

Intersectoral working in schools between education staff and primary healthcare professionals



Case study description

Title of the initiative / case study	Active Travel 4 Climate Action (AT4CA): Co-Designing Solutions to Increase Active Travel for Climate Action in Schools and Communities
Country / Territory	Australia
Summary of the intersectoral initiative	<p>The Active Travel 4 Climate Action (AC4CA) project was an intersectoral, collaborative effort conducted in partnership with Monash University, Cancer Council Victoria, and the Department of Education and Training (Victoria). The project aimed to address the pressing issue of climate change through the delivery of an innovative co-design approach in one secondary school in 2022.</p> <p>The project had a keen focus on increasing young women’s’ participation in active travel as climate action. The project team adapted a co-design model (Leahy et al., 2021) that sought to build health literacies and amplify student voice, agency, and leadership. A key focus of the co-design process was to identify the environmental barriers and enablers to active travel, and design solutions that promote active travel and mitigate climate change.</p> <p>This project, whilst being anchored in schools and curriculum¹, forged connections between teachers, young people, the local council, the Cancer Council Victoria, and academics. The project sought to build transformative agency and health literacies via a co-design process. To do this we utilised a constellation of citizen science and critical inquiry for the purpose of building critical health literacies. Throughout a series of workshops, we provided an opportunity for students to learn about the social determinants of health, and how they impact on capacity for active travel. The workshops then explored barriers and enablers to active travel with a focus on co-designing solutions to address the social determinants of health in their local environments to contribute to climate change solutions in their school and local communities.</p>
Focus of the initiative	Other - individual and planetary health.
Goal and objectives Overall goals and specific objectives.	The goal of the AC4CA initiative was to foster ‘constructive hope’ (Trott, 2021) among young people by providing them with opportunities to actively respond to climate change. The initiative aimed to enable students to co-design solutions and become leaders in promoting active travel and mitigating climate change in their everyday lives. The specific objectives included:

¹ Health and Physical Education curriculum

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Co-design solutions: Engage students in collaborative processes to amplify their voice, agency, and leadership and identify and address barriers to active travel. ● Build health literacies: Enhance students' understanding of social determinants of health and how they impact active travel. ● Promote active travel: Encourage students to adopt active modes of transportation, such as walking or cycling, to increase active travel participation through climate action. ● Foster supportive school environments: Advocate for changes in school policies and facilities to create a culture that supports and encourages active travel. ● Evaluate and assess impact: Measure the effectiveness of the initiative in promoting active travel and improving health literacies.
School setting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age group of students covered (0-18) 	Year 11 students, aged 16-17
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of students in the school 	1016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public (<i>no fees</i>) or Private (<i>pay fees</i>)? 	Public
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location 	Rural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Socioeconomic environment 	All types
Description of the initiative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What was the driver to start the initiative? Was it the pandemic, or something else? - From when to when did the initiative take place? Does it continue now? - Did it get funding? How was it funded? - What type of activities took 	<p>Climate change is one of the most significant challenges we, as a society, currently face. The effects of climate change threaten the very fabric of our planet. Education has a significant role to play if we are to mitigate climate change, and we have thus witnessed an intensification of programmatic efforts across the education sector to address climate change (Kemmis & Mutton, 2012; Reid, 2019; Rooney et al., 2020; Selwyn, 2019). As Leahy et al. (2020) remind us ‘while there are success stories, it appears that success is largely determined by the efforts of an individual teacher or principal, or a passionate community group or member, rather than reflecting broader integration and success across the sector’. As a result, the implementation of climate change curriculum projects tends to be piecemeal (Garg, 2017). There is a need for further innovation in the sector if we are to be able to ensure the longevity of climate change programs in schools.</p> <p>The AT4CA project ran from January to December 2022. This project which was funded by the Department of Education and Training (Victoria) Active School Innovation Grant is an example of an attempt at innovation in the schooling space. The project adopted a whole school approach, encompassing various pillars of school organisation, ethos, environment, and curriculum. The project comprised three workshops that adhered to Leahy et al. (2021) Kids Co-Designing Healthy Places model.</p>

<p>place e.g. health professionals seeing students or staff for consultations, health professionals training education staff, teachers training health professionals?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Workshop 1 was conducted via Zoom and served as an introduction to the project. The participants were asked a series of questions to gauge their understanding of climate change and active travel. Key climate change and active travel terms and concepts were also explored. This workshop emphasised the need for climate literacies and set the stage for the subsequent workshops. ● Workshop 2 focused on conducting a local environment audit to identify barriers and enablers to active travel within the school and the broader community. Participants discussed their experiences and concerns related to active travel, and barriers such as weather, safety, and social judgments were identified. Through voting and collaborative discussions, the top five barriers to active travel were determined. The workshop also highlighted the importance of addressing social influences, particularly concerning gender stereotypes and fear of judgement, which hindered active travel participation. ● Workshop 3 revolved around co-designing solutions to overcome the identified barriers. Participants collectively brainstormed and proposed potential solutions to promote active travel. The suggested solutions included educational workshops, separate bike racks for different genders and age groups, improved change rooms, and safer infrastructure. The workshop emphasised the role of supportive school environments, incentives, and creating an active culture to motivate and sustain active travel behaviours. <p>Overall, the three workshops aim to build and apply climate and health literacies to identify barriers to active travel and develop co-designed solutions that promote active travel.</p>
<p>Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who are the partners involved? - Who are the education professionals involved in the initiative? - Who are the health professionals involved in the initiative? - Where are the health professionals located? (e.g. In the school, in the community?) - At what stage/s did intersectoral 	<p>The AT4CA project was intersectoral from the outset, with partners from the public health and education sectors coming together to conceptualise the study and plan collaboratively for the co-design, implementation, and evaluation of the project. More specifically, this collaborative effort involved various stakeholders working towards a common goal of overcoming barriers to active travel. The partners involved in the project were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cancer Council Victoria led the project. They were integral in writing the project proposal and gathering the support across the sector. From the very outset, the Cancer Council recognised it was necessary to work across the sectors. ● Monash University: Three researchers from Monash University were commissioned to implement the co-design model and facilitate the workshops and evaluate the project. ● Local Councils: The Community Health Coordinator for Grampians Health and The Recreation and Open Space Planning Officer for Horsham Rural City Council were a part of the project steering committee and attended the workshops and assisted in the implementation of the initiative. ● Horsham Secondary College: Horsham College, more specifically a Health and Physical Education Teacher and the School Nurse helped facilitate the initiative and helped us understand the school environment. <p>One of the strengths of the project team was that health, education, and local government worked closely across the lifespan of the project. Together, these partners brought their unique expertise and perspectives to the AT4CA</p>

<p>work happen (eg conceptualization , co-design, implementation or evaluation)?</p>	<p>initiative to provide young people with opportunities to play a more active role in co-designing solutions to climate change in their local communities.</p>
<p>Results of the initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What were the deliverables? - Can you give some examples of actions resulting from the initiative? - What do you think was the impact of the initiative, if any? 	<p>The three workshops provided opportunities for participants to learn about active travel and its impact on climate change, evaluate the barriers to active travel in their local context, and propose solutions to overcome these barriers. Examples of actions resulting from the initiative included participants identifying barriers to active travel (e.g. judgement, lack of time, and lack of motivation). They also co-designed solutions such as body image/self-esteem workshops, separate bike racks, updated change rooms, and improved footpaths and crossings. The participants emphasised the importance of education and creating an active culture within the school to support active travel. The impact of the initiative was evident in the high level of engagement and enthusiasm shown by the participants throughout the workshops. The co-design model effectively generated rich data about the barriers to active travel and produced solutions that may inform change at the school level.</p> <p>Despite the participants' high level of engagement, findings revealed that they had limited climate literacy, narrow understandings of active travel, and were largely ambivalent about the impact of climate change. This highlights the need for further research and efforts to build these foundational literacies.</p> <p>Additionally, the participants had limited beliefs that their input would be listened to/responded to. This highlights the importance of ensuring the implementation of co-designed practices actually respond to students' ideas. This is crucial for empowering them and fostering transformative agency.</p> <p>Overall, the AT4CA project demonstrated the potential for innovation in the education sector by involving students in co-design practices and integrating climate action into the curriculum.</p>

<p>Evaluation of the initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Was the initiative evaluated? If Yes - <i>How, and by whom?</i> - Name two things that went well. - Name two things that could be improved. - What were the main <u>barriers</u> to intersectoral working? - What were the main <u>facilitators</u> for intersectoral working? - What advice would you give to others who would like to do a similar initiative? 	<p>The initiative was evaluated by Monash University. Based on the evaluation, two things that went well were the successful implementation of the adapted co-design model, which generated valuable data on the barriers faced by young women in rural Victoria regarding active travel, and the high level of engagement and enthusiastic contributions from the participants during workshops. Areas for improvement include having a longer lead-up to allow partners to better understand each other's aims and objectives and embedding a follow-up visit to assess the sustainability of the project's impact. These improvements would foster collaboration and evaluation, boosting the effectiveness of the project.</p> <p>Moreover, the evaluation highlighted two barriers to intersectoral working:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disparities existed between the aims of different sectors. The education sector partners aimed to foster health literacies, and the health sector aimed to increase active travel. These differing aims posed some discrete challenges in aligning efforts. 2. Time constraints emerged due to the involvement of multiple partners, necessitating extensive coordination and synchronisation. <p>Several factors facilitated intersectoral working:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The support and funding provided by the Department of Education enabled collaboration by pooling resources and expertise. 2. The project manager's efficiency, effectiveness, and leadership skills. 3. The involvement of the local council and community provided diverse perspectives and local knowledge, enhancing the initiative's relevance and garnering support. <p>To others interested in similar initiatives, it is advised to allocate sufficient time for partnership formation, prioritise effective communication among stakeholders, and ensure meaningful engagement of youth voices through a co-design model from the outset.</p>
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Additional information if available:

- Links to relevant websites
- Link to / title of relevant articles
- Other relevant resources

The Project Website '[Active Travel 4 Climate Action](#)'

ABC News Article '[Horsham College inspiring more students to get active through Move it! Mondays program](#)'

Garg, K. (2017). *Teaching sustainability in schools haphazard, despite education priority*. <https://www.thecitizen.org.au/articles/teaching-sustainability-schools-haphazard-despite-education-priority>

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Leahy, D., Aikens, K., & Taylor, N. (2020). Disrupting the 'business as usual' approach to educating for health and sustainability. *ACNEM Journal, 39*(3), 20–23.

Leahy, D., Taylor, W., Jeanes, R., Welch, R., Duhn, I., Cumbo, B., Lindsay, J., Tanner, C., Wescott, S. & Beltsos-Russo, Z. (2021). *Kids co-designing healthy places*. <https://www.kidscodesigninghealthyplaces.com.au>

Reid, A. (2019). Climate change education and research: possibilities and potentials versus problems and perils? *Environmental Education Research, 25*(6), 767–790.

Rooney, T., Blaise, M., & Royds, F. (2020). With shadows, dust and mud: Activating weathering-with pedagogies in early childhood education. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 22*(2), 109–123.

Selwyn, N. (2019). *Retooling schools for an era of climate change*. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. <https://www.smh.com.au/education/retooling-schools-for-an-era-of-climate-change-20190814-p52gx7.html>

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