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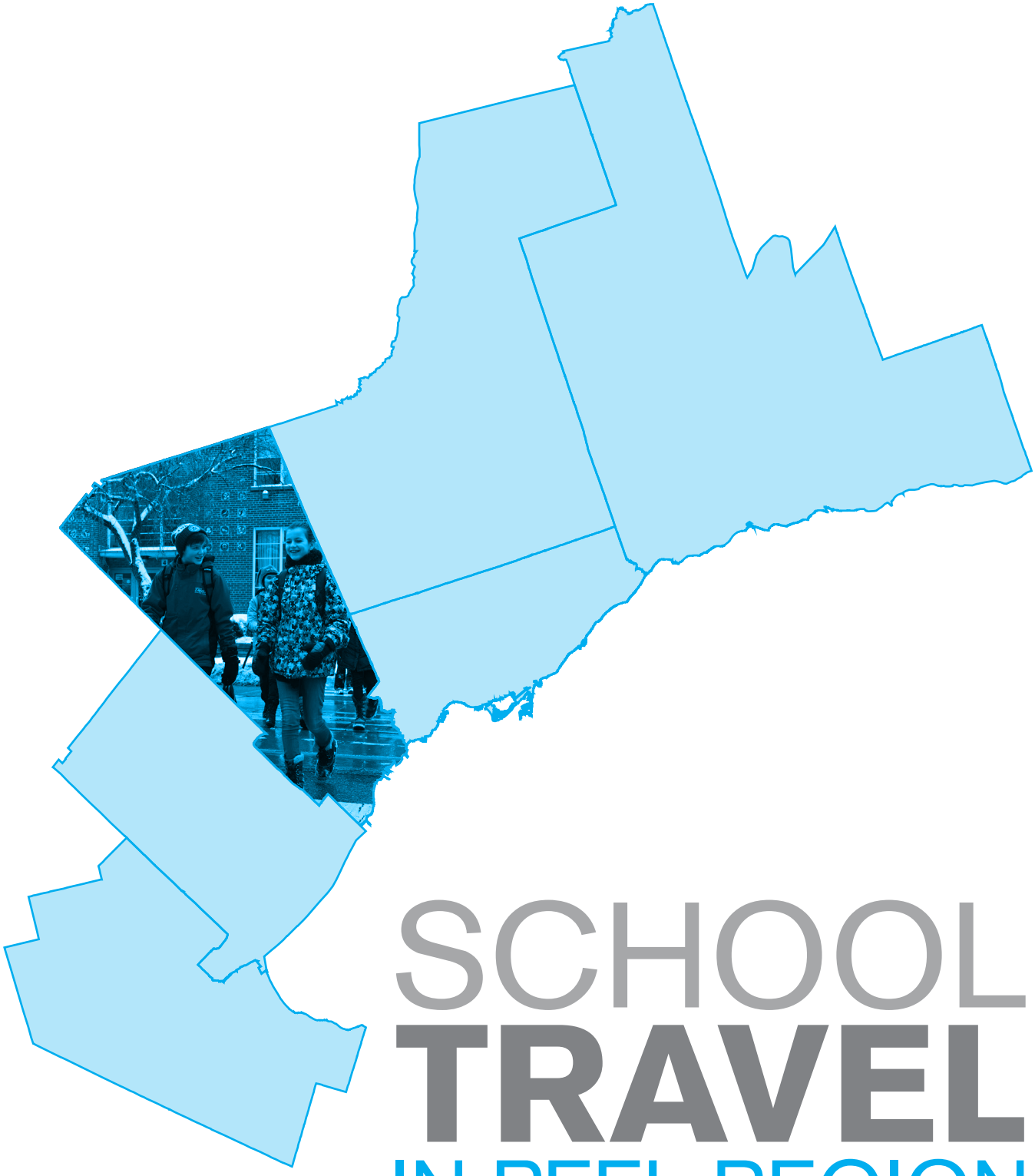

SCHOOL TRAVEL IN PEEL REGION

A Report on Trends

contents

This report is one of six reports examining travel trends in active school travel (AST) across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). The GTHA is comprised of the cities of Toronto and Hamilton and the regions of Durham, Halton, Peel, and York. For general trends in AST across the GTHA, refer to School Travel in the GTHA: A Report on Trends.

acknowledgments

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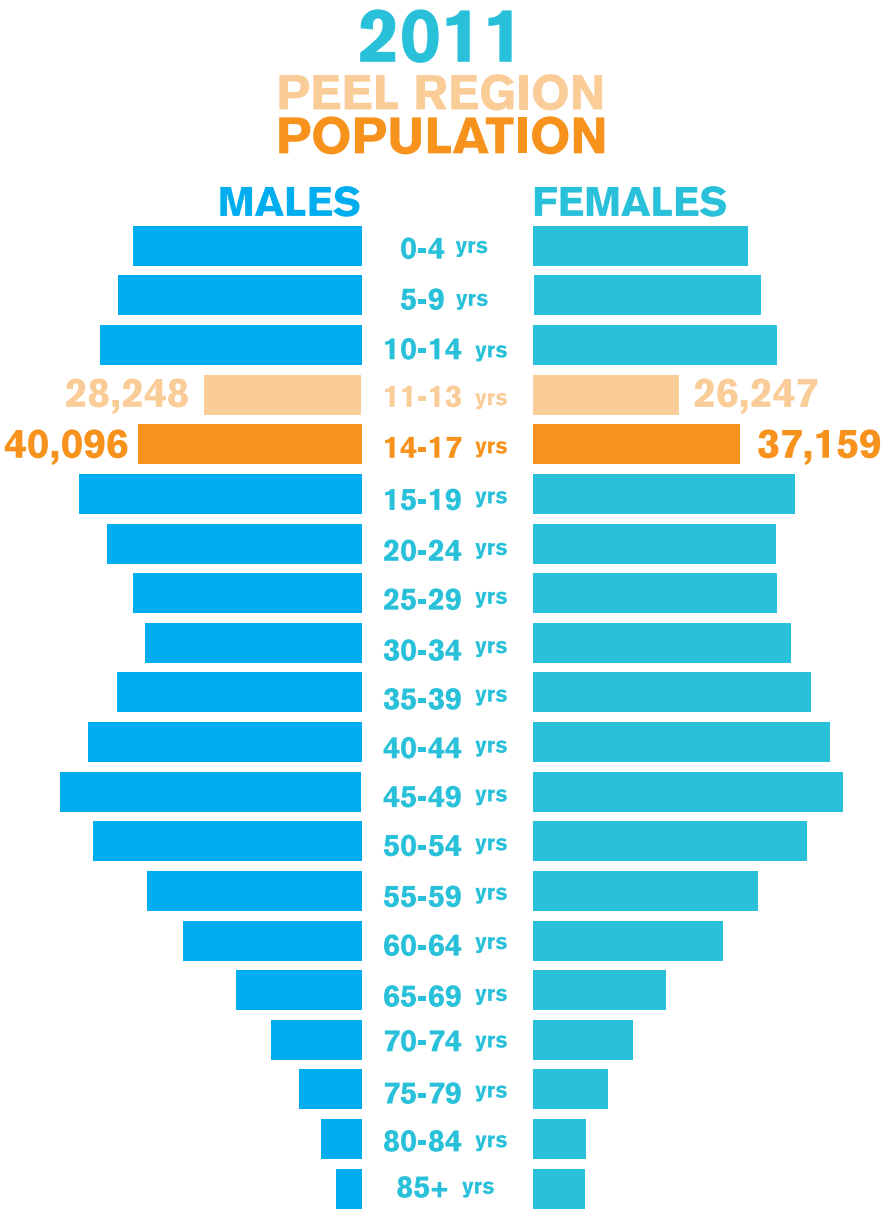
All regional and GTHA reports from this series can be found at smartcommute.ca

introduction

In recent decades, active school travel (AST), such as walking and cycling to school, has declined in many areas of the Global North including the United States, the UK, and Australia.[1] This trend has similarly been observed in the GTHA[2], where high levels of traffic congestion and auto-dependence are prevalent. With increasing rates of overweight and obesity and declining levels of walking among children and youth, it is important to understand where and when AST has decreased. This report explores patterns of school travel in the Peel Region by student age, gender, and time of day. Data for this report have been drawn from the 1986 to 2011 versions of the Transportation Tomorrow Survey (TTS).



2011 Census, Statistics Canada

Metrolinx's Regional Transportation Plan, *The Big Move*, envisions that 60% of children will walk or cycle to school and 20% of adults will use active modes to commute to work by 2031.[3] According to the 2011 Census of Canada, Peel has a population of over 310,000 children and youth under the age of 18.[4] By the end of the 25-year regional planning period, the teenagers of today will be mid-career commuters and their travel decisions will likely be influenced by experiences accumulated during childhood. It is important to establish higher levels of AST in childhood than what is seen today to promote greater levels of walking and cycling now and in the future. An increase in AST in Peel can contribute to meeting regional goals of increased active transportation and contribute toward improving the health and well-being of the children and youth of Peel Region.

travel trends

Local and GTHA School Trips by Mode**

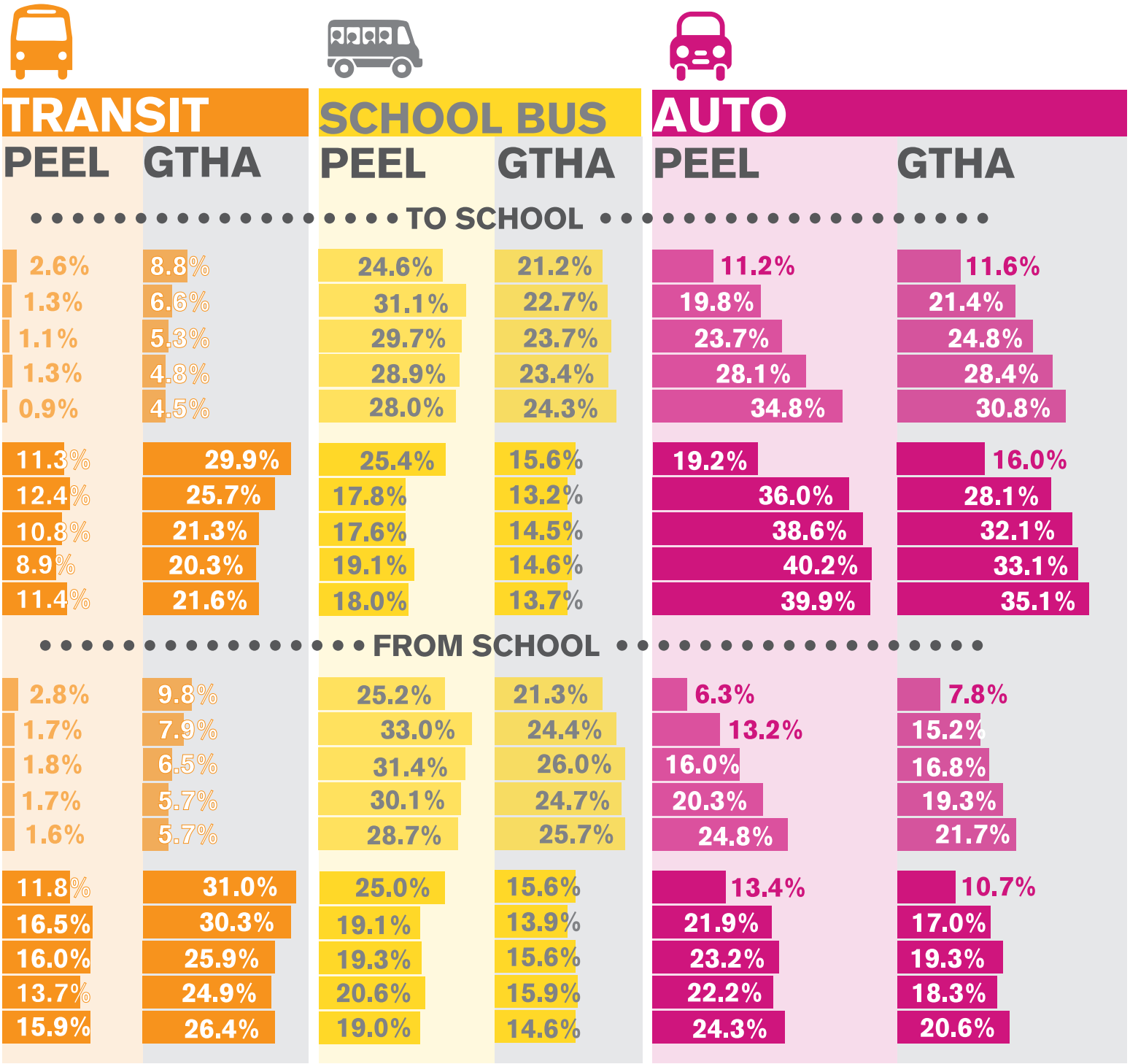
1986 to 2011 | males and females | a.m. and p.m.

AGE	YEAR	WALK PEEL	WALK GTHA	CYCLE PEEL	CYCLE GTHA
		TO SCHOOL			
11 - 13 years	1986	56.1%	55.5%	*	*
	1996	46.2%	47.3%	1.3%	1.8%
	2001	44.1%	44.7%	1.3%	1.3%
	2006	40.6%	42.4%	1.0%	0.8%
	2011	35.3%	39.0%	0.9%	1.0%
14 - 17 years	1986	41.0%	36.4%	*	*
	1996	32.3%	31.7%	1.2%	1.0%
	2001	31.6%	30.9%	1.1%	0.9%
	2006	30.0%	30.5%	1.4%	1.1%
	2011	29.2%	28.0%	1.0%	1.2%
		FROM SCHOOL			
11 - 13 years	1986	60.3%	57.5%	*	*
	1996	50.5%	50.4%	1.4%	1.8%
	2001	49.4%	49.2%	1.4%	1.3%
	2006	46.8%	49.2%	0.9%	0.8%
	2011	43.9%	45.6%	0.9%	1.0%
14 - 17 years	1986	46.3%	40.4%	*	*
	1996	40.6%	37.5%	1.3%	1.0%
	2001	40.1%	37.8%	1.0%	0.9%
	2006	41.6%	39.4%	1.5%	1.2%
	2011	39.5%	36.7%	0.9%	1.3%

* The cycling data for 1986 is not statisticaly reliable

** Due to space considerations, the 'other' category has been omitted from this graph. For all years, the 'other' category ranges between 0 to 1.2% of responses.

Note on age categories: Since the TTS begins collecting data at age 11, throughout this report, 11-13 year olds are used to describe elementary school students and 14-17 year olds are used to refer to secondary school students.

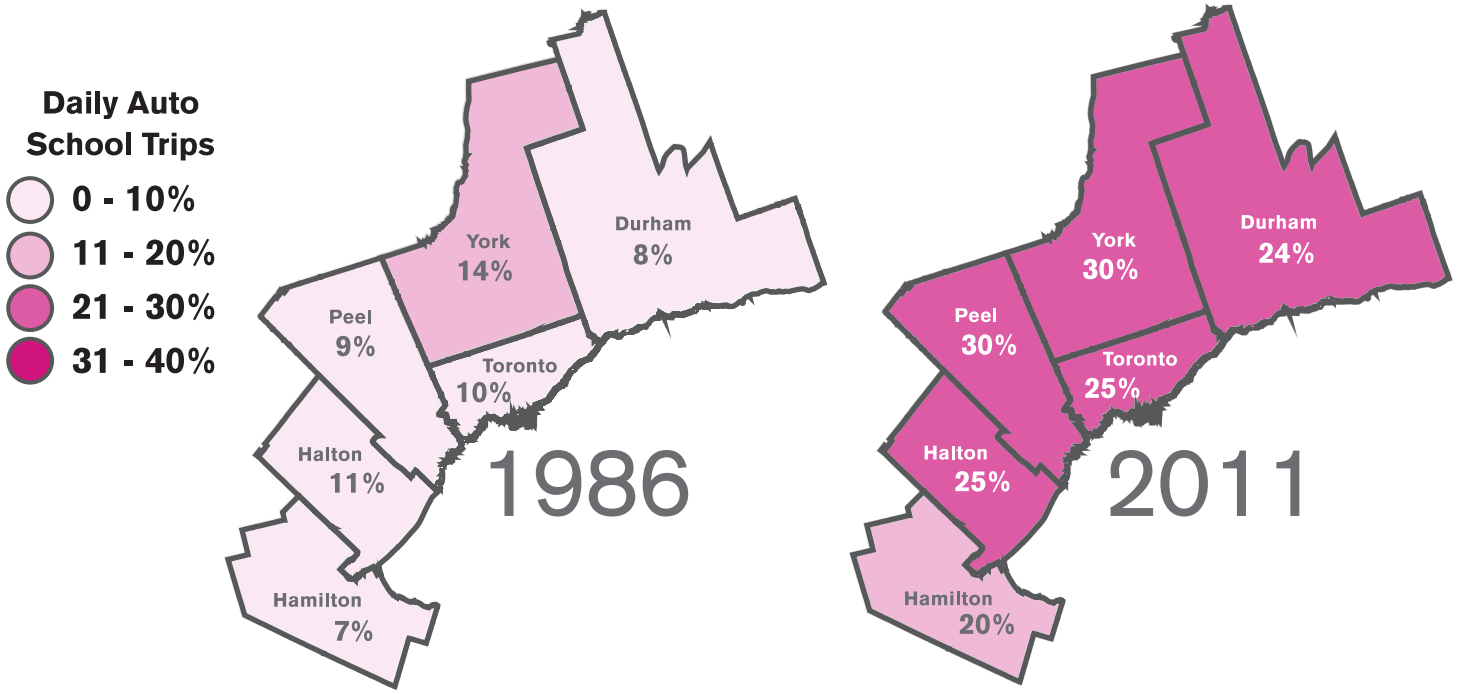


geographic trends

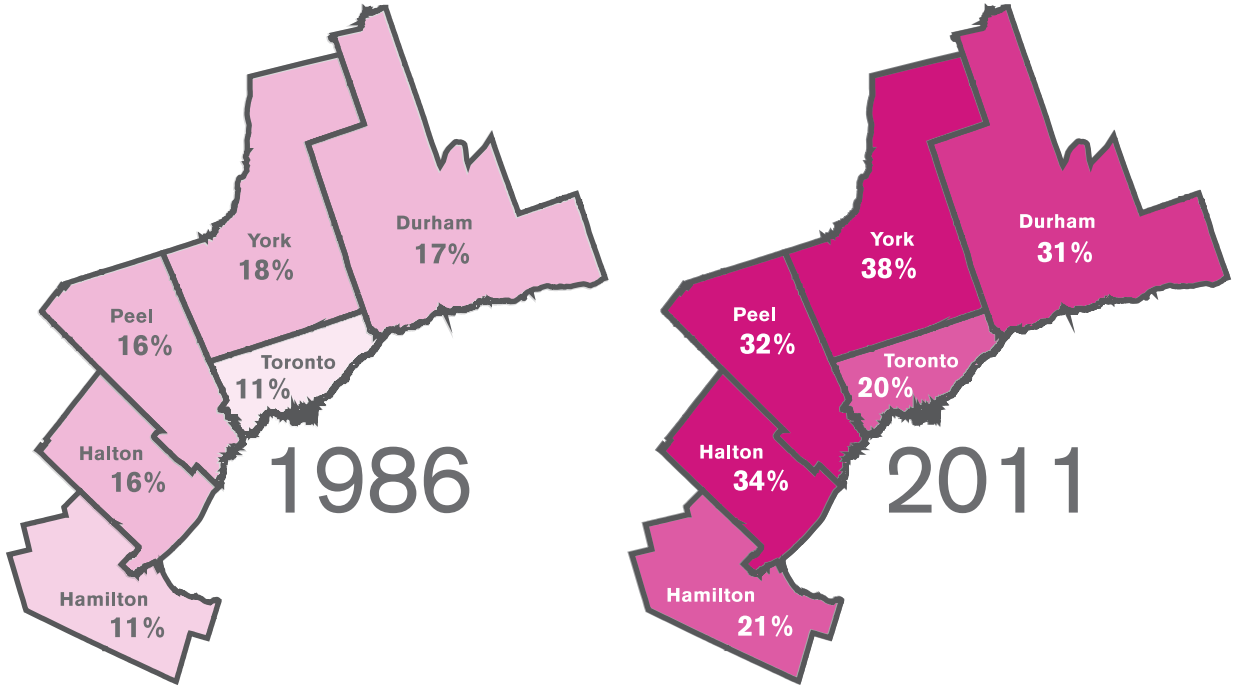
Daily Auto* School Trips

1986 and 2011 | males and females | a.m. and p.m.

AGE: 11 - 13 yrs



AGE: 14 - 17 yrs

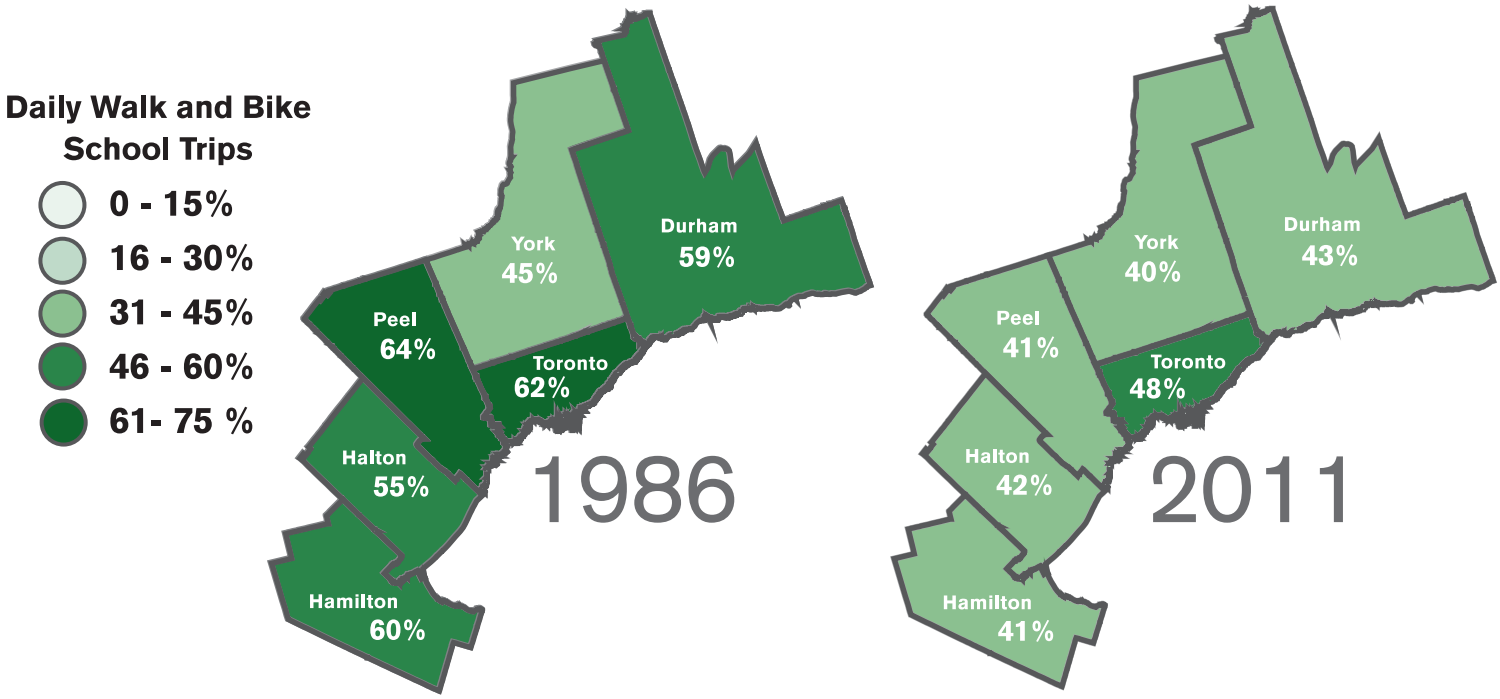


* Car or similar vehicle (e.g., mini-van)

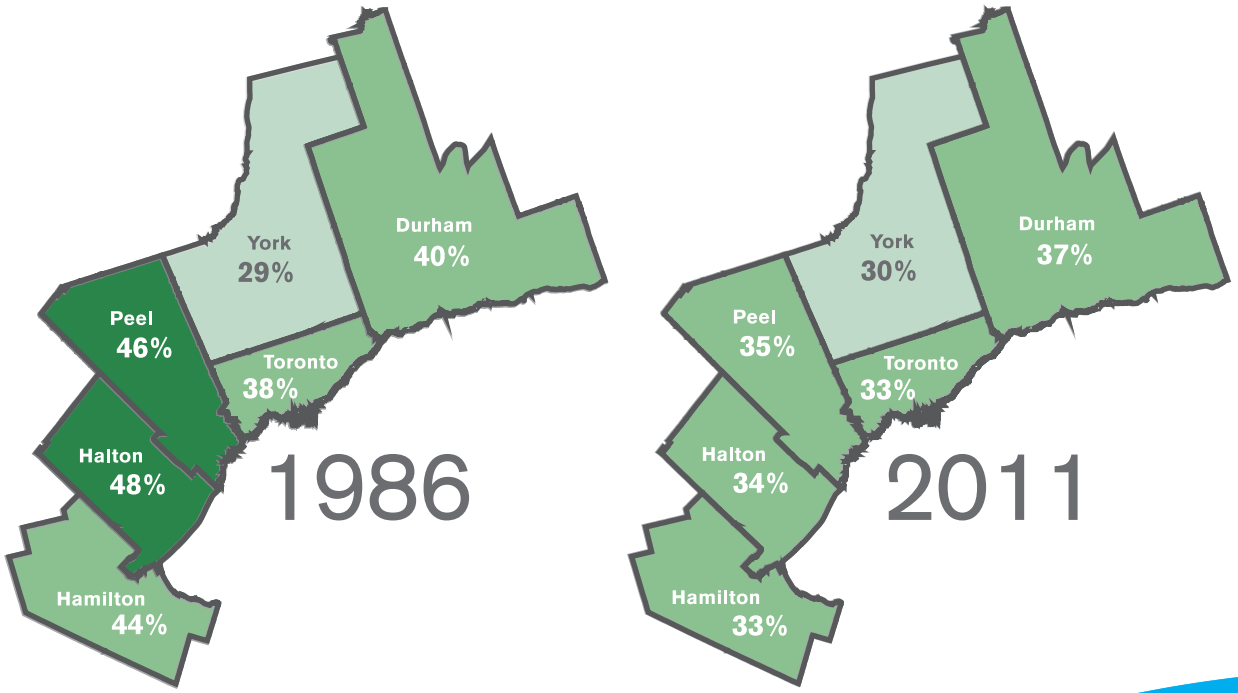
Daily Walking and Biking School Trips

1986 and 2011 | males and females | a.m. and p.m.

AGE: 11 - 13 yrs

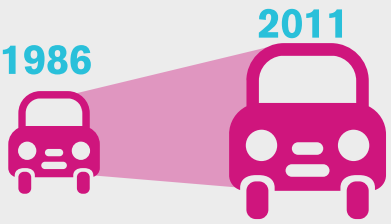


AGE: 14 - 17 yrs



general trends

- As of the 2011 TTS, Peel's auto mode share is larger than the GTHA auto mode share for both age groups, to and from school.
- Levels of AST have declined by 23% for 11-13 year olds and by 11% for 14-17 year olds since 1986.



While there's more driving* among 14-17 year olds,

RATES OF AUTO USE* AMONG 11-13 YEAR OLDS **HAVE GROWN FASTER**

*Auto use and driving refers to students as a driver or a passenger

Since 1986, **WALKING and CYCLING HAS DECREASED** MORE FOR **FEMALES** OF ALL AGES

Photo Credit: Shutterstock

time of day

am<pm

Active Transportation use is greater in the afternoon

am<pm

Busing and transit use is greater in the afternoon

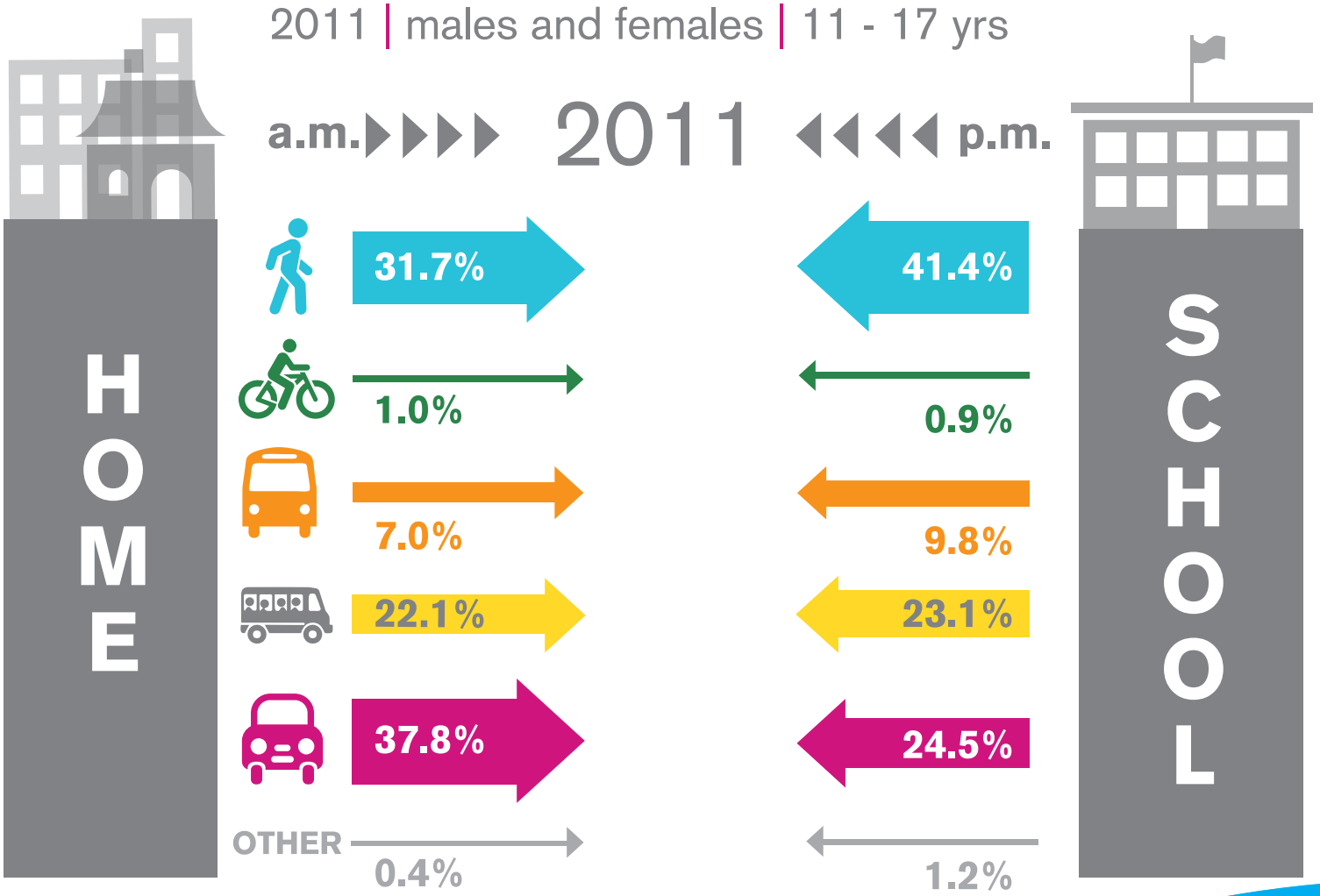
Walking mode share increases by nearly 10% in the afternoon and the automobile mode share decreases by over 13%, indicating that students who take another mode of transportation (e.g. automobile, school bus) in the morning are switching to walking in the afternoon period.

If walking home from school in the afternoon is an option for students, why are they not walking to school in the morning?

Students who use another mode of transportation in the morning and walk in the afternoon represent a key group of children and youth who could potentially make an easy switch to walking in the morning. More walking could ease traffic problems around schools in the morning and afternoon.

School Trips by Mode and Time of Day

2011 | males and females | 11 - 17 yrs



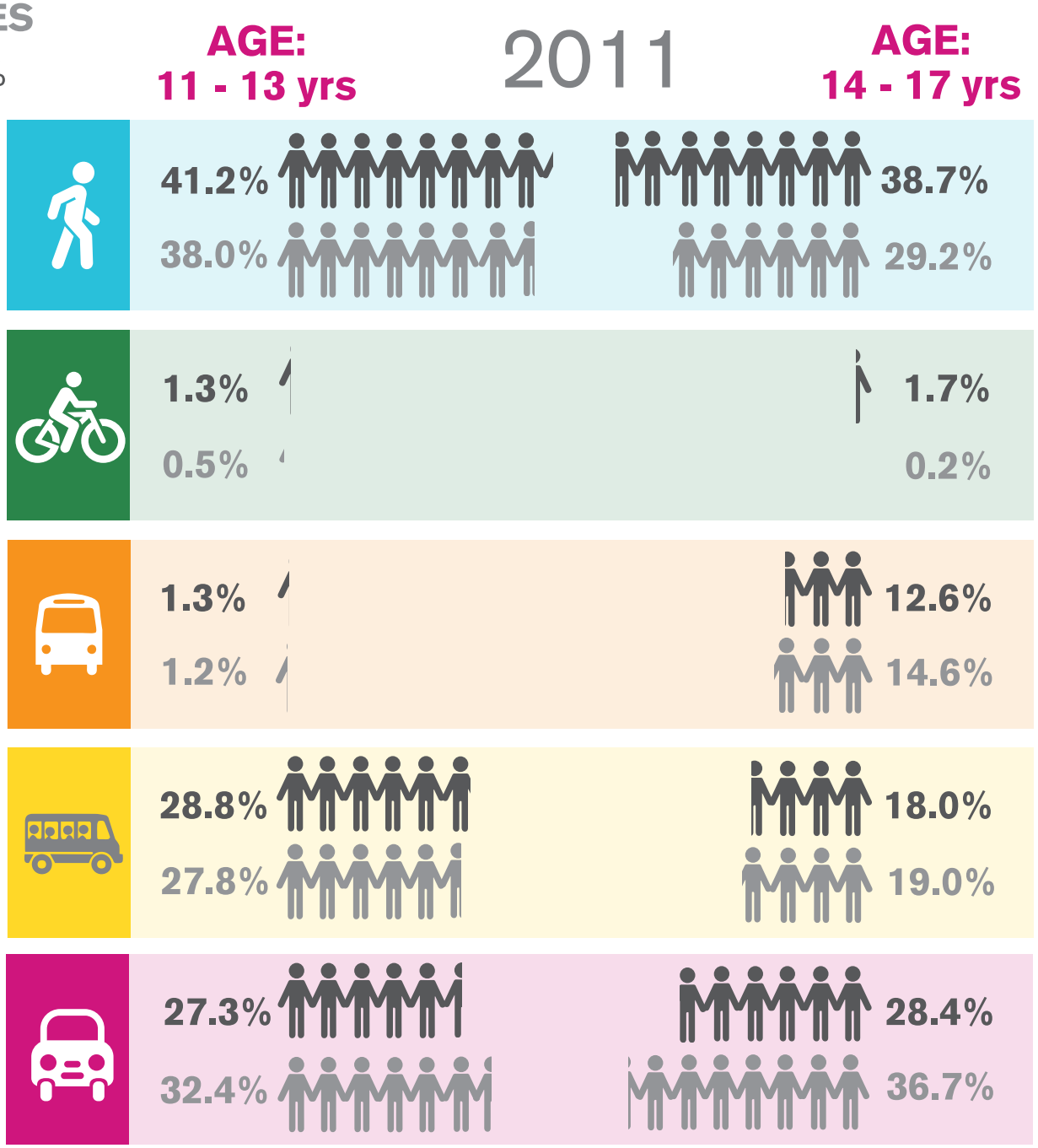
gender

Travel Mode* Shares

2011 | a.m. and p.m.

Note on gender: Gender was categorized by male or female as self-reported by the individual or by the member of the household who completed the survey on behalf of the household. The gender recorded may therefore not reflect the gender that the child identifies with.

= MALES
= FEMALES
ONE = 5%



* Due to space considerations, the 'other' category has been omitted from this graph. For 2011, the 'other' category ranges between 0.0 to 0.6% of responses.

ACTIVE SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION USE DECLINES FOR MALES AND FEMALES AS THEY GET OLDER

MALES ARE MORE LIKELY TO USE ACTIVE SCHOOL TRAVEL THAN FEMALES AT ALL AGES

conclusions

- Between 1986 and 2011, walking mode share in Peel Region has declined for 11-13 and 14-17 year olds (both to and from school), but walking occurs more in the afternoon than the morning.
- Automobile use is increasing over time and is greater for girls than boys, particularly in the morning period.
- The decline in AST in Peel Region has implications for the health of children as the risk of overweight, obesity and vehicle occupant and pedestrian injury increases with automobile use.
- Differences in age, gender, identity, mobilities, and abilities must be considered when thinking about and planning for school transportation.

references

[1] Sirard, J. R. and Slater, M.E. (2008) Walking and Bicycling to School: A Review. *American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine*, 2(5), 372-396.

[2] Buliung, R. N., Mitra, R., and Faulkner, G. (2009) Active school transportation in the Greater Toronto Area, Canada: An exploration of trends in space and time (1986-2006). *Preventive Medicine*, 48, 507-512.

[3] Metrolinx (2008) *The Big Move: Transforming Transportation in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area*. Greater Toronto Transportation Authority.

[4] Statistics Canada (2011) *Age and Sex for the Population of Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Divisions, Census Subdivisions and Dissemination Areas, 2011 Census.* Statistics Canada: Ottawa.

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