



# DOUBLE THE FEET ON THE STREET

NZ Walking Conference 2008  
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<b>Phone number</b>	06 357 5349	<b>Fax Number</b>	06 358 1178
<b>Presentation topic</b>	The iMove schools promotion in the Manawatu region		
<b>Presentation title</b>	iMove the Nation		
<b>Presentation Style</b>	<b>Presentation</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Workshop / Walkshop</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Estimated Time Required</b>	0-10 mins <input type="checkbox"/>	10-20 mins <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	20-30 mins <input type="checkbox"/>

### **Abstract Remit**

Every morning over 9,000 primary school children in the Manawatu, Horowhenua and Tararua regions travel to school by car. In the past 20 years, the percentage of children being driven to school has more than doubled. This is not an isolated problem - It's a nationwide issue.

Car trips add to traffic congestion around schools and increase the risk of injury to children. Meanwhile, many children do not get enough physical activity, increasing their risk of developing serious health problems.

The solution to the problem? Active transport. It's not only environmentally friendly but fewer car trips to school help keep children active, healthy and safe while reducing traffic congestion around school gates and reducing safety concerns.

In March 2006 RoadSafe Central decided to do something about the problem: launching a "Walking Wednesdays" and "Biking Thursdays" programme during Bikewise Week. Led by RoadSafe Central's Mary Mitchell the programme initially targeted selected schools in Palmerston North and Levin. It involved working with schools to reward children in years 5-8, that chose to walk or cycle to school on a designated day each week, over a four week period. Initially five schools and over 500 children were involved in the programme.

Two years on, the programme has evolved into iMove- neke neke hi! Enjoying a collaborative approach with support from numerous agencies, iMove is a versatile, and flexible promotion; now reaching well in excess of 3000 children from 30 primary and intermediate schools in Sport Manawatu's area.

Children involved in the iMove programme learn to form healthy and sustainable travel habits and how to be safe and responsible pedestrians or cyclists. The aim is to have more children getting to school actively, more often.

Participating Schools now undertake either a weekly challenge over four weeks. Or a full week of iMove. Whilst participating in the programme, children receive spot prizes and the reward incentive of attaining four stamps (one per iMove day) to fill their personal card. Completed cards are placed in a draw for a variety of reward prizes.

In addition to this, a friendly competition is run among the schools, with a trophy awarded to the school with the highest completion percentage. There is also a overall 'Spirit of iMove Award,' for the school who does the best job of embracing the ideals of iMove.

Due to the overwhelming success of iMove Sport Manawatu has gained a full time Staff member dedicated to the programme and a proposal has been put to LTNZ to expand the programme moving towards a community wide focus.

By using the same simple concepts Sport Manawatu hopes to use the programme to encourage parents, teachers and workplaces to walk or cycle to their chosen destination. Other benefits will include increased utilization of recreation facilities throughout the region

The programme continues to be well evaluated so that high quality, quantative data can drive future directions for iMove. With a national collaborative approach, our vision of the 'iMove the world,' may not be so far off.

### **Author Profile**

Mark Leishman is a new face in the health promotion sector. He is the co-ordinator of the iMove promotion, having been appointed to the role by Sport Manawatu in Dec 2007.

A trained Physical Education teacher, Mark has spent much of his Adult life travelling both NZ and the globe as a Cross-Country Mountainbike racer. And more recently as a triathlete, specialising in off-road disciplines. With a background that includes teaching, sports management, journalism, coaching, and fitness instruction; Mark brings a broad array of skills and experience to the role.

A role that is consistently expanding and developing, as the concept of iMove reaches a wider audience.