



Mobility plan for schools (manual presentation)

Introduction

- Sometimes people see the world with the eyes of a car. Kids and young people 13-16 don't. They don't drive. Because of that it is fun to plan traffic with them.
- That is why it is always very fruitful to involve them in planning, because they don't have these silly ideas of adjusting the world to a car.

Children and mobility

- At IPoP we often deal with sustainable mobility in relation to travel to school. We promote active travel to school, mainly meaning that children and young people walk to school.
- The reason is, that the amount of children and young people that walk to school decreased in the last decades significantly.
 - We all used to walk to school back in the nineties while nowadays in some areas only half of the children and young people walk to school. On the other hand, the share of children/young people who are taken to school by their parents with a car increased tremendously. And that is an issue we need to tackle.
 - Walking to school supplies children/youth with the minimal needed amount of daily exercise. The school areas are too full of cars and that diminishes the traffic safety, particularly for children/youth and increases air pollution and traffic congestion. And, above all, children/youth don't like being driven. It is the idea of the parents, not the children/youngsters.
- Mobility plan for schools is a tailor made plan for a specific school, that aims to increase the share of children and young people and schools staff who travel to school sustainably.
- With an aim to make a mobility plan designed for children/young people, we (up to some point) designed it with them.

Traffic rules might be different from the perspective of a child and young people

- In order to enable children and young people (students) to walk to school, the safety of the school area needs to be improved. Some of the improvements are obvious, for example

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removing traffic from the school gates, which is a good start but obviously not enough because a wider set of streets needs to be reconsidered from a pedestrian safety perspective.

- In order to understand how children and young people see the traffic we walked the streets in their school area together with them. We noted their observations, complains and needs. Some were very obvious like the lack of a safe place to leave their scooter while they are at school. Other were a surprise. For example, some of the pedestrian crossings were badly marked. For us, the adults it was obvious that crossing the street at such crossing is OK, but the children thought, that they should not and were quite confused by such minor, from a wider perspective unimportant traffic measures. The observations of the children and young people provided a foundation for a mobility plan for the school area.

- We interviewed the parents to understand, which part of the school way they find unpleasant or even dangerous. After all it is them who choose the mode how their children travel to school. Although they often think that their children want to be driven to school, data show, they don't.

Children and young people like to walk

When promoting active travel to school we always measure how students get to school and how they would like to get to school. Only a minority expresses a wish to travel to school by car usually well below 20 %, even below 10 %, while the usual share of students, who would like to get to school actively always goes beyond 70 %.

These data help us to convince the parents that they are not doing any favour to their children with taking them to school with a car, quite the opposite. This helps us to implement actions that make active travel to school safer and more pleasant.

Traffic data

- In order to communicate the mobility plan, reliable data are needed. We measure the amount of traffic (cars, pedestrians etc.) at selected streets in the school area.

- These data are used to analyse the school district. It is divided into smaller areas and specific locations are analysed from different perspectives – interviews and observations which can include traffic planning expert.

- Two outcomes – same solution.

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Aim of the mobility plan

- The aim for students and school staff is separated. Teachers residences are more dispersed, obviously.

Measures

Three categories of potential measures have been prepared.

- Organisation.
 - Rewarding teachers who share the ride.
 - School bike.
 - Kiss and ride.
- Infrastructure.
 - Light measures.
 - Painting the school courtyard.
 - School streets.
 - Lowering speed limit.
 - Hard measures.
 - Bike line installation.
 - New sidewalk.
 - Cross road redesign.
- Promotion.
 - A festival for European mobility week.
 - Active role of school in terms of promoting sustainable mobility.
 - Games. Students and staff.

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Action plan

- During this process we usually get students, school and parents into coalition promoting sustainable mobility. But municipality is the game changer. If we get their support, things change.

Teenagers

- Teenagers are sometimes more keen on cars. They will drive in a couple of years. The first challenge is to explain to them, what the main problem of cars is. It's the space.

- Cars take too much space and space in the cities is in limited supply, obviously.

- The trick I use is I ask the students to put apart their hand. The game is they all have to walk to the library, balcony, ... and they are not allowed to touch.

- The first thing is, the class room becomes too small.

- I explain, that if we want them to fit in the class room, we will have to expand the the class room first and the school second, which will eventually increase the distance to the toilet and other classrooms. This is how the sprawl happens.

- Then we have the bottle neck – the doors of the classroom. This is how the congestion happens.

- Next is negotiation at the stairs. This is how the crossroad works in the rush hour.

- And at the end they don't fit in the library. I use that to explain the parking policy.

- After the game we start the workshop.

- Usually two things are pointed out.

- They want to be more independent from their parents. It annoys them to be driven around by the parents.

- The second is night buses. In order to avoid driving home from parties with parents or drunken peers, which is a well-grounded wish.

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