

Information topic	Details
Indicator name	Active transport to and from school
Domain and topic	Transport
Indicator definition and units	The percentage of children aged 5–14 years who usually travel to and from school by walking, cycling, or other non-motorised modes such as skates (Ministry of Health 2025a).
Data source	New Zealand Health Survey (NZHS).
Numerator	Children aged 5–14 years participating in the NZHS who usually walk, bike, skate or use other physical activity to get to and from school.
Denominator	All children aged 5–14 years participating in the NZHS, excluding those that responded ‘don’t know’ or ‘refused’ for this question.
Methodology	<p>Active transport to and from school was asked about in the child questionnaire of the New Zealand Health Survey, for children aged 5–14 years. The question asked was:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">How does [child’s name] usually get to and from school? [Multiple responses possible]</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Walk / Bike / Skate or other physical activity / Car or taxi / School bus or school van / Public transport / Other / Not applicable, for example, is home schooled / Don’t know / Refused</i></p> <p>A primary caregiver answered the child questionnaire as a proxy for the child. Question non-response (where respondents did not answer the question or answered “don’t know”) was adjusted for in analysis, so that the results still represent the whole population.</p> <p>Time trends: Results between survey years have been compared, and statistically significant differences are noted (based on <i>t</i>-tests using age-standardised results).</p> <p>Population groups: Results between population groups have been compared using adjusted rate ratios (except for between different age groups).</p> <p>For more details, see the NZHS Methodology report (Ministry of Health 2025b).</p>
Time period and time scale	The survey is conducted over a period of 12 months from July to the following June. National data is available annually from 2011/12 onward.
Population coverage	New Zealand usually resident population of all ages. The child survey covers children aged 0–14 years, though the specific question for this indicator was only asked for children aged 5–14 years.
Spatial Coverage	National. Data for health districts (the former District Health Board areas) was not updated in the November 2025 NZHS release.

Metadata

Measures of frequency	Results are presented by sex, age group, ethnic group (total response) and neighbourhood deprivation (NZDep2018 quintiles).
Confidence interval methodology	95% confidence intervals were calculated by the Ministry of Health. Confidence intervals are presented in brackets in the text and tables, and as error bars on graphs.
Limitations of indicator	There is some uncertainty in the estimates due to taking a sample, reflected in the 95% confidence intervals.
Limitations of data source	The survey results may under- or over-estimate indicators due to the nature of self-reported information.
Created by	New Zealand Ministry of Health
Related indicators	Number of motor vehicles Road traffic injury deaths and hospitalisations Unmet need for GP services due to lack of transport Main mode of transport to work Household travel time by mode of transport
For more information	For more information on the New Zealand Health Survey, visit the New Zealand Health Survey website: https://www.health.govt.nz/statistics-research/surveys/new-zealand-health-survey
References	<p>Ministry of Health. 2025a. <i>New Zealand Health Survey Annual Data Explorer</i>. URL: https://minhealthnz.shinyapps.io/nz-health-survey-2024-25-annual-data-explorer.</p> <p>Ministry of Health. 2025b. <i>Methodology Report 2024/25: New Zealand Health Survey</i>. URL: https://www.health.govt.nz/publications/methodology-report-202425-new-zealand-health-survey.</p>