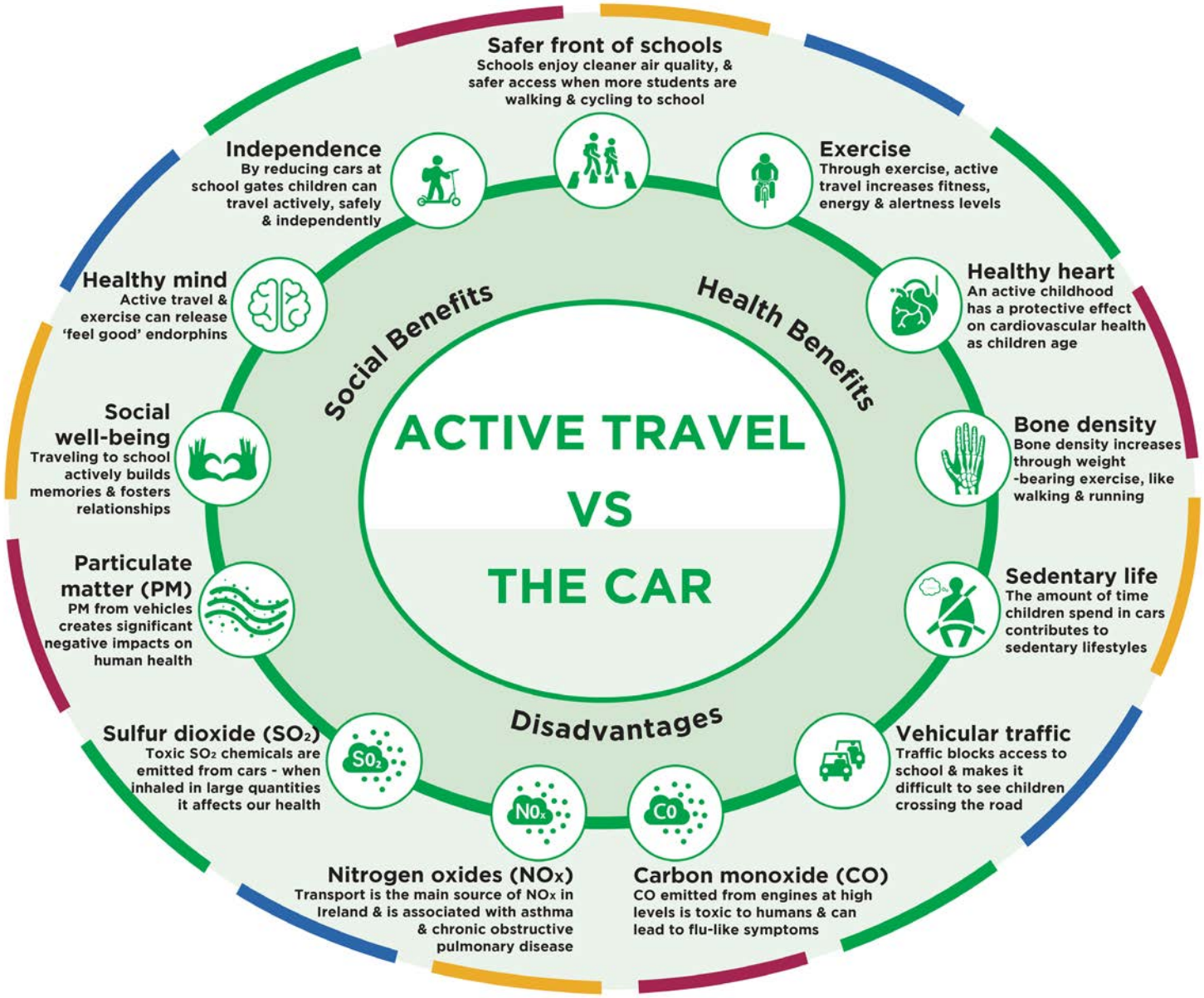
THE EFFECTS OF HOW WE TRAVEL TO SCHOOL - ACTIVE TRAVEL VS. THE CAR



WHY IS ACTIVE TRAVEL IMPORTANT?

Active travel to school is important for your children's health and for the health of the environment. Less children are using active ways to travel to school, with more being driven than ever before. More cars at the front of school creates a safety hazard for children and the emissions created from car engines are harmful to your children's health. This Safe Routes to School (SRTS) brochure explains:

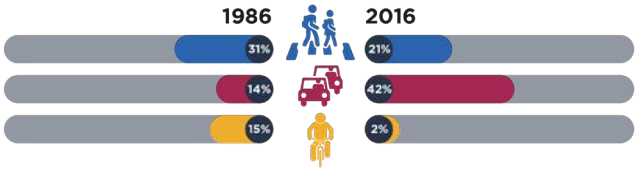
- Why active travel is important
- How SRTS aims to support active travel
- The health benefits of active travel to school

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

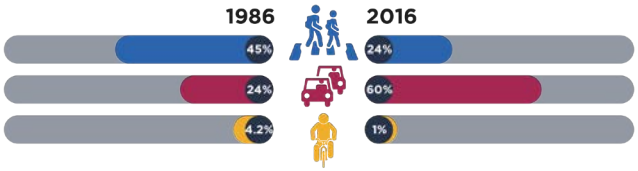
CHANGING THE WAY WE MOVE

If we look at the shifting trends of how students travel to school, Central Statistics Office (CSO) statistics will show that active travel rates to school have been rapidly decreasing in the last 30 years. Active travel, such as walking and cycling, has decreased by half, from 49.5% of primary school students in 1986 to just 25% in 2016. Walking and cycling has been substituted for primary school students, with the majority of journeys to school being made by car. This period saw a 24% increase of children being driven to school between 1986 to 59.8% in 2016, almost triple what it was a generation ago. SRTS aims to reverse the declining trends of active travel to school.

Secondary Students



Primary Students



WHY IS ACTIVE TRAVEL IMPORTANT?

Some people might ask: “why is it so important to increase active travel to school?” By engendering active travel, students and communities have the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of better air quality, improved health and well-being, and a safer environment around the school. Vehicular traffic at the front of school during drop-off and pick-up times presents a safety hazard for school children and contributes to poor air quality. By developing safer routes, the SRTS programme will be tackling the multiple issues facing young school goers.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

The SRTS Programme launched in March 2021 and was open to all schools in Ireland to apply for front of school upgrades which provide walking, cycling and safer access to school. The programme is an initiative of the Department of Transport and supported by the Department of Education. It is operated by the Green-Schools Programme in partnership with the NTA and local authorities. A dedicated SRTS Infrastructure Officer works with schools and local authorities during the process.

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