

UTown@UBC Walk 'n Roll to School: U-Hill Secondary Surveys

May 1, 2013



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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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1. Introduction

The week of April 8th to 12th, UBC Campus and Community Planning and the UNA conducted a survey with over 100 University Hill Secondary School students as part of the planning process for the Walk 'n Roll to School initiative. The purpose of this survey was to determine the most often-used walking and cycling routes students take when commuting to U-Hill Elementary, as well as to determine the most popular forms of transportation used by these students when commuting to school and to garner feedback on how to engage youth in active, sustainable transportation.

The following report outlines the feedback received from the surveys. Please note that the total number of surveys received was 114, however the number of respondents per question varied and is indicated. The percentage values are based upon the number of respondents for that particular question.

2. Demographics:

2.1. What Grade Are You In?

The survey was conducted by C+CP and UNA staff during lunch hour at U-Hill Elementary. Grade 9 students comprised the largest portion of respondents.

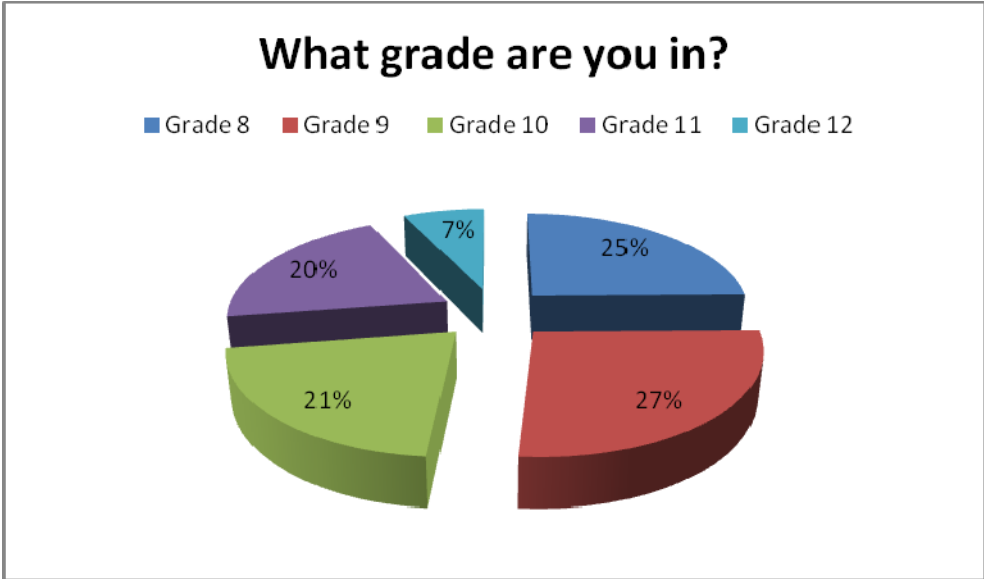


Figure 1 Grade level distribution amongst respondents (113)

In addition to basic demographic information, participants were asked to indicate the language they speak most frequently at home by filling in their own response. For the purpose of the chart below, specific Chinese dialects were not combined; the responses have been tallied according to what students themselves indicated as their primary spoken language.

2.2. Primary Language Spoken At Home

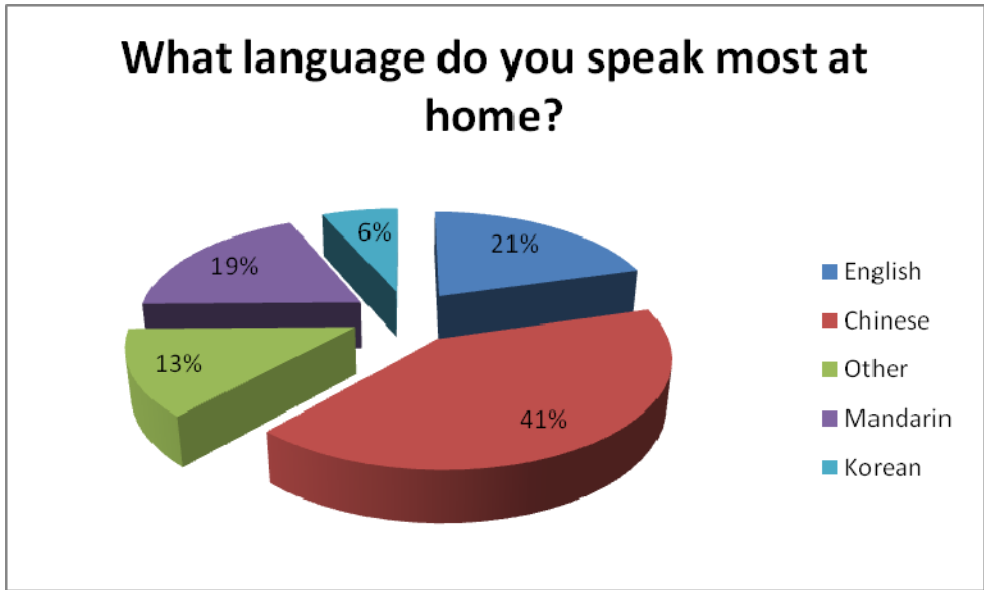


Figure 2: Frequently spoken languages indicated by respondents (112 respondents)

All of the neighbourhoods at UTown@UBC are represented in the survey findings, as well as the UEL and City of Vancouver. Wesbook Place, located closest in proximity to U-Hill Secondary had the highest number of respondents (21%), with Hampton Place and Acadia tied with 14%.

2.3. Where Do You Live?

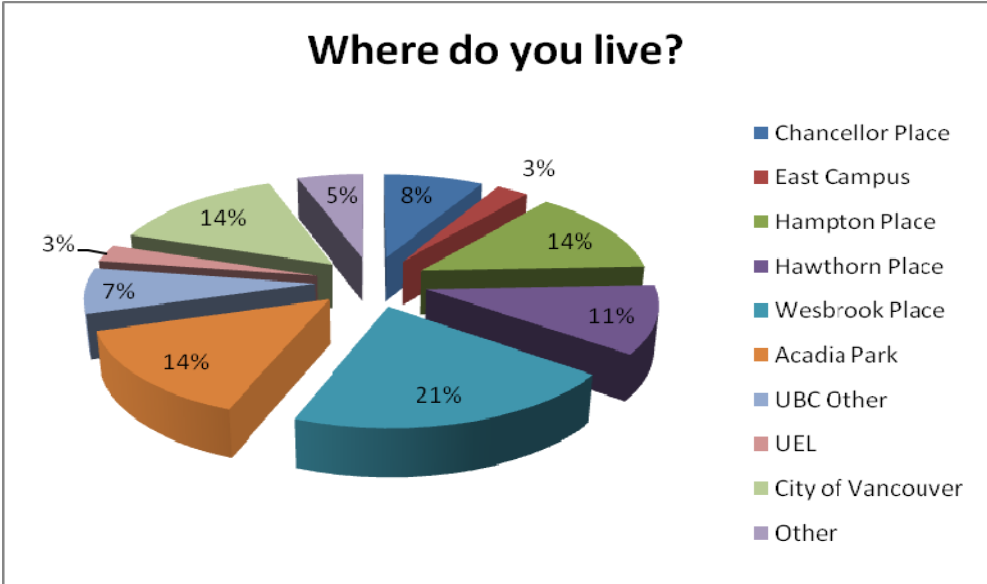


Figure 3: Chart indicating where respondents live (111 respondents)

While 5% of respondents indicated they live somewhere “other” than the choices given, it is important to note that in some cases they indicated a location that may have fit under another category. For example, rather than check off City of Vancouver, a respondent who lives in downtown Vancouver checked off “other.”

3. Questions about Commute:

3.1. Modes of Transportation Used for Commuting

U-Hill Secondary School students appear to be avid walkers, with 55% indicating that walking is the mode of transportation they use to commute to and from school.

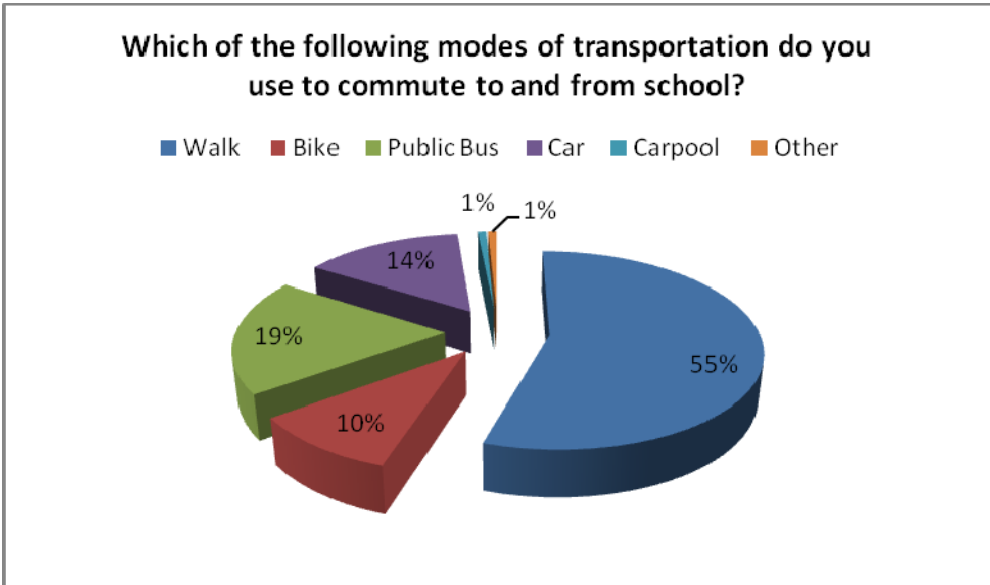


Figure 4: Modes of transportation used by respondents (114)

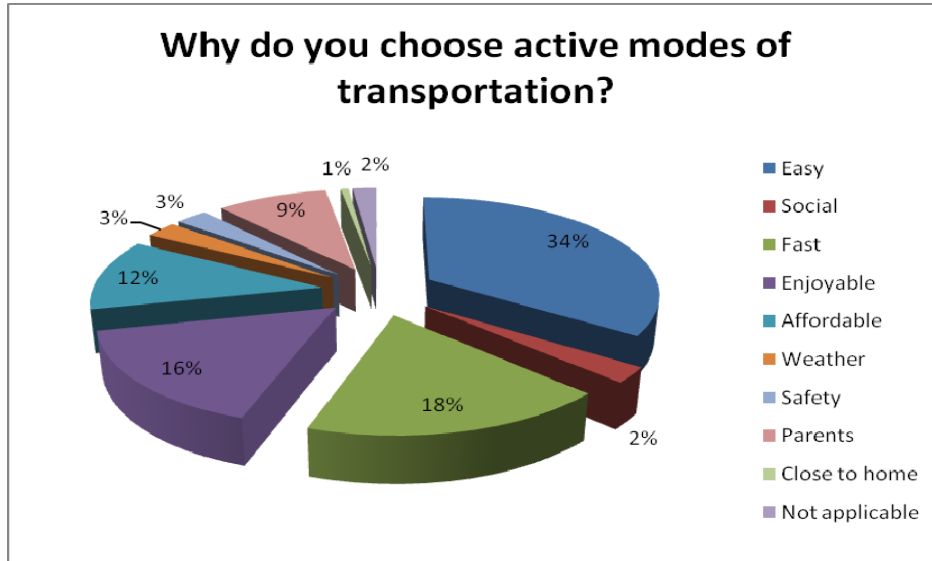
The remaining 45% of students use Public Bus (19%), Car (14%) and Bike (10%), while only 1% indicated Carpool or “Other.”

Although not all students walk as their primary form of commuting to and from school, over **80% indicated that since September, they have walked to or from school at least once, while 29% have cycled.**

Of particular interest are the reasons why U-Hill Secondary School students opt to use a specific mode of transportation to commute to and from school. Walk ‘n Roll Celebration Week aims to get students and parents excited about using active transportation as part of the daily commute to and from school and it is integral to know why they are choosing their current mode of transportation and what can be done to encourage them to either continue to use active forms of transportation, or start using them.

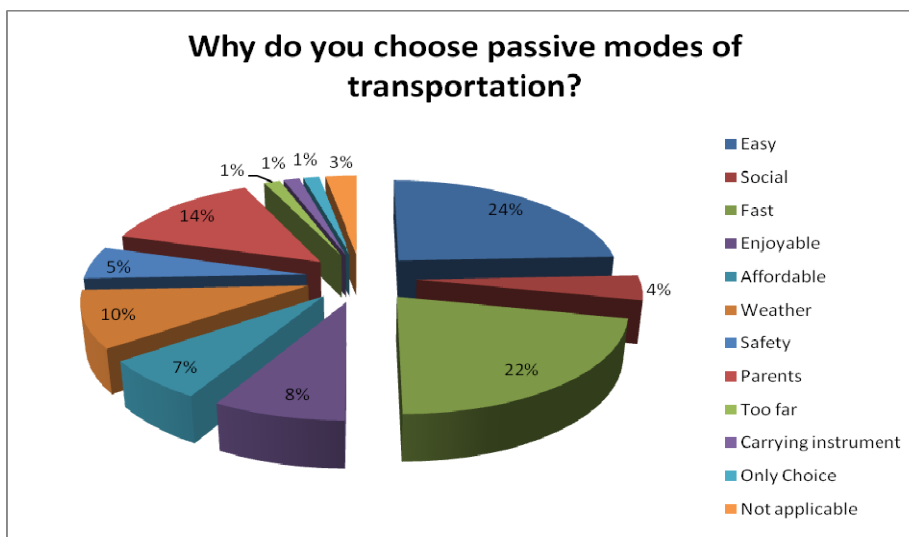
Modes of transportation were further themed into two categories: active transportation (walking, biking, skateboarding etc) and passive transportation (car, bus, etc). They were then referenced with indicated reasons for choosing active or passive transportation.

3.2. Reasons for Choosing Specified Mode of Transportation



Time, ease and enjoyment play a large role in determining how U-Hill Secondary School students commute to and from school. When asked “**why do you choose that mode of transportation?**” 34% respondents indicated that they choose active transportation because it is **easy**, 18% said because it is **fast** and 16% said they find it **enjoyable**.

Respondents were permitted to choose more than one answer for this question, which is reflected in the total number of responses versus total number of respondents.



Reasons for using passive transportation modes to commute to and from school were similar to those indicated for active transportation; 24% cited driving or bussing to school as **easy** while 22% said they choose it because it is fast. However, **parental input** also plays a significant role in why students opt to take a car or bus to school; 14% of students who regularly take passive transportation indicated that their parents choose their mode of transportation. Getting parents on board will be key to promoting active transportation in the community.

The question “what would make you more likely to walk or bike to school?” yielded 125 responses. Of these responses, the following were the most often cited:

Response	Percentage
A shorter distance	12.8%
Better weather	12.0%
I already walk/ride	11.2%
Walking/riding with friends	4.8%

Students were also asked to provide feedback on how to engage them in a Walk ‘n Roll to School event. Incentives and prizes were by far the most referenced engagement tool (18%), followed by “walking with friends” (10%).

Further to providing insight into engagement tactics, the students were also asked what kinds of promotional and educational materials might help encourage students to walk and bike to school. Once again, giving out prizes for those who walk or bike to school was the number one suggestion (17%):

- ***“Prizes and awards for those who walk or bike every day for the whole year***
- ***“Free breakfast”***

Giving **extra marks to those who walk or bike**, particularly in PE, was also a suggestion that emerged repeatedly (7%). In terms of educational materials, 5% of students indicated that collateral that explained the environmental impact of driving or bussing to school and the effects of walking instead would be helpful.

4. Concerns:

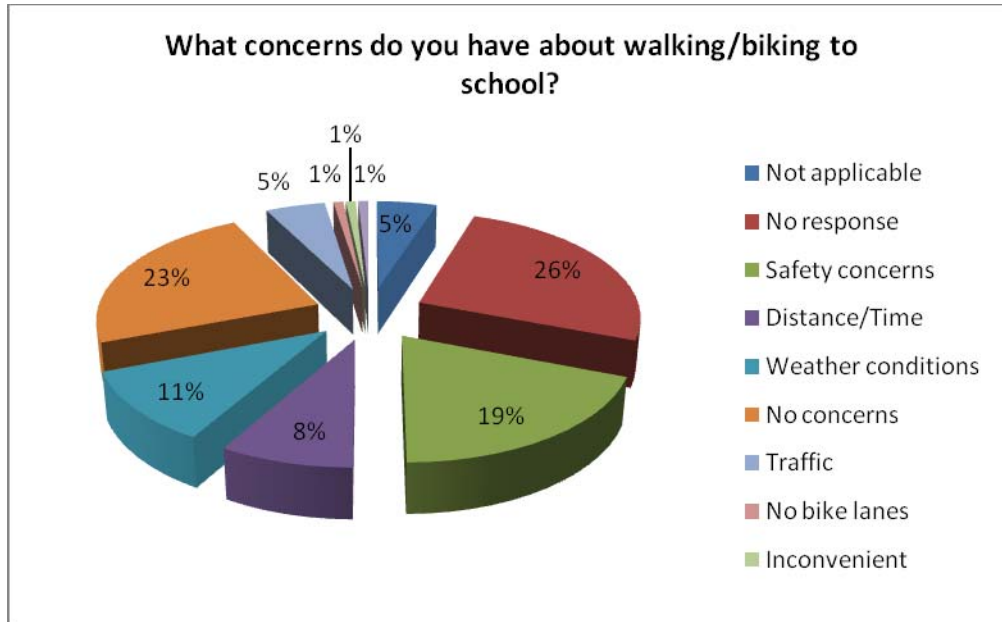
Students were asked to rate sidewalks, street crossings, traffic/driver behavior, safety and appeal of route during their route to and from school. The overall response was positive, with most rating these areas as either “excellent” or “good”.

Question: On your route to and from school, please rate the following	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total Responses
Sidewalks (availability, condition, locations)	55 (53%)	40 (39%)	7 (7%)	1 (1%)	103
Street Crossings (locations, safety, visibility)	44 (43%)	41 (40%)	14 (14%)	4 (4%)	103
Traffic and Driver Behaviour (obey signs, speed)	41 (41%)	40 (40%)	16 (16%)	4 (4%)	101
Safety (traffic, lighting, people, animals)	47 (47%)	40 (40%)	12 (12%)	2 (2%)	101
Appeal of route (landscape, litter)	56 (56%)	38 (38%)	4 (4%)	2 (2%)	100

Students were asked to respond to the following two questions in their own words:

- *“What concerns, if any, do you have about walking or biking to school?”*
- *“What concerns, if any, do your parents have about you walking or biking to school?”*

4.1. Student Concerns About Walking/Biking to School

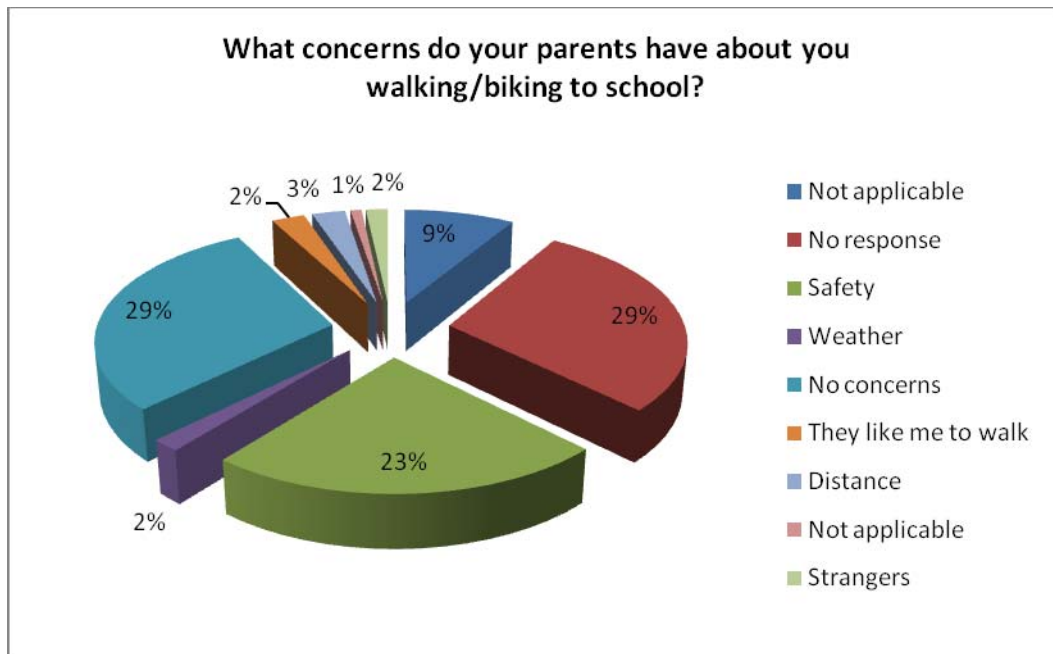


Responses to the first question showed that 23% of students have no concerns themselves about walking or biking to school, however, while 47% of students rated safety as “excellent,” this is still a concern for many when commuting via active transportation. 19% of students indicated various safety concerns when walking or riding to school, including:

- *“People might get hit by a car”*
- *“It’s more dangerous than walking to school”*
- *“Crossing the road”*

4.2. Parent Concerns About Walking/Biking to School

When asked what concerns their parents have about allowing them to walk or ride to school, responses were similar; while 29% believe their parents do not have any concerns about them walking to school, 23% noted that their parents are apprehensive about their safety when they walk or bike to school.



Meeting with parents has shown that safety is definitely a concern for many parents and many improvements have been made to West 16th as a result. Survey findings will be used to assist UBC Transportation Planners in devising the safest walking and cycling routes to school from various central locations.

5. Route Mapping:

For this portion of the survey, respondents were given a map of UBC and were asked to draw their favourite walking, biking or skating route. The results were analyzed by looking at the indicated starting point and mapping out roads, trails and streets that students took in their journey to school.

While 37 unique routes were identified by U-Hill Secondary School students through the mapping exercise, only five yielded statistically significant results:

Statistically Significant Routes	Count	Total	Percentage
Wesbrook Place to U-Hill Secondary	11	89	12.4%
Wesbrook Mall to West 16 th to U-Hill Secondary	10	89	11.2%
Acadia Road to West 16 th to U-Hill Secondary	6	89	6.7%
Hampton Place Road to West 16 th to U-Hill Secondary	5	89	5.6%

These survey findings, including identified routes, have been shared with UBC Transportation Planning, to assist in developing safe, recommended routes to school as well as to help identify potential “stops” for a walking school bus, based on where students are commuting from and existing routes they are taking.

The identified routes will be used by C+CP staff, Transportation Planners and community members to conduct a “walk through” so that potential hazards can be identified and appropriate collateral materials can be developed to assist both students and parents in safely and actively getting to and from school

6. Potential Survey Biases:

Although the mapping exercise specifically asked that students draw **their favourite walking or biking route** potential misinterpretation of the exercise may have caused students to map out routes that they take when using alternate forms of transportation.

Although efforts were made to be as specific as possible when identifying and analyzing the routes, as the mapping information was compiled by hand, there is also the potential for human error or misinterpretation.



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