Active School Travel

Active School Travel is a free program to help Gold Coast school students, parents and teachers leave their cars at home and:

- re-mode - encourage people to increase walking, cycling, use of buses and carpooling
- reduce car trips by carpooling or combining trips
- re-time school related trips – consider dropping children a bit earlier or picking up children later
- re-route – taking a slightly different route to avoid congested roads.

The Active School Travel program is tailored to suit each school to reduce traffic congestion around schools, promote a healthier school community and contribute to a cleaner, more sustainable Gold Coast.

Benefits of Active School Travel

Gold Coast schools have shown that when the school community changes the way they move and adopt healthier travel options such as walking, cycling, scooting, carpooling and public transport, school traffic congestion can be reduced by up to 16 per cent (2017).

Benefits for children who actively travel include:

- increased road safety skills
- improved student health through increased physical activity
- arriving at school alert and ready to learn
- improved concentration, sleep and relaxation
- improved self-esteem, confidence, and independence
- opportunities to make friends and enhance social skills
- more time together with family and friends.

Local school and community benefits from active travel include:

- reduced traffic congestion and car emissions
- safer school drop-off and pick-up zones
- a more social and connected community.

Meet Zero the Hero - road safety mascot

Zero the Hero is our road safety mascot who visits primary schools who are part of the Active School Travel program.

He performs an exciting singing and dancing routine to provide students with key road safety messages to stay safe when actively travelling.

An interview with Zero the Hero

How long have you been on the Gold Coast?

I was born in the hollow of a paperbark gum tree in Mudjimba. Both my mum and dad looked after me in the nest and every day I would watch children on their way to and from school. I saw children doing some crazy things from the excellent view from my nest and vowed that when I was big I was going to protect the children and make sure they knew how to get to and from school safely.

What do you do in your spare time?

I spend a lot of time sitting in trees watching children ride their bikes, scooters and walk to school – checking that they remembered the road safety messages from our show. I also practice my dance moves – a lot. I probably spend more time dancing than I do flying around!

What’s your favourite way of getting to school?

Other than flying ... there’s nothing I enjoy more than walking or riding to school. Sometimes, my parents drive me some of the way and then we walk or cycle the rest of the way. On the days that we drive, I try to take a few friends with me so there are fewer cars on the road around the school.

Active School Travel ARTAST competition

We’re looking for the 2020 ART-ASTS of the year!
Calling all budding artists! Enter an A3 landscape artwork which celebrates active school travel themes: walking, cycling, catching public transport, carpooling or road safety for your chance to win great prizes and be named ART-AST of the year.

Download the entry form and terms.

There are two entry categories:

- Junior Category – Prep to Year 3 students
- Senior Category – Year 4 to Year 6 students

The winner of each category will receive a Garmin VivoFit 4 Activity Tracker and will be announced "ART-AST of the Year". Thirteen entries will feature in the Active School Travel 2020 Calendar, available in Term 4, 2020. All entrants will receive a merit certificate.

Students must submit an entry form with their artwork that is signed by their parent or carer. The student’s name and class must also be written on the back of the artwork.

This competition opens on Monday 20 April, 2020. Students must submit their artwork to their school by Friday 17 July 2020.

Download the ARTAST 2020 poster, terms, and entry forms

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**Active School Travel videos**

Congratulations to the schools who participated in the 2019 Gold Coast Active School Travel program. View the Active Travel promotional videos below.

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**Join the Active School Travel program**

Applications for the 2019 Active School Travel program intake have closed. If you are interested in joining the Active School Travel program, please email our team

active.schooltavel@goldcoast.qld.gov.au.

The Active School Travel program’s objectives are to:

- decrease traffic congestion by at least 10 per cent during peak periods around school grounds
- increase participation in walking, cycling, use of public transport and carpooling for trips to and from school
- increase road safety awareness and create a safer school zone environment
- increase the amount of physical activity by the school community, improving their health and wellbeing.

As part of the Active School Travel program your school will receive:

- a dedicated Active School Travel Officer who will provide guidance, support and resources
- assistance in developing a School Travel Plan to create and sustain travel behaviour change
- assistance in implementing initiatives such as a weekly active travel day with incentives and rewards for students
- funding to contribute towards the cost of events, teacher release and healthy breakfasts
- an active travel infrastructure audit that may include delivery of minor improvements such as new or upgraded shared pathways.

Watch these videos to hear from our Active Travel Schools about walking, cycling, carpooling or catching public transport to and from school.

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**Active School Travel participants**

We look forward to welcoming an additional six schools to the program including the first high schools in 2020.

- Arundel State School
- Coomera State School
- Foxwell State Secondary College
- Jubilee Primary School
- Mudgeeraba State School
- Southport State High School

There are currently five schools participating in the 2019 Active School Travel program.

**Commenced in 2019**

- Caniaba State School (Division 12)
- Clover Hill State School (Division 9)
- Mudgeeraba Creek State School (Division 9)
- St Andrews Lutheran College (Division 12)
- Upper Coomera State College (Division 1)

**Completed in 2018**

- Emmanuel College (Division 8)

Commenced in 2016 – completed program in 2018
Surfers Paradise State School (Division 7)
Coomera River State School (Division 3)
Currimin State School (Division 14)

Commenced in 2015 – completed program in 2017
- Coombabah State School (Division 3)
- Elanora State School (Division 12)
- Helensvale State School (Division 2)
- Merrimac State School (Division 8)
- Oxenford State School (Division 2)
- Pimpama State School (Division 1)

Commenced in 2014 – completed program in 2016
- Robina State School (Division 11)
- Highland Reserve State School (Division 1)
- St Brigid’s Catholic Primary (Division 5)
- St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary (Division 3)
- Varsity College Primary Campus (Division 11)
- Miami State School (Division 12)

Commenced in 2013 – completed program in 2015
- Guardian Angels Primary School (Division 6)
- Southport State School (Division 6)
- Labrador State School (Division 4)
- Park Lake State School (Division 5)
- Tallebudgera State School (Division 14)

Commenced in 2012 – completed program in 2014
- Mudgeeraba State School (Division 9)
- Norfolk Village State School (Division 1)

Ways to travel to and from school

Cycling
Cycling has many benefits including improved personal health and fitness. By changing the car for the bicycle you will be contributing to a cleaner and more sustainable city.

Come along to one of our free cycling workshops to help you be a safer, more confident cyclist. The City runs free cycling workshops suitable for all ages. These workshops include assisting children to advance from training wheels to two wheels, children’s bike handling skills workshops and Sunday social rides for the whole family. Bookings for the workshops are essential.

Watch Bicycle Network’s three step video guide to prepare your child to cycle to school. Parents and teachers can also learn more about children cycling from the bike user guide by the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

Remember to also maintain your bike for a better and safer riding experience.

Walking
Walking is a free and accessible alternative to using the car. A daily walk to and from school is a great way to improve your fitness and chat with your children about their school day.

If you live too far away from your school to walk, consider parking a short distance from the school and walking the rest of the way with your children.

Public transport
The City of Gold Coast works in partnership with TransLink to provide public transport options including bus, train and tram services. TransLink have a school service finder to find school and urban public transport services within one kilometre of your school. They also have information on school travel safety, tickets and travel for school students in Queensland.

TransLink school travel tips for students, parents and carers prepare you for safe public transport travel. Make sure you travel on public transport with your children to demonstrate how to tap on and off with a go card, find a seat and travel safely.

Queensland Rail has information on rail safety education, including resources available to download for teachers, students and parents.
Carpooling
Sharing a car trip to school with other families is a great way to take cars off the road. There are lots of ways to make this easy for everyone – some tips are:

- Parents and carers meet up at the beginning of each term to plan the route to school, the schedule, and some basic rules so everyone knows what to do – such as be ready if you are being picked up.
- Ensure the car has enough space for booster seats, and or school bags, and equipment.
- Create an email, text or social media group so parents and carers can communicate easily.
- Assign the same day of each week to one parent.
- Parents and carers – remind your child who is picking them up – especially early in the term.
- Always double check no school bags or equipment has been left behind.

Reporting road and footpath issues
Did you know you can report a problem with Gold Coast roads and footpaths from anywhere, at any time of the day? The City App mobile application lets you report non-urgent issues including footpaths, potholes in local roads and damaged or missing street signs.

Active School Travel – activity books
There are many great ways to travel to and from school that are great for your health and our environment. Staying safe on your journey is also very important.

Complete the workbooks to learn more about safe ways to travel.

Download the Active School Travel - activity books

Active School Travel events
Throughout the year there are a range of safe and active travel national events you may wish to participate in. A few are listed below.

Day for Daniel is Australia’s largest child safety awareness and education day. This day honours the memory of Daniel Morcombe. The theme of the day is to wear Red, Educate and Donate. Parents, carers and educators are asked to start a conversation with children and young people about personal safety. Save the date – usually held in October each year.

National Ride2School Day is Australia's biggest celebration of active travel run by Bicycle Network. It is a day full of fun and colour, where student, teachers, parents and carers discover the joy of riding and hopefully kick-start healthy habits for the future. Save the date – Friday 13 March 2020.

National Walk Safely to School Day is an annual event when all primary school children are encouraged to walk safely to school run by the Pedestrian Council of Australia. Save the date – usually held in May each year.

In addition to these annual events, RACQ offers primary schools their Streets Ahead, RACQ's road safety education program for Queensland primary school students. Schools can organise for four age-appropriate presentations covering road safety themes like passenger, pedestrian and bicycle safety.

How parents and carers can get involved in Active School Travel
Parents and carers play a critical role in influencing the development of a child’s positive travel behaviour. Lessons learned at an early age and reinforced throughout a child’s schooling will have a major effect on their attitudes and behaviours for the rest of their lives.

Families are encouraged to participate in Active School Travel events and initiatives and promote active and safe travel behaviour.

Parents and carers are also encouraged to join their school’s Active School Travel Committee (ASTC). The Committee helps lead and promote the program within the school community.

Schools are always looking for volunteers who can help organise events and activities, promote active travel in the school, lead walking groups to schools and enter data to record the weekly active travel surveys. Contact your school to see how you can help.

School zone road rules
Keeping students safe and traffic flowing around school zones is everyone’s responsibility and a City priority.

There are simple but important rules and guidelines in place to help parents, carers and drivers do the right thing to help keep students safe.

Download the School zone road rules brochure for more information.

You can also find out more about parking rules, drop-off and pick-up areas and the school zone speed limits from the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

You can help keep your children’s school zone safe by reporting badly parked vehicles using the online Report a problem - Vehicles form.

RACQ offers the Kids & Cars safety awareness education program designed for primary and secondary carers of children, with a focus on safety in and around cars. The program runs for approximately one hour and is free of charge to Queensland community groups and organisations.

Related information
- Gold Coast City Transport Strategy 2031
- Road safety
- Sustainable travel choices

**Key information**

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