [laughs]

But, have you enjoyed working on it so far?
Yeah, it’s quite interesting, yeah.

Is it something that is important to you?
Yeah, yeah, it is.

How does, so you said it was last year that you started doing your thing.
September, yeah.

Okay, so how has it affected your school’s sustainable travel rates?
Not very much. Cause I think the parents, you know, travelling to school and stuff, you can’t change it, the way the kids travel to school. We’re trying to get a Zebra crossing through the travel plan but, I always forget his name, the man last week. [Peter] Yeah, Peter, he was saying to me last week that we’re not going to get it. So, that was the basis in the School Travel Plan. I don’t know whether we’ll get it or not, we’ll see. That’s basically what we’ve been focusing on in the School Travel Plan.

Okay, is getting that Zebra crossing?
Yeah, cause there was an accident last year. A boy in reception got knocked down. By a parent. He wasn’t dropping his child off very well. He was fine, I think we went to the hospital but he was fine. [That’s good.] Yeah but it didn’t stop the parents. It hasn’t stopped them, yeah. [From driving?] Yeah, or just where they park.
Okay, so kind of along those lines, does Courtwood promote exercise and healthy eating to the children?

Yeah, we just achieved the Healthy Schools Award. I don’t know if you’ve heard of that. [Yeah, we’ve heard it mentioned.] We achieve that, we’ve had it for years but we have to reapply every 4 years so we got it again this year. So that’s all based around safety and traveling to school and how healthy the food is and what after school clubs we do, things like that. So that’s all good.

Is there like any activities that you guys do throughout the year for it?

Yup, well there is obviously football club, net ball team, lots of after school gymnastics, that sort of thing.

What is your current knowledge of the Walk on Wednesday program?

As much as, yeah, you get an award every month for walking on a Wednesday. Yeah, that’s all I know.

Okay, and you mentioned that it had might have been run before you…

Yeah might have been run a few years ago. I wasn’t, it was when I first started, and that was about 6 years ago. But since then, nothing. [And you don’t know why it stopped?] No.

If you had to like make an estimate of what the student-walking rate is here, like what percentage of your students walk to school?

I’d say about 50%. Yeah.

And then the other 50% all car or bus?

Car, yeah. Maybe I suppose about…I’d say probably in each class probably about 2 children that get the bus. So what would that be about, 5%? Something like that.

Which is surprising. I mean there was a bus stop right down the road. I think we came up on one.

It’s surprising because this road is all straight and then there’s a dead end, a complete dead end so most of the children come from that direction and I suppose mums and dads going to work, they drive kids to school and then they’re off to work. So probably not much point in walking them to school and then walking back home to get the car to get to work. Cause they go straight past the school.

The once a week program, do you think parents would be receptive of that at this school? If they agreed to do it once a week?

I don’t know, I really don’t know. The parents are quite stubborn here.

At a couple of the schools, the children want to walk to school to get the badge but their parents just refuse. Because like you said, it just makes more sense for parents to drop off. [Yeah, yeah.] And along those lines, do you think that the 50% walking rate might increase if WoW was brought here?

I think it might. I think it may get more children walking to school. Dependent on why they have to walk. Why the get the car. Be interesting to know, and I think it may be because of
the weather. We have got about, I’d say on average in each class, there is about 5 children that don’t live close enough to walk.

**Have you heard of Park and Stride?**

Yes, you mentioned it last week.

**It’s an option that a lot of the schools have put into place either because students who live too far away or whatnot.**

Yeah, it stops the congestion outside as well. It’s quite a nice idea that. So they could further along the way.

**A few schools actually have talked to local business, like Waitrose, and agreed to have the parents park there in the morning.**

Yeah we really don’t have that around here. No. There are no shops.

**But even just side streets.**

Yeah, which is further down the lane. So they could do the Walk on Wednesday like that.

**Also taking the bus could count because the kid is not taking a car.**

Yeah, that’s a good idea.

**In your personal opinion, why do you think Courtwood doesn’t use WoW right now?**

I don’t know. I don’t know really. I suppose the person who was in charge of it last year wasn’t that ____ And I think a lot of people’s ____ is that parents won’t change. But I think maybe once a week they might. Especially, what’s the thing you just said? [Park and Stride] Park and Stride, something like that. That might work better, definitely. I didn’t realize that was, you could do that. I’m just going to get my notebook.

**So you were saying, that the main reason you think students don’t walk to school is because they live so far away or because their parents will drop them off on the way.**

Parents will drop them off and also that some of them live too far away.

**So, the pavements around here aren’t an issue? Those are fine? Streets aren’t too dangerous?**

No, this area, when it was built, in the 60s, that was really thought about. Being able to walk in between people’s houses and things like that, so pavement-wise, yeah I think it’s fine.

**Do you know, approximately the average distance a student lives from this school?**

Probably within, I’d say a radius of around, half a mile. Yeah, the children who live around here don’t live far away. Quite a few of the kids in this class actually just live over the road in those houses, there.

**Yeah, that’s one of the issues with the Walk on Wednesday program the way it is set up now. It tends to reward those children who already walk to school.**

I think that would be an issue. Yeah, it’s those children that just live over the road and stuff, they are never going to get the car are they? They’re always going to get the badges and then there’s children that [make the effort once a week.] Yeah. And then there’s children
that, like my teaching assistant, she lives quite a few miles away, her son would never get a badge. Because she parks outside the school for her. Thing like that, I think that would cause a few issues if we were to do Walk on Wednesday.

**Do you have any thoughts on a way to remedy that?**

I think the Park and Stride thing is quite a good idea. I will take that on. But someone like, there wouldn't be many people like ____ and Sarah, my teaching assistant, but he would never get a badge because there is no point in her parking all the way down the road.
Okay wonderful then

So my first question is, how long has the Healthy Schools program, existed in Croydon?

Okay in Croydon, right, it’s just worth kind of briefly outlining the kind of historical thing, cause that will give you an idea for the program itself and its changed since it was first implement if you know what I mean. There was a national Healthy Schools program.

That kind of came in 2000, I believe. So we’ve actually had a Healthy Schools presence, since then. So really about 13 years all together. But the national program came to an end in 2010 when the general election happened and the central government decided it was down to local level Boroughs

As to whether or not they wanted to continue with it. So Croydon decided yes we want to keep the Healthy Schools program and that’s been in place. We launched it January last year, so January 2012. But all the schools were still kept involved from the previous one so 13 years in total, but a couple of years with Croydon specific Healthy Schools thing.

Why is it that Croydon decided to keep implementing the program even after the national government decided not to?

Yeah well we, first of all obviously what’s tended to happen with Healthy Schools is its usually been jointed funded, yeah. So half of it came from Public Health and half of it came from the Education Department and there was a good link between the schools that were part of the program. We used to have a team of five people yeah, that actually worked here and it was seen really as a really good delivery vehicle for the health related priorities that Croydon had decided that it had. So things like tackling things like obesity, the other big issue is teenage pregnancy, yeah up until a couple of years ago and obviously a lot of the work that was being done on those streams had come via the Healthy Schools program. So we had a good concrete existing relationship and a strategic buy in really from all of the partners yeah, who were responsible for commissioning and deciding whether our service stayed, so yeah that was it basically.
Yeah, and how do schools become a Healthy School, how do they get certified in that respect?

Okay, again used to be a national award

Right, but here

And the national award was actually an absolute pain in the backside, but according to the criteria that they had to do. There was all sorts of evidence that schools had to give, like written evidence or other evidence that had to be witnessed on three or four different occasions. The bureaucracy side of it there was a huge audit tool and it basically meant that in fact you would duplicate information about five or six times through now. So what we did when we re-launched the local one was we streamlined the process yeah, and made it a more straight forward, audit, yeah tool. So in order to get the Healthy Schools status they have to complete a self-assessment framework, yeah, which asks them to evidence a number of different areas and I can give you the audit tool if you would like to take it with you.

Yeah, that would be wonderful

Then you can see what the blank document looks like.

Okay

It asks for them to, you know, show that they've got strategic commitment to some of the priorities that Croydon has and big ones. The healthy schools coordinator is, yeah, within the schools, some of them are given that role specifically other people seem to get it tacked on a little bit to you know, what their normal responsibilities are. They complete the audit, they're asked to demonstrate whatever the current priorities happen to be for Croydon. Yeah, they need to evidence what they're doing on the curriculum and off the curriculum, in those particular areas. So this year, we're looking at obesity, risk taking behavior, as that's drugs and teenage pregnancy as well, emotional health and well-being and anti-bullying, yeah. So ultimately they submit an audit tool that says this is what we're doing. The Quality Assurance group that we've set up, yeah, then looks at the submissions and decides whether or not to award the status or whether they need a little bit more work. Yeah, and what we've also done now is, there's a London Healthy Schools program that's being launched on April the 25th and Croydon is acting as a pilot borough for that in terms of working out whether the audit tools are suitable and so on. So we've got an agreement with London that if the schools get the Croydon award then they're automatically qualified for the bronze standard on the London one too

Mhm

There, a slight drawback I suppose is that, because of the capacity we can't get into each of the schools that are part of the program to really dive down into their audits. So what the Quality Assurance group does is take a representative sample yeah, of all the submissions from that particular time, yeah just to check that the quality is sort of across the board with all of them. And all the schools are told that they may be required to actually provide all the paperwork and evidence and stuff to back up what they're actually saying in the audit tool. So most of the time we frighten them, into thinking that we could turn up at any minute and ask them to prove it. Yeah, so and again you know, there was a, there has always been a
willingness from the schools to keep that healthy schools work going. So thankfully we
don’t get too examples of poor submissions.

**And if a submission wasn’t up to par, what, are the schools told, this is what you need
to fix?**

Yeah, generally and my role for the last year, I don’t know if you know, you probably don’t
know actually, but there’s been another restructure, yeah just now, within the Council

**Yep**

And of course public health are coming into the alley and so on, and there was myself and
my boss, who, we were forced into having to compete, yeah for the one post. And which, I’m
still here so I got that one. Yeah for the last year in essence I was going through every single
one of the submissions prior to the fact that they went to the Quality Assurance group
saying looks a bit weak here, looks a bit dodgy here, yeah and I also do that again when the
Quality Assurance group have met if there’s any standards that

**They don’t agree with**

We think they need to improve, it’s not that we would turn out to anybody and say that’s a
terrible submission go away and never knock on our door again, I mean you know it’s all
about kind of encouraging them to reach those standards that we’d like them to get to. But
yeah they get individual feedback about their audits

**Okay**

And yeah, and suggestions what to improve on

**And they would be able to apply what, the next year or?**

Yeah we normally have like one batch a term so we had I think 62 went through on the first
batch so that was rather stressful, yeah but then we had some more submissions in
December, some more in February, so each kind of half term. Because they all joined the
original national program at different times

**Right**

Yeah, we’ve kind of kept them on the old time scales, rather than than instead having them
all at one point in the year, cause you can see how that would be a nightmare.

**Does that mean that you have to reapply at a certain time?**

Yeah. We ask for them to do an annual review

**So annual, okay**

Yeah annual ones. And also that gives the opportunity for, if there’s any changes in the
priorities strategically, for schools to kind of write and have some chance to adapt and
consider what they’re doing yeah for those, because it used to be for example, teenage
pregnancy was a separate thing, drug taking was a separate thing, then the priority
changed ever so slightly and they decided to group it all together in this alcohol and
teenage pregnancy combination. So sometimes we have to tweak what evidence we’re
looking for to make sure that it fits what the particular direction is.
Okay

If that makes sense

Yeah, you said that kind of the role you've been playing is going through the submissions before they get to the Quality Assurance group, is there any other roles that you play within the Healthy Schools program.

Oh yeah, anything to do with training, yeah around Healthy Schools for teachers

**Teachers**

I basically deliver that, we have healthy schools network meetings. Yeah, so once a term the coordinators are able to come here, yeah to the one of the rooms on the eighth floor and they'll get updates on all the different bits. So we have, one of the big ones we have is personal, social and health education, the PSHE as they call it, there's just been a national review, yeah, of that so any developments that happen nationally or locally that have got anything to do with those four kind of priority areas, we make sure that the schools are given it. And, some of this may change as kind of the next few months evolve. But yeah, I mean it's anything to do with information to the schools, support for the schools, training for the schools. We're asked to do parent workshops sometimes around sex and relationships education and that's my specialty so I end up kind of being the middle man between the slightly angry parents on occasion and the school itself. So, literally all those four streams of work, and any support the schools need that's what we do.

**Kind of going off of that two questions, the groups that you say come in, once a month, are those teachers that are the?**

Yeah, all schools that are part of the program, we have, we ask the schools to designate somebody who is going to have the responsibility for being the healthy schools coordinator. So, as I said, some of them they go down the route of having somebody in the senior management team, sometimes you do get particular, teachers with a passion for it where they want to do it and other people it gets kind of foisted upon them that they never asked for.

**We've seen that**

Yeah, so ultimately it's the coordinators, that we get out and then that way they have a chance to network with each other, and also receive new updates that we think is necessary

**Okay, that's interesting, cause we were, as we're going along with our project, were thinking about recommending to the Council of having the kind of Walk on Wednesday coordinators, which are usually the teachers, that are running it in each school, getting together, once a term, once a month to discuss different ideas and bouncing off each other about the program.**

Yeah, and that's the concept for the Healthy Schools thing, and it seems to work so much nicer for them to be able to talk to kind of counterparts in similar schools and actually because we straddle from primary all the way through secondary, yeah, sometimes actually the secondaries’ knowing what the primaries’ are doing helps with kind of continuity and so on. So yeah, I'd agree with your observation and they like the information.
Yeah, and the second one was on the parent side, so you say you’ve held parent workshops and things like that?

Yeah specifically around the SRE so far, yeah the sex and relationships stuff, but as part of the evidence for the Healthy Schools program they have to show how they’re communicating with parents of their pupils. Yeah, and so we ask them what mechanisms they’ve got in place to communicate school news, that sort of thing. How often they invite parents in, they have to talk about what they’re doing in the school and how they would basically inform, the broader community really about the type of work that they’re trying to get done.

Okay

So it’s more about process, that question, than it is about specifically what they are telling the people. But it’s have you got the infrastructure in place almost, to be able to communicate.

And you said that you’re kind of the middle man with angry parents, is that, is that more of that they just don’t want to be coming to these things, to the workshops, or?

No, not where the sex and relationships stuff is concerned, that usually they definitely want to be there, usually, actually, it’s not fair to say usually, they split quite well between supporters and obviously it’s quite a controversial area, faith based objections to sort of the things that I’m saying, so yeah, sometimes having, a local authority representative there takes a bit of the heat off the school if they have a particularly vocal group of parents.

We’ve come across a lot of the teachers and heads that we’ve talked to you know are convinced that it’s really the parents that have to change if they want they want children to walk to school more for example

Absolutely, yeah, you can’t do it in isolation you know

Exactly

It’s all very well doing this stuff in school but if it’s not backed up outside then you know what can you do. When you’ve got stuff like obesity which is obviously so complex and all the Walk on Wednesday stuff fits in with kind of the obesity drive I suppose. Yeah, we’re very conscious of the fact that schools can often do an awful lot of work that can get undermined by the fact that the parents themselves haven’t really bought into it as much

Right. It’s hard to get them involved in

It can be. Yeah it’s easier in primary schools than it is in secondary

Okay, that’s interesting.

Yeah, secondary schools traditionally, I think by that stage a lot of the parents will be going, well actually there, it’s when their twelve, thirteen, fourteen they actually trust the school to do it and not jeopardize our child’s innocence or whatever else it happens to be. Yeah, where as primary they tend to be a lot more, what are you teaching our kids, are you corrupting them in any way or do we approve of what you are teaching our children and at what point. So there’s usually more engagement from primary parents then we get from secondary.
Interesting. So next question is, how do you think that the healthy schools program has sort of helped the children of Croydon and the communities?

Okay, are you still specifically talking about Walk on Wednesday here or anything in general?

Not yet, but you can be broad, be general.

Well I mean we’ve got noticeable results for things like teenage pregnancy for example. There’s a fifty percent reduction in Croydon Borough over the last ten years.

Wow, since, ten years. Wow.

And that’s been because A) there’s been real strategic agreement, but we created like schemes of work for primary school, yeah, and for secondary school, basically training the staff properly to be able to do that. Yeah, the children themselves, there’s been a lot of initiatives that have come under Healthy Schools. So, pupil voice, yeah is one of the big, what’s the word? Not schemes, traditionally it wasn’t something that necessarily a lot of schools did, consult with their pupils about what actually they wanted the dining room to look like, or what they would eat, or anything like that. And the Healthy Schools kind of have that as part of its core ethos. So I think what you would notice is potentially pupils do feel that they have more of a say, in the way that their school runs.

Okay

Because we insist on them consulting with pupils, and it was the Healthy Schools thing that kind of brought that in and really made it more commonplace. Walk on Wednesday, its harder to define because I know it’s been a bit piecemeal in terms of where it was, but we get evidence in some of the submissions, you know, about the fact that there’s been an uptake in afterschool activities, or there’s been changes to the menus in the dining room. So there’s kind of anecdotal evidence within those audits that the pupils have influenced what’s going on and are also more content and then their happy with it. But that’s talking in broad terms, and yeah but yeah I think so. Schools have got better at engaging with the pupils and asking what they actually need rather than imposing

And assuming things

Yeah, yeah from above.

That’s interesting. And then on a Walk on Wednesday perspective how do you think that programs like WoW have sort of helped schools with their certification for Healthy Schools? Does it have a correlation?

We’ve always got a list of the types of activity that we’d like schools to do, yeah. But we’ve found it quite difficult because, because a lot of them aren’t statutory and they’re not kind of: a school has to do this in order to open or to get its certification for being a school in the first place, you know. So all we’ve been able to do a lot of the time is kind of influence and suggest, yeah, to people that maybe they’d like to look at whether its cycling or Walk on Wednesday or if we’ve identified that there’s a problem with obesity for example, or that they’ve got a lot of sedentary children who aren’t doing any physical activity. Rather than just turn around and go this is what you must do we prefer to give the school the option of a kind of range or different issues or topics if you like, or initiatives that they could use that
would suit them, yeah. So I mean Walk on Wednesday, there are some schools where actually the traffic and everything else in certain areas is so built up and everything you’d actually be concerned for the children potentially walking in, yeah, unless the broader kind of traffic situation was solved. So, if a school found that having lots of just people just walking, and again that’s a bigger issue in secondary because some of them, you know kind of go across the borough to actually get to school in the first place. Yeah, so ultimately we would include Walk on Wednesday as one of the basket of options that they’ve got if they wanted to look at it, rather than definitively saying: you must do it. But what we have done this year, which we didn’t have previously, was the school travel plans which Peter is responsible for. We’ve actually now categorically put within there that they must have updated it within the kind of recommended time and of course that means that they are looking at things like how people are getting there and so on and so forth. So we’ve strengthened it as much as we feel we can without alienating the schools in the first place and making them feel that in fact they’re being dictated to by the local authority. Cause the political changes in the country, you know the way the central government has changed the relationship between local authority and individual schools, yeah, ultimately means that we don’t have quite the clout that we used in terms of being able to say you must do this or you can’t have this certificate whatever. There’s, it’s having to be a lot more subtle than it used to be simply because of the changes in the system.

**Our project is kind of leaning toward, sort of for the conclusion is putting together a few different bundles, if you would say, of programs and the ways to run them. Because not every school is the same.**

Exactly

**You know, not every school has**

I mean there are so many in Croydon as well

**Exactly, some have specific issues, problems like you were saying obesity or traffic, you know you can’t do, if you have so much traffic out front you can’t really have children walking**

Yeah, you’ve got to think of people’s safety as well, yeah

**Exactly**

Absolutely so that sounds like a good

**So that can be something, if Peter takes our recommendations, which I hope he does, I mean he can pass them on to you and you can kind of**

Yeah, yeah absolutely, I mean we’ve been working much closer over the last kind of year or so

**Yep, especially with the school travel plans thing**

Yeah, yeah exactly, I mean that didn’t used to be a compulsory part of the award at all. But we kind of went actually that that’s one of the biggest issues, particularly because obesity has been identified as a priority in Croydon. It made it easier to say: right if you want our certification then you need to demonstrate this and here’s Peter and he’ll support you on
that part of it and then get that communication between the schools and him, yeah, sorted out.

**Why do you think schools want this certification? Do they get, you know, is it just for the recognition or do you think it’s because they want, they genuinely want their children to in the schools to live the healthier lives?**

Okay, that’s quite a complicated question in a way.

**Sorry**

No no no, it’s not something to apologize about. It’s a very good question actually, but again it comes down to, fundamentally, what has changed I think, in the way that everything is operating now, the relationships with the schools. The previous national program was recognized all across the country. Yeah, endorsed by the Department of Health you know, nationally and everything else. And of course with this local devolution, we’ve had to be careful that we aren’t overselling ourselves. You know, that we’re not saying: actually you have to do this because we’re very conscious of the fact that a lot of the work that’s done under the Healthy Schools banner isn’t compulsory on the curriculum, yeah isn’t compulsory within national guidance. We know it’s best practice, we know that happy, healthy, fit children get better exam results and stuff along those lines, but in the longer term, yeah, rather than straight away. And really its, the schools they like logos, they like badges, they like being able to put things on letterhead and note paper and say to their parents: look you know we’ve got this award from the local authority, or this award from London. So there’s definitely a prestige thing in there. But in the current climate, where, as I say we’re conscious that not all of it is stuff that schools have to do, yeah we have to kind of almost like sell it more, and we usually do that along the lines of: if you implement these changes then your overall environment will be better, your pupil satisfaction will be better, your bullying rates will come down. It may not happen straightaway, and the problem is, it’s kind of contradicted in a way by what is going on with central government because they are so academically focused at the moment, you know, that any school that finds itself slipping is instantly under a lot of pressure to improve their exam results straightaway or they’ll be forced to turn into an academy. Yeah so, you know when that happens, if you have got a failing school it’s much more difficult, yeah to be able to persuade them. Because really they haven’t got the time, or the luxury of time I think for some of the Healthy Schools stuff to be embedded properly, yeah. Yeah, but sorry to the rest of it now.

**No, don’t worry about it**

But literally yeah, the prestige of being Healthy School, yeah the fact that everybody likes to sit around and say we are a Healthy School, it reassures parents, it does mean that they get on our official lists of which schools yeah, have got the award and which ones haven’t and more than half of them have them. So you know, once that crucial balance point tipped over it becomes easier to persuade them.

**To recruit them**
But thankfully a lot of them now, you know they’ve been engaged with the program for so long that they do recognize that a lot of the Healthy Schools stuff is a benefit to the broader school and their on that team.

**Hmmm, interesting. So I have one more question**

Am I speaking to fast for you by the way?

**No, cause we’re recording it**

Oh no, we’re recording it as well

Of course

**We're just taking notes as well**

*That way we have notes in two different places*

Yeah yeah, that’s fine, I’m just that, I always talk a bit quick

**It’s alright I’m a fast typer**

Okay, good

**I talk very fast and very loud, so my last question is: what do you think is the most important tools or characteristics or something for encouraging children to be more active, to lead more active life, lifestyles?**

The children themselves, yeah?

**Yes, yup**

It’s a very tricky one because you have this issue of children never believing that they’re going to get old in any way, shape or form, or that the benefits that can help them later on in life, yeah need to be done now. Yeah, you’ve got that kind of immortal, I’m never going to die or I’ll be sixteen forever or whatever it happens to be. Again it’s a very good question. The children themselves, I think it, what you have to focus on really is is, how they’re feeling, you know on the daily basis. You know what they’re emotional state is, where they’re mentally, whether they’re enjoying school and so on and so forth. We know that the more kids enjoy school the better their results are, so in a way we try and encourage as much as possible the children to be involved, yeah. I think one of the biggest enemies to kids’ engagement with education is they’re feeling that they are being dictated to and that they haven’t got a say and that everything’s been decided by adults around them, and really they’re helpless kind of passengers. Yeah so, ultimately we try and kind of use that a lot. Yeah, like you as a child have the opportunity here to change the color of your dining, even if it’s just change the color of your dining room or get rid of a certain thing off the menu or off the next train or whatever. Little steps you know, you can’t convince a five year old that all the health choices they make now, well without frightening them anyway. You can’t sit them down and say: never drink a drink children or your liver will fall out, or yeah something. You’ve got to adapt it to the age group that you’re actually talking to. So I think encouraging ownership of the schemes and making them feel part of it, participation. And obviously physical activity and things like that, you always are going to get some kids that love it and some kids that hate it, yeah and so you have to be kind of creative in the way that you, I suppose market things to them really. Yeah, kids are getting far more savvy, yeah
politically, and commercially about what’s good for them and what isn’t. Yeah, you know I encourage all parts of the school community really, all the different types of children, sort of to feel that just because they belong to one racial group, or one faith group or whatever that they’re as valued, you know, as anybody else. Yeah, I think that would probably sum it up. What was, just repeat the question again, and yeah

**I asked: what did you think the most important tools were for encouraging children to lead more active lifestyles?**

Yeah, so give them a voice, making them feel part of that. You can obviously make sure that you’re doing a good balance of curriculum stuff and providing them outside curriculum opportunities as well, because not everybody’s an academic. Yeah, so as long as you can provide a sort of variety of ways for children to be involved. You know, recognizing their different learning styles and their different abilities and so on and so forth. Creating tools that include everybody I think is the best way to encourage them rather than dictatorial run around the field ten times.

**That’s a good point**

Because they used to punish kids with exercise, didn’t they. I mean at one point it was if you misbehaved you had to run around the school a few times

**Even in high school**

*They did that in my marching band, it’s like if we left trash after practice you get to run laps at the next practice*

**Yeah**

Yeah, drop down and do ten press ups, whatever, you know I mean, why is that going to encourage any child, you know to actually think that exercise is something good? It can’t be.

**Exactly. That’s a very good point. My soccer coach did that to us all the time.**

Yeah. You don’t want people building up a resentment of things; you want them to feel that in fact it is something that is good, you know that they’ve been part of. That will help more than anything.

**Alright, well that is all of the questions I have for you. Do you have any questions for us at all?**

I suppose it’s really about how’re you finding it out there? How are the schools responding to stuff?

**It’s really depending on, we’ve looked at schools that use WoW, that have for a long time, we’ve looked at schools that recently started using it, and schools that have never used it. And we’ve kind of seen a difference between the age groups even within the primary schools. Like from ages four to I would say six or seven, and then you know, seven or eight to eleven. The younger pupils seem to respond more to the badges and by the time they get up to year five, year six, they’re kind of meh, these badges**

*These badges are for little kids*
The old cynics, yeah

**Badges are lame, so we’re**

Yeah, and that’s a constant challenge actually, because you know they are exposed to so many different sources of you know information that you can’t patronize them in any way, shape or form.

**Yeah**

The days of just going: here you are have a badge and that

**And being excited about it**

Yeah that’s kind of long gone

**But they’ve given, you know we’d ask them: what are some other incentives that you would want? And they gave us some good, gave us some really, not appropriate, you know, not realistic ones.**

*A lot of them want cars, Xboxes*

**Cars, a hundred million pounds**

Yeah, right right

*Or they want candy, which is kind of the opposite*

**Of wanting to walk to school, sweets, sweets, chocolate**

Oh no. You know, when we did the first award ceremony for the Croydon program last year I walked into the hotel that we’d booked on the day that all the kids were due to come in and on every single table they’d put loads of boiled sweets, yeah and kind of cans of coke and stuff in a big bucket. And I thought, that it’s Healthy Schools, you know so how

**Carrot sticks, water**

Mad rush about in fifteen minutes, you know trying to sort it all out before any of them arrived

**But the children are nice, they’re very kind and they respond well**

Right, yep

**When we ask them if they have any questions it’s usually about America**

Yeah, of course

**Which is fine**

*Or our accents, they love our accents*

Right

**Which is very strange for us to hear, but**

Of course. No they do, but kids like, I mean Croydon particularly, it’s a really diverse kind of borough, you know it really is one of the biggest melting pots I think in London actually. But yeah you don’t tend to see or hear many Americans walking around.
Yep
It's usually varieties of English accents, or you've got kind of African communities

Yeah, we get stared at a lot of the time. If I'm talking, like on the Tube, I'll just, I feel them like staring at me, and I'm like: hi. Yeah but some of the kids they, they wanted us to try out an English accent, and then I was like: only if you try an American accent. And he was like: okay, no offence. And then like did it and it was pretty good

There was like a twenty minute accent conversation with that class

And the teachers are, the teachers are nice as well, they're

Yeah, I mean it depends on what school you go to really

Exactly

As to kind of what level of buy in they've got and how kind of receptive they are to all this stuff. But we've got, I think it's a hundred and four schools that are officially part of the program, yeah, at the moment. And there are seventy something that have already got their certificates, and another batch that are due to go through in June. So ultimately we're still doing quite a good job I think on that. When the national program finished, half of the London boroughs actually got rid of anything to do with Healthy Schools. They got rid of their coordinators, they got rid of you know people who were employed by the local authority to support it, simply because it wasn't compulsory anymore. Yeah, and as I say, thankfully Croydon's been pretty good at keeping it around, even though we just lost another member of staff. So it's just me, yeah that'll be nice, there were five of us two years ago. But that's just reflective I think of you know, of the current climate economically and politically. It's nice to know that at least, strategically they've decided the program itself is, is worth the effort of keeping. So, hopefully it will show more dividends as time goes on yeah. So have you got to go see more schools, or have you finished the schools?

We've pretty much finished because we're only here for another two and a half weeks

Yeah, I was going to say, you must be

And then with the whole Easter break, we really focused on getting all of the contacting with the schools done before Easter because they've got this two week break

Yeah, were there any that you didn't manage to get a hold of, or that didn't respond?

Yeah there were some schools. We were trying to have four different categories of schools; ones that had regularly used WoW, have recently started, have recently stopped and have never used it.

Okay

And we never heard anything back from schools that have recently stopped, I think

Really, okay that's interesting, yeah

Gresham and West Thornton were the ones we were trying to get

West Thornton, that's interesting. Gresham, Gresham are a funny one, they've not really got involved with the program properly, yeah they never went for certification.
We heard that too
West Thornton though that’s funny cause they are, yeah they’ve got their award just recently, and they are doing a lot of stuff, so I think maybe they, but they moved to an academy in September so that might have been part of the reason that the change happened

Yeah, it may have been that our email just got lost in the shuffle of pre-Easter stuff that happens

And would you still want to talk to them, or is it too late for that now?

We could probably include the data, I mean we just wanted to have most of the data done beforehand so that it wasn’t all now at the end. But if we could talk to them, even if we couldn’t include the data in the analysis, we could add stuff from what they’re teachers said.

Yeah, yeah, cause it’s Viv, Viv Woon is the name of the lady who actually is the coordinator at West Thornton, you know the Healthy Schools one. So yeah, she kind of sort of back on the agenda for a little while ago with the last batch of submissions. So I could always drop her an email on Monday morning or something, possibly the easiest thing to do would be to give her a call. Yeah, so if I drop her an email that said that she should expect a call from you, then that might work, yeah. Can’t guarantee it, but, but if you want me to

Yeah that would be helpful, thank you

Yeah that would be good

Okay, yeah, I’ll make sure that I do that on Monday

That would be awesome

I can actually do that today, yeah I can send her an email today actually, and then when she is back on Monday, I’d like to sort of suggest give the school a ring, rather than another email and that might work

Wonderful, alright

So you’re only here for two and a half weeks, and then what, when will your report be done do you think? Is that before you go?
Robert Brown, Manager of Croydon Council’s Sports and Physical Activity Team

Thursday, April 11th, 2013, 2:30 p.m.

Key:
Robert Brown

Interviewer

So we were wondering what does the active lifestyles team actually do in Croydon?

Well we are now called the sports and physical activity team, we used to have a sports development team and active lifestyles team and the sports development team would develop sport as the name suggests so work with people who wanted to get involved in competitive sport. The active lifestyles team would do what I kind of describe as lower level stuff, walking cycling and recreational activity as opposed to competitive side of things. So we have now merged and we are the sport and physical activity team we still do both of those things and we have got both of those elements. But we focus on from the physical activity side which is the equivalent of the active lifestyle side; we focus on getting inactive adults active. By inactive we define that as people who do 0 times 30 min a week exercise. The chief medical officer, the government’s chief medical officer said that people should do 5 times 30 min exercise a week and that gives you all the health benefits associated with it and so there is 50 percent of Croydon that don’t do any 30 minute slots of exercise. So our job is to find them and get them at least doing something, like the first step on the latter. Cause often people very rarely does anyone go from doing nothing to playing competitive football or rugby, there are a lot of steps in between to get them to that point where they can do it. So we find opportunities, create ideas, create programs, hook up with community organizations to help them with things that match our objectives.

So what exactly is your role on the team?

I am the manager so I oversee that day to day staffing; making sure everyone is doing what they are supposed to do. I set our targets at the start of the year. I set staff targets in there, what we call PDCS, which is Performance Development Competency Scheme sort of appraisal scheme. Then I also work on our ledger contract, so out ledger centers are all managed under a contract, and I oversee that contract with fusion lifestyle who manages the ledger centers, to make sure they are all doing what they are supposed to be doing. The ledger centers are open, anything to do with building new ledger centers comes through me and anything to do with Croydon arena, another one of our sites run in house, I oversee that so on a day to day basis it’s kind of partnership building, actually working with people saying is there an opportunity here is there an opportunity there and whether or not we can do something about that.

Well you mentioned your team tries to encourage more active lifestyles, what are some of the strategies that you use to try to encourage that?

Um there are kind of two strands, we come up with ideas as random as you like to say alright we think there is gap in the market, for example there is nothing happening in New Addington. So we are going to come up with an activity that we think is suited for the
people in New Addington. Because we know New Addington has high levels of deprivation and therefore associated with that are high levels of inactivity so we will come up with an activity and try and market it in a particular way that suits that demographic and well try it and see if it works. If it works then it’s a success and it will carry on, and if it doesn’t we stop it. So there is that element where we come up with ideas and we try things. There is also the other side of it where we try and help other people who are keep to develop ideas to do that, so quite often that’s community groups and voluntary groups and they just need a bit of support, knowledge, and maybe a small bit of upfront funding to do some leaflets or get some equipment or something like that and we can support them to do that. And then that allows us to step away and allow them to carry on doing it. So there is the kind of bit where we do it ourselves and then where we support others as well.

So you would say demographics and environment of certain areas play a huge role in that?

I think it definitely does. I think in an ideal world we would be doing everything for everyone. But in a world where you have finite resources and you have to target what you are doing you then pick, right ok well, we have narrowed it down to inactive people. We then have to find where those inactive people are and we want to make sure we have the best use of our resources so going to the places where there is most inactive people means that we target certain areas. So yeah, it is not just knowing that the people, however you describe them, whatever that target group is it might be a BME groups it might be socio and economic groups but it’s also about how they respond to being encouraged to do something so what messages they like to receive and how they like to receive them. Being quite specific about what we spoke about and what you’re asking people, how you are suggesting people to do, to change their behavior.

So what would you say are some of the bigger obstacles that you face in trying to get these people more active?

There is all the sort of standard barriers to activity, which are: I haven’t got enough money, I haven’t got enough time, I don’t know how to do it, I don’t know where to go, I am too fearful to step across the threshold of a ledger center for example because I think everyone in there is going to be liycroclad and mussel bound and all that sort of thing. So there is all those kind of varying barriers, and I personally think that the last one is the biggest one. And the fear of going somewhere where you don’t know exactly what you are doing when you are there is the hardest way to encourage someone to change their behavior. I know as I, I work in sports development; I am a manager of a service that delivers that, that tells people or encourages people to do that and yet personally when I have to join a new cricket club I walk in through the door and I was thinking, I really hope I am good enough to play at this level. So all those fears come back and I am someone who knows about that so you can image someone who doesn’t know that, that’s a really big thing that stops people becoming active. So if we can address that, if we can make that transition from inactivity to activity as smooth as possible and as easy by giving them enough information, by budding them up with other people who they know and create a social group of activity then I think that helps us. And that is one of the biggest things that I found in my time here in Croydon. I think that fear of the unknown and this fear that you are not good enough is actually
bigger than, I haven’t got enough time, I haven’t got enough money because if you want to do something you will find time and you will find money hopefully.

**Does your team try to encourage active lifestyles in students and children as well or is there a specific age group you focus on?**

We work, because again we have got finite resources, we work on the physical activity side in active people for adults and we work on the sports development side for young people. And so my sports development officers, all of their work is around under eighteens encouraging competitive sports, supporting clubs, and the really big disabilities sports program that we run.

**Do you think that the Walk on Wednesday program is a cost effective way to encourage students to walk to school and to be more active or do you think there are better ways to go about that?**

I think it’s one of a range of ways. I think it’s like any initiative, it’s got a bit of a gimmick about it which actually makes people remember it and you need that. I think it hits are targets in terms of inactive people and just doing one little thing to sort of initiate that step. What we want is people to walk to school every day, you want them to walk wherever they are walking every day. But as a first protocol Walk on Wednesday is alliterative, it’s catchy so I think it is a good a project as many of the other ones but I think it is one of a number of projects that need to be encouraged.

**Do you think you could use active lifestyle, your team, to encourage or even increase student walking more rather than just focus on the sports or is that another limitation of your resources?**

It’s always a limitations of resources. I think there is always connectivity between activities, between for example are there ledger centers en-route to and from schools that people walk quite often. So there are areas where we could possibly become more joined up, and make sure we are supporting each other through stuff that we already do, so it is not by creating or needing to create new capacity. There is probably synergies that we could already look at. But in terms of, it is a resource thing for us so giving a lot of support for a program. And especially in our area there is in sports development in general there are school sports partnerships, I don’t know if you have come across them yet, who work directly with the school. So we don’t work directly with schools and colleges, school sports partnerships will do that. And they have a remit beyond just sport but they are called school sport partnerships so more of the linkages with schools are done through them and not through us. But we would still happily be part of sort of a project to try to identify where these things over lap, and where we can make use of our facilities to support these projects.

**You had said you could see where they were overlapping and you would try to work with the program in a way, so you encourage parents to walk and we are trying to encourage parents to allow their children to walk. One of our main concerns is that parents, don’t, they are driving to work or they are doing this so they don’t see the benefit in their child walking to school so they choose to just drive them anyway so one of the main reasons students don’t walk is because they are being driven. Do you**
have an idea of a way to maybe get through to the parents that this would be very beneficial?

Yeah it’s like anything if the parents do not do it than you cannot get the kids to do it. It’s exactly the same issue with healthy eating. We encourage young people teach them about fruit and vegetables and that sort of thing but if mom or dad is feeding them McDonalds every day at home then that is what they are going to get. They don’t have control over that element of their lives so I think you are right I think there is sort of an education thing. We run a walks program, a sort of health walks program. Its predominantly attended by older people, so probably not, they are 50 plus so probably beyond that parenting young people stage so there is an opportunity to introduce a sort of a family walk to encourage people to walk together I am sure given time my team could come up with any number of ideas on encouraging people into walking but it is an education thing, a time thing. And I think a lot of what Peter’s team is doing in terms of making it a lot easier I think that what it needs to be a lot easier and a lot safer. I think one of the issues is I don’t want my kid to walk down the street because I don’t trust who is on the street so there is a sort of safety issue and you start to get into active transport seems to be something that has strands absolutely everywhere it’s a safety issue it’s a street lighting issue it’s a health issue so I think there are lots of elements to it there is not kind of a silver bullet or a one answer to it. But there is no reason why we couldn’t link in to our program and encourage parents and do family walks and that sort of thing to try and assist it.
Appendix I: Survey and Observational Data
The excel files containing the raw data and graphs constructed from our surveys and observational data can be found under these names:

WPI WoW – Class Survey Data
WPI WoW – Drive-vs-Active Transport Graphs
WPI WoW – Parent Survey Data
WPI WoW – School Observation Data
WPI WoW – Teacher Survey Data
Glossary – words denoted by a superscript at first occurrence

1. **Backpack Surveys**
   Surveys for parents to complete sent home in students’ backpacks.

2. **Hands-up Surveys**
   Surveys conducted in classrooms where children indicate their response by raising their hand.

3. **Legible London**
   A campaign to provide readable street signage and maps for pedestrians in London.

4. **Lollipop Lady**
   Someone who helps children at a street crossing near school.

5. **Modal Shift**
   Change in method of transportation.

6. **Park and Stride**
   An adaptation of WoW where parents drive their child most of the way to school, but park in an uncongested area near the school and walk the end of the journey with their child.

7. **Pelican Crossing**
   A street crossing with a green or red symbol indicating to pedestrians when it is safe to cross and green, red, and yellow signals indicating when drivers are allowed to go.

8. **Transport Rates: including Walking Rates, Sustainable Transport Rates, and Active Travel Rates**
   The proportion of a school’s population that travels via this method.

9. **Walking Bears**
   An incentive program where each school has a teddy bear wearing the school uniform. The class that walks the most in a given month receives the teddy bear for the next month, and participating students are given the opportunity to take the teddy bear home for one night.

10. **Walking Buses**
    A program where parent volunteers walk a group of children to school in shifts with parents being responsible for the area nearest their house.

11. **Zebra Crossing**
    A street crossing with stripes across the road and flashing yellow beacons.