

National Family Biking Survey

Part II: Destinations and Motivations

Data Collected as of February 28, 2013
by Megan Odett, Kidical Mass DC

States Represented: 21

- AK (Seldovia)
- AZ (Tucson)
- CA (Berkeley, Dublin, Eureka, Fairfax, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, Santa Cruz, Sunnyvale)
- CT (Bridgeport, New Haven, Thomaston)
- CO (Denver)
- DC (Washington)
- FL (Miami, Tallahassee)
- IA (Cedar Rapids)
- IL (Chicago, Evanston)
- IN (Fort Wayne, Indianapolis)
- MA (Boston, Cambridge, Reading)
- MD (Cheverly, Rockville, Silver Spring)
- MI (Grand Blanc)
- MN (Minneapolis, St. Paul)
- MT (Anaconda)
- NC (Carrboro)
- OR (Eugene, Portland, Salem)
- PA (Philadelphia)
- TX (Austin, Houston, Tomball)
- WA (Seattle)
- WI (Madison, Milwaukee)

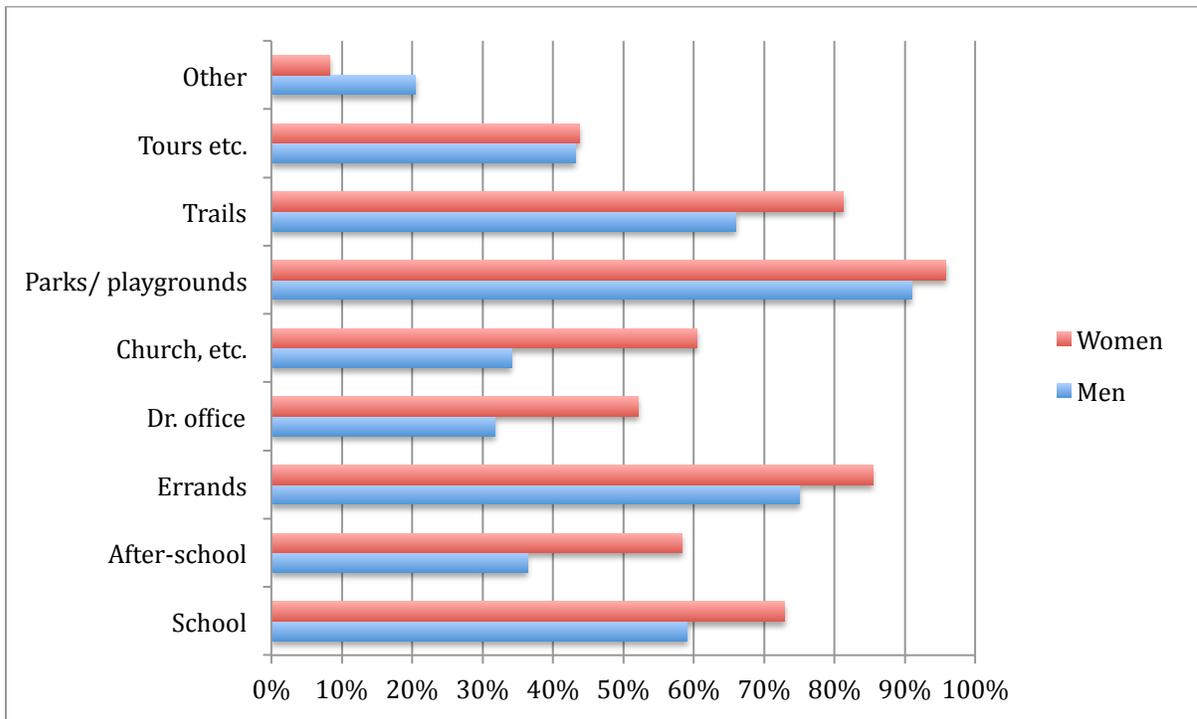
Countries Represented: 4

- United States
- Canada (Winnipeg, Toronto)
- UK (Swanage [Dorset])
- Australia (Brisbane)

Total Respondents: 96

- Women: 51%
- Men: 46%
- Gender Unspecified: 3%

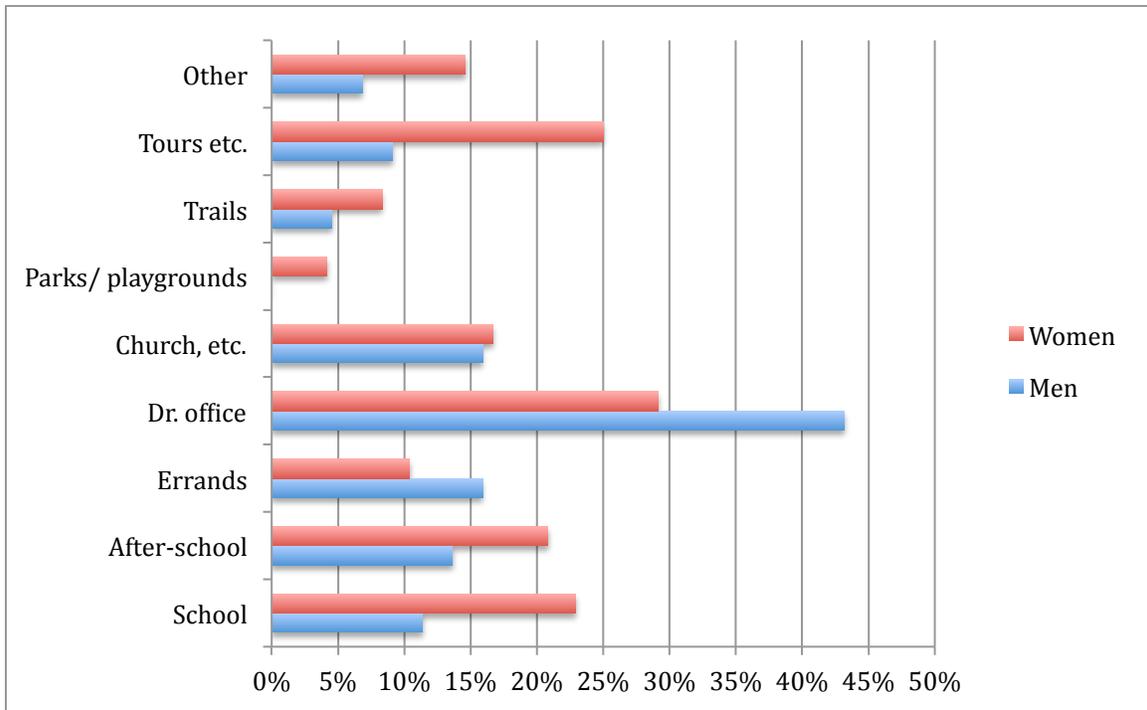
Where do you bike with your children?



Notes:

- Other: popular answers included neighborhood streets and bike lanes, local destinations such as YMCA/YWCA, museums & monuments, friends' houses
- Tours, etc.: Tours, vacations, or camping
- Church, etc.: Church or other community events
- Errands: Grocery store/around town errands
- After-school: After-school activities

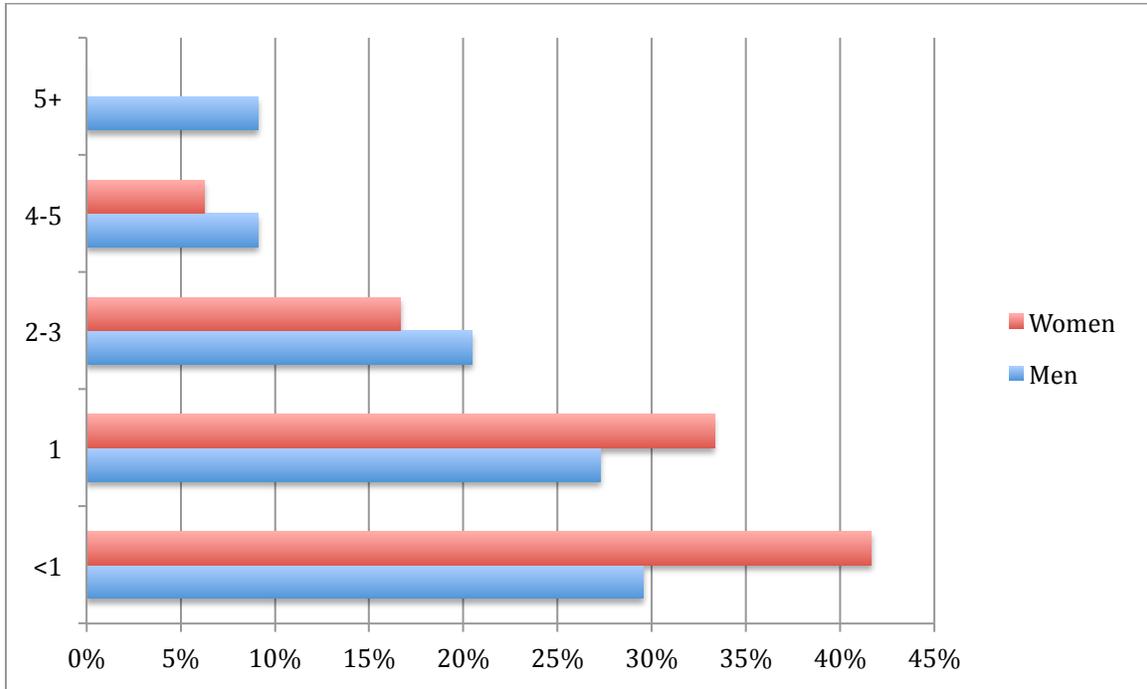
Where DON'T (or can't) you bike with your children?



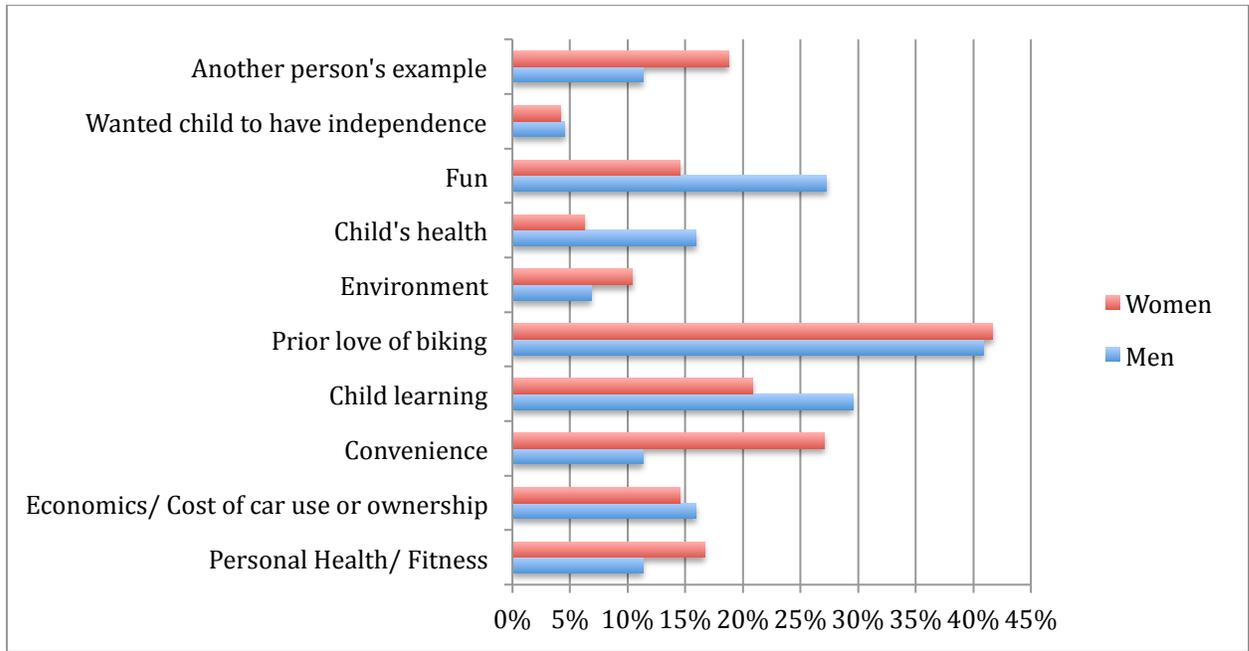
Notes:

- Other: popular answers included families and friends in bike-inaccessible areas, areas with bad infrastructure
- Tours, etc: Tours, vacations, or camping
- Church, etc.: Church or other community events
- Errands: Grocery store/around town errands
- After-school: After-school activities

At what age(s) did you start cycling with your children?



What first inspired you to start bicycling with your children?



Notes:

- Answers provided in text form; assigned to categories during survey analysis. Samples of answers provided below.

We find it important to foster independence and self-reliance. As a family we choose to be independent of motor vehicles so cycling with our children is a given. We think cycling is fun and a healthy way to get around – beyond the obvious health benefits, our kids develop a keener sense of direction and observation which again enables independence and self-reliance. We feel that cycling builds community and is a less anonymous way of interacting with our immediate surroundings and the people we encounter. We feel that cities built for automobiles breed more inequality and exacerbate poverty and ill health. We want live the change we want to see.

We went to Copenhagen and rented family bikes while we were there. We realized in less than a day that riding was far easier than driving.

Kid starting kindergarten, hoping to avoid the chaos of school pick-up and drop-off by car, so I began exploring other options.

The main motivation is the environment, but we get a lot of joy out of it (and it saves money).

I was desperate to move about the city the same way I did pre-kids: on two wheels. I did not want to have to drive or take transit; walking felt was too slow and time consuming; I needed exercise and "head space". a cargo-bike/bakfiets was – and still is! – the perfect family mobile.

It takes practically as long to drive as it does to bike [in my city], and biking you can park closer! And it's more time-efficient – don't need to exercise separately!

I've always bicycled some. We just gradually started doing more and more without thinking too much about it. It means our family of 8 only needs one car, which we can leave parked for days on end! [Editor's Note: commenter is NOT Emily Finch!]

I grew up distance cycling in the States with my Mom at a very young age and have biked for a variety of reasons my entire 40 years, so this is a natural part of life for me. I have never gone long without a bicycle or riding. My husband also worked as a bike messenger in NY in his 20s, so navigating the streets are not a big deal to him. Also, culturally, cycling for transportation is normal in the [region] where we are both from, due to economics. So, for my husband and myself this is not a new, "alternative" movement like it is for many American suburbanites. It bugs us somewhat that the faces of cargo biking in the States do not reflect the importance of bicycles to people of color and their longtime use of them for transportation long before this "trend" has taken hold. Given this background, having our children ride was not even a question, but rather necessary in order for us to have a normal-feeling family life. All three of our kids have been independent riders as soon as they could straddle a push bike. None have used training wheels past age 3.5. They have done rides on their own bikes up to 20 miles on flat paths, but have also navigated the streets of [our native island] and done distance rides there as well as we prepare for a long bike tour.

I don't have a car, and love transporting myself by bike. I've done so for pretty much my whole adult life. We got a trailer when my youngest was 5 months, and I was excited to be able to transport the kids that way too. However, the reality of our terrible winter road conditions, steep hill, and the growing weight of the kids is making me less and less satisfied with over time.

...hoping to show my daughter early that there are great alternatives to getting in the car to go everywhere.

With a range of ages, cycling is an easier way to get the family doing outdoor activities since the youngest ones can ride in the trailer and older ones bike independently. Being able to ride a bike becomes an important milestone in your child's physical development that has a nice progression (trailer bike, kick bike, getting on a pedal bike without training wheels, independent riding) that requires a parent's active involvement. Riding a bike for the first time provides a huge sense of accomplishment.

The hassle of dragging a one and a four year old onto a bus just before rush hour on a heavy commuter line.



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