

PREMIER'S COUNCIL FOR ACTIVE LIVING MONTHLY BULLETIN

Welcome to the Premier's Council for Active Living (PCAL) Bulletin

The purpose of the bulletin is to provide people interested in promoting active living choices within NSW with relevant up-to-date news and research. The monthly bulletins focus upon material applicable to the broad range of NSW agencies represented on PCAL and will be archived on the PCAL website at: http://www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/resources/monthly_bulletin.html. If you wish to receive the PCAL Bulletin please write **SUBSCRIBE** in the subject area and email pcal@heartfoundation.org.au.

New NSW BikePlan

PCAL has been commissioned by the NSW Government to oversee the preparation of a new [Bike Plan for NSW](#). Work on



the new NSW BikePlan will be implemented by a joint project team consisting of the Roads & Traffic Authority and the Department of Environment and Climate Change. It is expected the plan – to be ready for release in 2009 – will map out new events, facilities and programs needed to support the development of cycling for both recreation and transport. The project team will be consulting widely with local councils, major employers, bicycle user groups and other peak organisations with an interest in improving safe and sustainable transport options. Broad community consultation is a key component of developing the new NSW BikePlan and individuals are encouraged to put forward their ideas and views via email before October 31 to Bike_Plan@rta.nsw.gov.au. A dedicated webpage updating developments towards the new NSW BikePlan will be established on the PCAL site shortly.

Tax Incentives to Ride to Work

One example of a new idea to encourage more cycling has emerged from Bicycle Victoria who have proposed that employees could be given a tax incentive to ride to work. Under the proposal, workers could claim up to \$1500 of the cost of a bike and riding equipment as a tax-free income, provided they log at least 25 kilometres a week commuting. The scheme provides potential carbon benefits, infrastructure savings and community health gains. For further information on the scheme and other disincentives to commute by car see <http://www.theage.com.au>

Obesity Costs continue to expand

Access Economics in a recent [report](#) has estimated that obesity will cost Australia \$58 billion in 2008 with 17.5% of Australians considered obese. The [National Preventative Health Task Force](#) is scheduled to release a discussion paper on a national preventative health strategy in October. The [PCAL Why Active Living Statement](#) summarises the evidence stating that as well as helping to reduce obesity levels, physical activity has an independent protective role against cardiovascular disease, some cancers as well as reducing the impact of clinical depression and anxiety.

Cash for Weight-loss ideas

The Queensland Government has offered \$1 million to the local town or city with the best idea to beat society's costly and growing obesity problem. As well, schools and workplaces will be able to compete for separate "fat-buster" prizes worth a total of \$600,000.



Prize money for the new Healthiest Community Award will have to be put towards "healthy" infrastructure, such as a swimming pool, sports facility or bike-walk path.

Small town losses weight

The small town of Colac in rural Victoria has reported long term significant reductions in children's weight as a result of a campaign to build the communities capacity to fight childhood obesity. Key strategies include transforming canteen menus, reducing television watching and increasing activities after school. For further information see <http://www.bmj.com/>

Greener Neighbourhoods National website

The CSIRO and the Federal Government have collaborated to generate a new website, [Your Development](#), which aims to provide urban developers fact sheets, case studies and information relating to the creation of greener and more walkable neighbourhoods. More than 60 fact sheets are available, many addressing active transport/travel issues while national and international case studies are also presented

Designing for Play



Play England have published guidance on the design of play spaces in the future. The

guide shows how to design good play spaces, which can be affordably maintained, give children and young people the freedom to play creatively and yet still allow them to experience risk, challenge and excitement. The guide is available free of charge at <http://www.playengland.org.uk/Page>. A recently launched NSW Central Coast play ground was amongst the facilities and programs acknowledged in the National Heart Foundation 2008 Local Government Awards. For further information on award recipients see: www.heartfoundation.org.au

Activity may help prevent memory loss

New Australian research has found that as little as 150 minutes of walking a week may help treat memory problems in adults. The researchers focused on 138 people aged 50 and older at increased risk of dementia and found that a home based physical activity program led to modest improvements in adults with memory difficulties. Further details are available at <http://www.healthday.com/>

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