

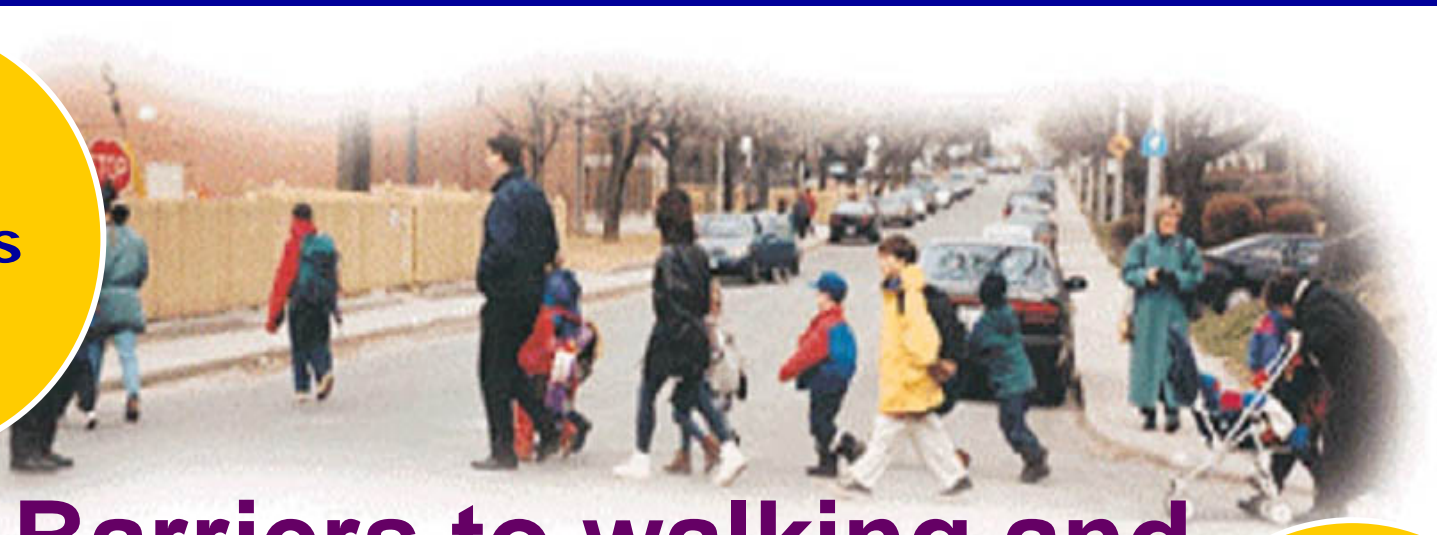
Injury Prevention – Practical Approaches The Walking School Bus

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Workshop – Injury Prevention
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Policies



Barriers to walking and bicycling to school

**Community
Design**

Safety

**Time and
Convenience**

Culture



VicHealth

Some Issues - Children's Transport Safety

Major roads

Stranger Danger

Roads more busy

Weather

Not safe to cross roads

Inexperience on the road

Too many cars on the road

Convenience of driving everywhere

Urban Planning e.g. no footpaths, spaghetti design

Too far to walk

Some Responses

- * Increased adult control and supervision of children's lives
- * Reduced opportunity to experience being a pedestrian.
- * Parental preoccupation with safety or is it fear?
- * Children driven everywhere

Why the Problem?

- * Heavy reliance on the car
- * Longer working hours of parents
- * Less parental role modeling
- * Changes in urban environments, land use and transport planning
- * Traffic
- * Busy roads and intersections to cross
- * Perceptions of safety

What are the consequences?

Kids are:

- ✦ Being robbed of their rights to explore the world for themselves
- ✦ Getting fatter due to inactivity
- ✦ Not building up resilience so that they can cope with difficult situations
- ✦ Becoming 'battery reared'
- ✦ Being forgotten when designing urban environments
- ✦ Know familiarity with their community the streets etc..

Walking to School

- * While 80% of 7-8 year olds went to school on their own in 1970's, less than 10% do so now (Hillman 1991)
- * In 2004, 70% of children get driven to school. 61% of these children want to walk (VicHealth 2004)



Case Study: Walking School Bus™

- * Provides a safe option
- * Partnership between schools, councils and local community
- * Collaborative support across different sectors
- * Enhances independent mobility
- * Enables connection with the neighbourhood

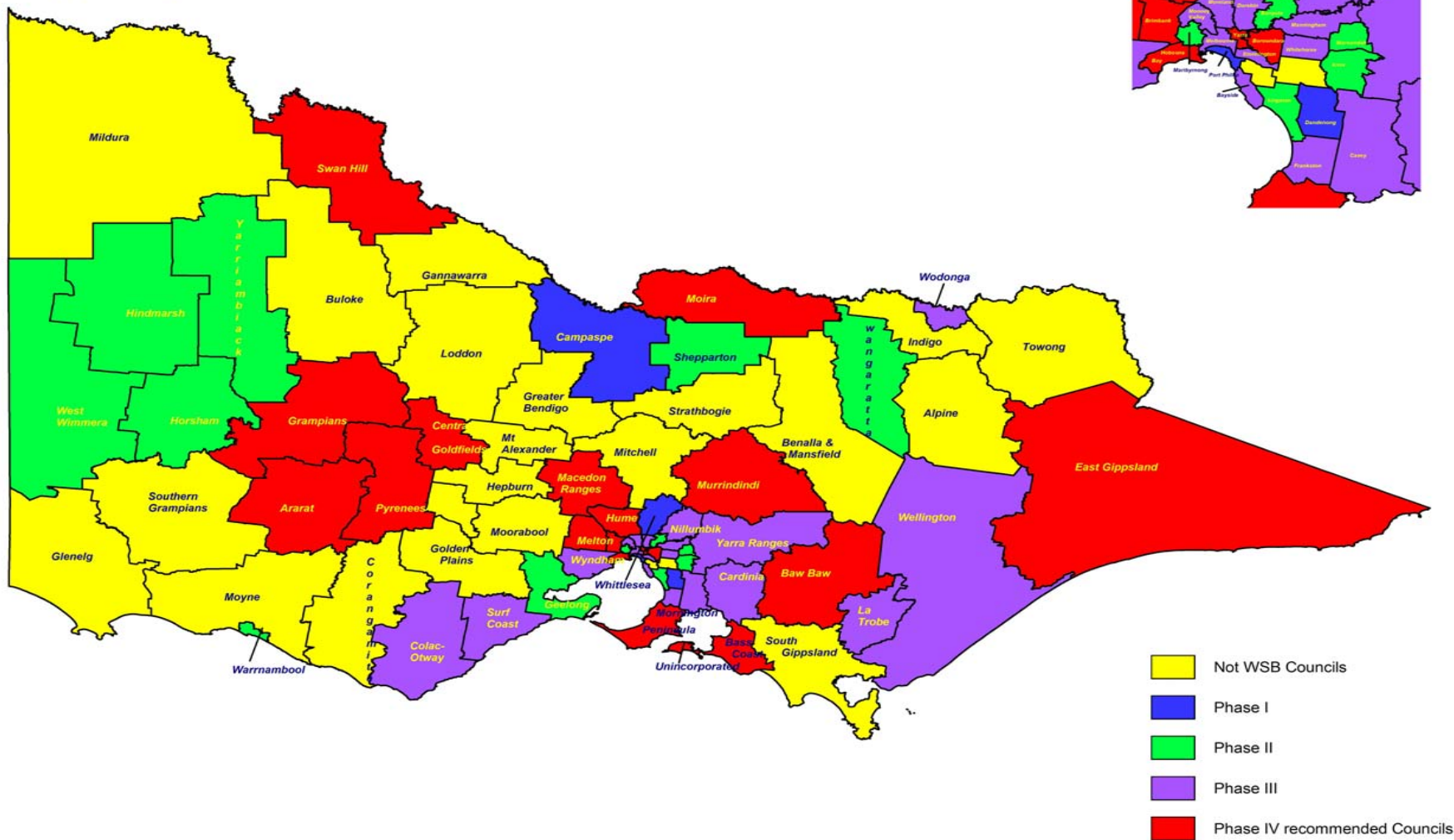


Current Activity

- * 48 councils are currently involved in the program (70%)
 - ➔ 21 of 23 metropolitan council areas
 - ➔ 8 of 8 interface council areas
 - ➔ 4 of 5 regional council areas
 - ➔ 22 of 43 rural council areas

Map: Walking School Bus Councils

Insert: Metropolitan Local Government Areas



Quality and Standards

- ➔ Growth of program and long-term commitment to sustainability
- ➔ Need to protect integrity and safety standards of the program
- ➔ Confidence of standards for safety and care
- ➔ Provide a safe positive option for children
- ➔ Commercial interest
- ➔ Trademark



Victorian Walking School Bus™ Program

Current level of activity

Year	Councils	Schools	Routes	Kids
01/02	4	14	28	224
02/03	14	59	94	755
02/03	33	132	224	2143
04/05	48	192	307	2916

Program Impact

- * Teachers reporting children who walk are more attentive in class
- * Helping to reduce bullying on the way to school – provides a safe walking environment
- * Older kids taking a 'leadership' role with younger kids on the bus - sense of independence
- * Building parental trust and confidence
- * Creating better physical infrastructure

Program Impact

- * Meaningful relationships between schools and community
- * Helping to connect kids with their local community
- * Reducing traffic congestion around schools and providing safer pedestrian environment.
- * Teaching pedestrian safety skills which are not often taught by parents or school on the road

Not just about pedestrian skills

- * Shift focus for child road safety towards drivers
- * Role of parents and practical experience
- * Urban / road design that recognises children's capabilities (if its safe for kids its safer for everyone)
- * Built environment which stimulates growth and safe interaction with traffic
- * Safety audits from a child's perspective

What is VicHealth doing

- * Working with Planning Institute to increase awareness of urban design issues
- * ICLEI Tool (building a business case for walking)
- * Leading the Way
- * Greenlight Project

Linking Planning and Health –role of urban planners

- Strategic alliance with Planning Institute of Australia.
- Awareness about “building health into a community”.
- Relationship between urban infrastructure and design and the extent to which people choose to walk, cycle or drive.

Linking Planning and Health –role of urban planners

- **Recognition / award for local achievements in contributions to healthy environments.**
- **Features on planning and health their professional monthly magazine, workshops and professional development seminars.**
- **Policy change – Liveable community policy**

Building Local Government capacity for Pedestrian and Bicycle friendly actions

- * International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI)
 - Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) projects. (51 Victorian CCP Councils in Victoria.)

Building Local Government capacity for Pedestrian and Bicycle friendly actions

- * Interactive web site for councils - case studies of local active transport initiatives to promoting walkability, cycling and funding options.
- * On line tool for the assessment of triple bottom line outcomes; environmental, social and economic indicators to building the business case for walking and cycling.

Online Tool

Schools



Greenhouse Benefit

3.23 TCO₂/yr

CHD Benefit

\$271 /yr

Personal Benefit

\$1,480 /yr

About Leading the Way

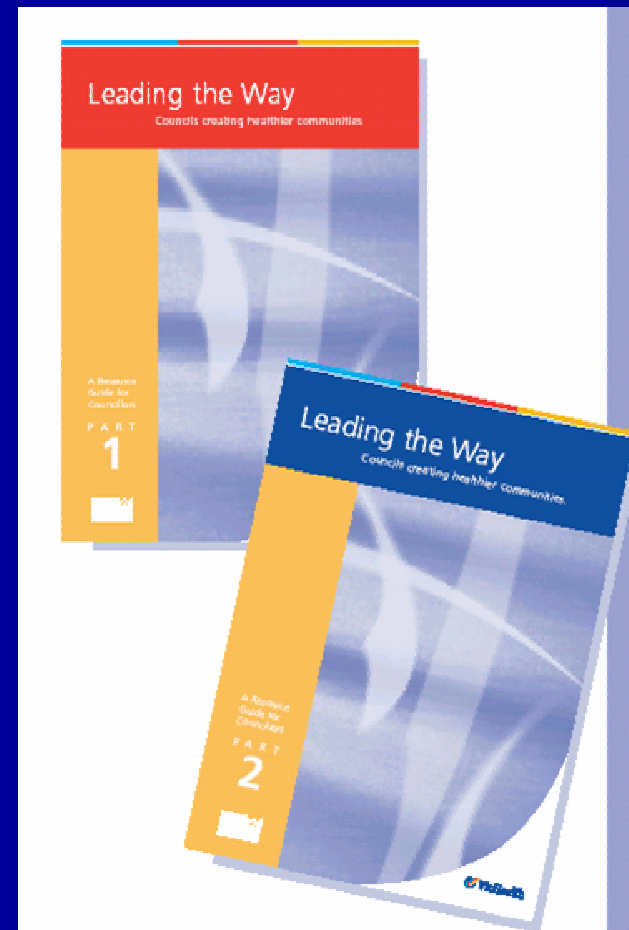
79 councils in Victoria.

Local Government mandated to do health plans.

Developed with MAV and DHS

Directed to senior managers and Councillors to help them understand broader factors impacting on health.

Available on VicHealth website



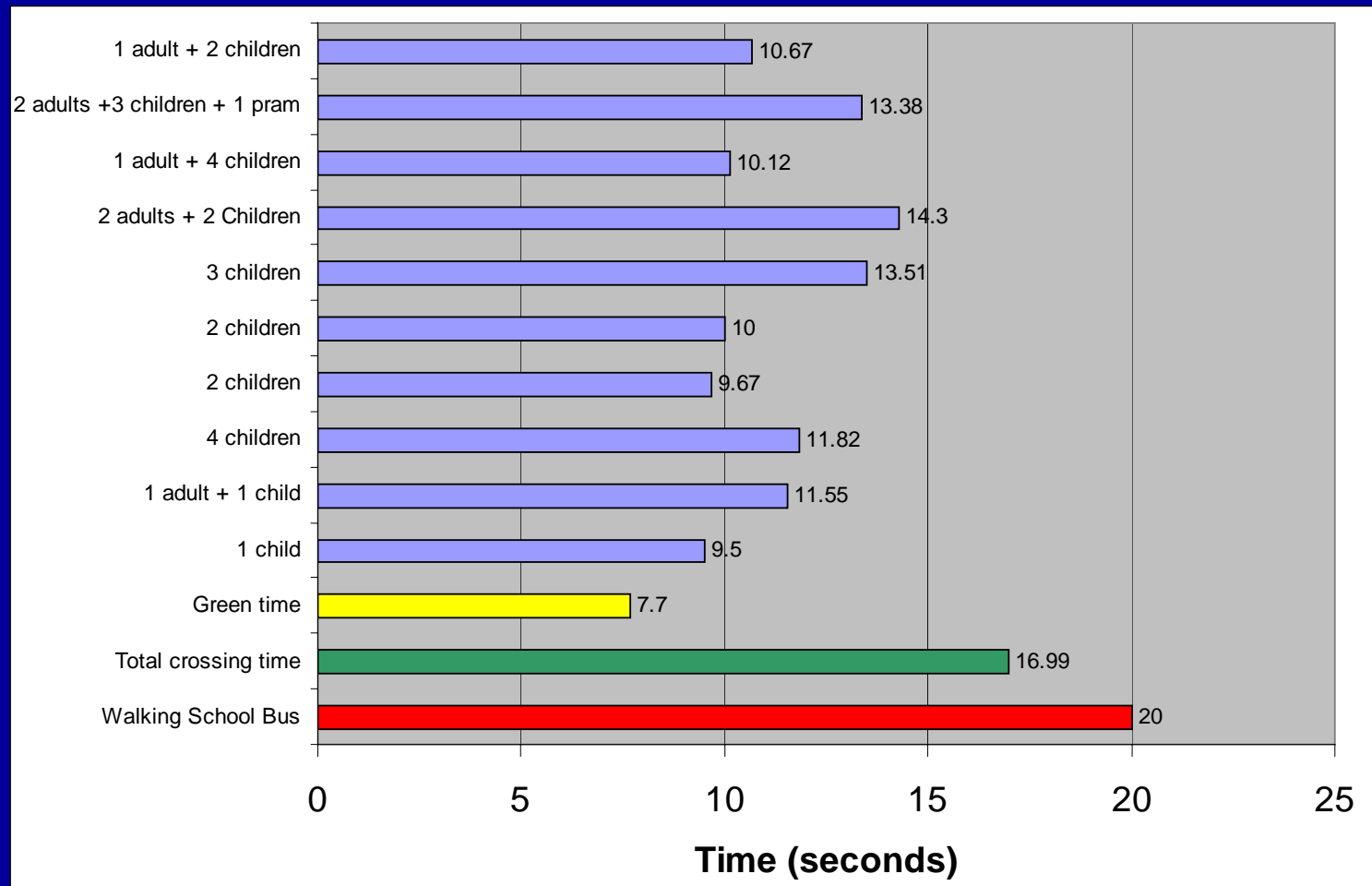
How can local government influence health and well-being?

- Altering **built** or **physical** surrounds - eg buildings, parks, paths, facilities
- Creating opportunities for community participation and **social** engagement
- Encouraging **economic** development and distributing wealth
- Caring for the **natural** environment

Greenlight Project

- * Led by Port Phillip
- * Includes Bayside and Geelong
- * Investigating time to get kids on wsb across the road in green-man time.
- * Findings
 - ➔ Current standard of 1.2meters per second is inadequate

Summary of time to cross at one site



The walking school bus group consisted of 12 children and 1 adult with 2 infants in a pram

Summary

- * Walking School Bus is just a start
- * Teaching children pedestrian safety is not enough
- * Need to understand the impact of planning design and operation of transportation facilities on child pedestrians and do something about it.
- * UK of a School Transport Bill (school travel planning and role of Commonwealth, State and local government)