

RESEARCH SUMMARY

Title	Evaluation of the Accreditation Scheme (STAR)	
Objective	To evaluate the value of the School Travel Accredited & Recognised (STAR) scheme, assess appropriateness of workshops and review the switch from paper to online applications	
Date	April 2012	Agency: SPA Future Thinking
Methodology	Two online surveys (one with Oct-11 workshop attendees, the second with non-attendees), 5 face-to-face depth interviews with participant schools, 31 semi-structured telephone depths (21 with participant schools and 10 with non-participant schools)	

Abstract

STAR is contributing to higher levels of walking and cycling to and from school. The scheme's success relies on the presence of a highly enthused school travel champion, and an active and supportive School Travel Advisor. The main barrier to participation is the time necessitated by the scheme. The workshops are valued and the research supports shorter and more local workshops in future. Moving the application process online is welcomed.

Key findings

STAR is contributing to increased walking and cycling levels and does this through focussing School Travel Plan objectives and maintaining motivation. The presence of a highly enthused school travel champion and an active and supportive School Travel Advisor contribute greatly to the scheme's success. Logistical factors such as the presence of busy roads nearby or a large catchment area are claimed to limit how far some schools can increase walking and cycling levels.

The key motivations for participation in the scheme focus on renewing School Travel Plans and receiving information and support from School Travel Advisors. Rewards offered by the scheme, and recognition gained from it, are important in terms of celebration but do not themselves motivate participation in STAR. The main barrier to taking part in STAR, and the main complaint about it, is the time it requires. Both the application form and the set-up and running of the scheme are considered very time consuming. For some school travel champions, the scheme's value outweighs the time commitment, though for others it is considered prohibitive.

Satisfaction with the workshops is very high (88% being very/ fairly satisfied overall), as is propensity to attend future workshops (93% of those who attended in Oct-11 are definitely/ probably likely to attend again). Motivations for attending the workshop focus around the opportunities to network and share ideas with other schools/ TfL. The research supports the plan for shorter and more local workshops as a lack of time is the main factor for discouraging workshop attendance.

Moving the application process from paper to online is welcomed by the school travel champions. In general, the move is thought to be sensible as online provides a quicker and easier medium through which to apply. The only concerns raised are around possible IT issues and a preference to work from hard copies.

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