

# Living Streets Aotearoa



EMBARGOED TILL 8:45 am 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019

## Safer Speeds to Walk to School

27<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Living Streets Aotearoa strongly endorses the Government's commitment to improve safety for students walking to school through today's announcement about lowering speeds around schools.

***"Walking is a healthy and social choice for students, either for the whole journey or combined with public transport,"*** says Celia Wade-Brown, Living Streets National Secretary and member of Walking to School/ Hikoī ki a Mātauranga steering group. ***"We welcome safer speeds near schools. Research consistently shows most students want to walk to school with friends or family, not be driven."***

Minister Genter today announced maximum urban school speeds of 40 kph and rural school speeds of 60kph.

<https://transport.cwp.govt.nz/land/tackling-unsafe-speeds/>

Research shows daily physical activity is essential for physical and mental health and that young people in New Zealand aren't exercising enough. ***"The daily walk to school can be an important part of children keeping fit, independent and knowing their neighbourhoods, but only if it's safe"*** says Ms Wade-Brown.

In 2014, New Zealand Transport Agency carried out a desktop Safety Assessment of all schools, obtained by Living Streets under an OIA request, but Ms Wade-Brown says not enough investment has been made since.

Living Streets is calling for a nationwide Walk to School campaign and funding from the Road Safty budget for infrastructure such as zebra crossings, traffic lights and good quality footpaths near schools. Living Streets Aotearoa aims to ensure **over 50% of children and adolescents usually walk all or part of their journey to school by 2025.**

***"Make streets safe for our tamariki and you'll improve neighbourhoods for everyone!"*** says former Mayor of Wellington, who has led walking school buses and supported suburban and CBD speed reductions in the capital.

Living Streets Aotearoa is part of a steering group to increase the numbers of students walking to school. There are 24 recommendations <https://www.livingstreets.org.nz/node/5047> including

9. Urban schools have 30kph speed limits, safe crossings and footpaths for a minimum 300m radius for primary and 1km for intermediate and secondary schools, including access to nearby bus or train stops.
10. Every rural school has safe access to buses and safe crossings with time-based speed limits before and after school. The bus passing limit of 20kph is promoted and enforced.

### Background

Living Streets Aotearoa is the New Zealand organisation for people on foot, promoting walking-friendly communities. We are a nationwide organisation with local branches and affiliates throughout New Zealand.

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