



Kids driven to early grave

Daniel Hoy

PARENTS may be driving their children to obesity and early graves by refusing to let them walk to school, a survey has found.

Three out of four children are chauffeured to school and most other places, driving up their chances of suffering heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and cancer.

Though parents insist on driving them around, a recent

survey of Melbourne school children found 62 per cent would prefer to walk.

Results of the latest survey back up the grim finding of the Federal Government's National Children's Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey, which predicts half of the nation's children will be overweight or obese by 2025.

It warns this generation of children could be the first to be outlived by their parents.

But the Government report

claims the problem could be solved simply through walking, with children taking about 1000 steps less a day than they should.

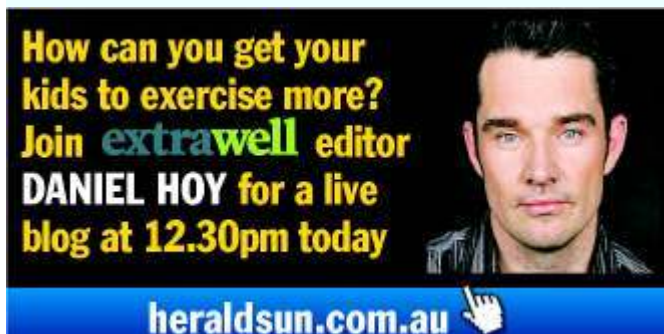
Health Productivity Institute of Australia president Dr John Lang said childhood obesity was five times more prevalent now than it was in the 1960s, with research revealing both boys and girls did not walk enough.

"It's no coincidence that back in the '60s it was common for children to walk to


school," Dr Lang said in the lead-up to Friday's National Walk to School Day.

"Back then we had a 5 per cent incidence of obese and overweight children. Today our children are so sedentary that by 2025 half of them will be obese.

"We know that children develop lifestyle habits when they're young, so teaching them healthy behaviour early is vital."



How can you get your kids to exercise more?
Join **extrawell** editor **DANIEL HOY** for a live blog at 12.30pm today



heraldsun.com.au