

Visualization and engagement

Awareness, accountability and behavior change in Pays de Lumbres

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Gathering good examples
in sustainable mobility and
safe transport to and from schools



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Visualization and engagement

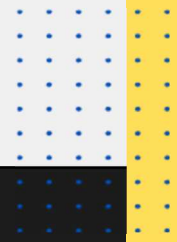
Awareness, accountability and behavior change in Pays de Lumbres

About this example

In this good example you will learn about an effective engagement and visualization strategy for both raising awareness and nudging new mobility behavior among school children at the elementary level.

Context and Challenge

The Community of Communes Pays de Lumbres, a group of 36 municipalities and 24 000 inhabitants in France, wanted to promote sustainable mobility in their villages. They expect to cultivate sustainable behavior in future citizens by empowering them to influence collective dynamics in addition to getting the health benefits.



General Process

The region has been interested in the many benefits of active mobility and has been working on developing ways to implement various initiatives. Having started with bike trainings in the schools, it was time to come up with a mobility challenge.

Three municipal schools have embarked on an inspiring sustainable mobility initiative, a project designed to engage both students and their parents in eco-friendly travel habits. The project unfolded through two engaging activities aimed at raising awareness and encouraging participation in elementary school.

The first activity was a mobility overview, directed to smaller children. Here, students were introduced to a matrix illustrating different modes of transport. Each morning, the children placed a colorful dot in a specially designated place next to the mode of mobility they used to get to school—walking, cycling, carpooling, using public transport or even a private car.

This simple yet impactful exercise allowed them to visualize their mobility choices, fostering a sense of responsibility and encouraging sustainable behaviour. When they returned home, moved by a sense of improvement, the students would encourage their parents in adjusting their own mobility behaviour.

The second activity was directed to older children still in elementary school. They invited creativity and reflection as children were asked to draw how they got to school. This process encouraged participants to use their senses as they depicted their journeys. The drawings not only became a source of pride for the students but also served as a valuable tool for understanding travel habits in the community.

As the weeks went by, the results were encouraging. There was an increase in sustainable commuting was evident, highlighted by the accumulation of colored dots in the corresponding matrix corner. Remarkably, in one village, it was discovered that many children were already walking to school. Another learning was that the distance (around 4km) was not an issue for those engaged in sustainable mobility, as the illustrations represented their homes and the school, without challenges along the way.

With an eye to the future, the team envisioned expanding the initiative to cover a wider area and involve more than 20 schools.

Other future activities are already in the pipeline, including a parent bus initiative, one or more parents can join walking or cycling to school.

Results and Benefits

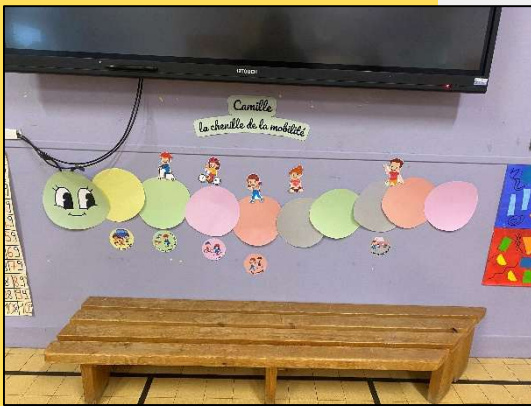


Photo: Pays de Lumbres

Empower children

Giving children a live overview of their mobility raises their awareness and teaches them how to create a process to see if they are making progress, so they can correct their course of action.



Photo: Pays de Lumbres

Increased sustainable mobility

As children become aware, they engage their parents in the new sustainable behavior, and over time changes in the mobility patterns can be seen.

Lessons Learned

Levels of buy-in authorization and implementation

Even if there is buy-in from the school director/principal, there is still another level of buy-in which involves getting other stakeholders to participate. For example, in this case getting the teachers engaged in running the exercise at the beginning of the lesson is essential for the success of the initiative.

Design and materials

If you are using a particular design to make the overview more attractive, remember to have it done as soon as possible, preferably before reaching out. Having the design in place helps to get buy-in by showing the process, as well as it avoids eventual delays in implementation.

Formal authorizations and other bureaucracy

Authorizations and bureaucratic permissions to work in schools may take a long time. Remember to start early enough and be prepared for that.

Two contact persons

The school director is one of the key buy-in and driving forces to keep the process going. In addition, whenever possible, a back-up contact should be assigned to increase resilience and keep the process going.

Key Steps (Check list)

- ☐ Prepare the material
 - Dot stickers
 - Template for data collection
 - Choose the design for gathering information

(It can be a simple matrix with pictures of different modes of transport or whatever you like)
- ☐ Engage school director
 - Tip: Have more than one contact person within the school assigned to the activity
- ☐ Build capacity with the staff
- ☐ Optional: inform parents
- ☐ Run the process for a month or two
 - Tip: remember to run the process in the appropriate months for walking and biking
 - Gather data using a template
- ☐ Evaluate the results and eventual changes in the choice of mobility modes
- ☐ Communicate results to students, staff and parents