

Active Living Research

Using Evidence to Prevent Childhood Obesity
and Create Active Communities

ARTICLE SUMMARY

February 2013

Access to Transportation in Lower-Income Communities

Introduction

Research shows that having access to public transportation and to places that support walking and bicycling can promote healthy behaviors, increased physical activity, and access to stores that sell fresh fruits and vegetables. This study explored the relationship between socioeconomic status and access to transportation options (i.e. road network, subway system, and bicycle share program).

Key Findings

Findings revealed that access to a subway system and bike share program is greatest among residents living in lower-income neighborhoods.

Methodology

Our study examined relationships between sociodemographic factors (e.g. age, sex, education, household income) and access to the road network, subway system, and a bicycle share program among 6,495 adults in Montreal, Canada. The study analyzed both individual- and neighborhood- level sociodemographic characteristics.

Other Findings

People with a high school education or lower, or with an annual household income of \$100,000 or higher, were the least likely to live near public transportation and the bicycle share program compared with university-educated residents or less affluent people.

Implications

The findings suggest that Montreal's policies have helped lower-income neighborhoods have equitable access to public transportation. These findings may not be applicable to other North American cities and future research should explore the influence that access to and use of transportation systems have on physical activity and other health behaviors in other cities.

SOURCE

Fuller, D., et al. (2013). Individual- and Area-Level Disparities in Access to the Road Network, Subway System and a Public Bicycle Share Program on the Island of Montreal, Canada. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, 45(Suppl): S95-S100.

Open access to the full text article is available at:

<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12160-012-9433-y>

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