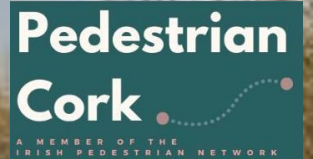


From Healthy Cities to Happy Cities?

The psychosocial benefits of design for active travel



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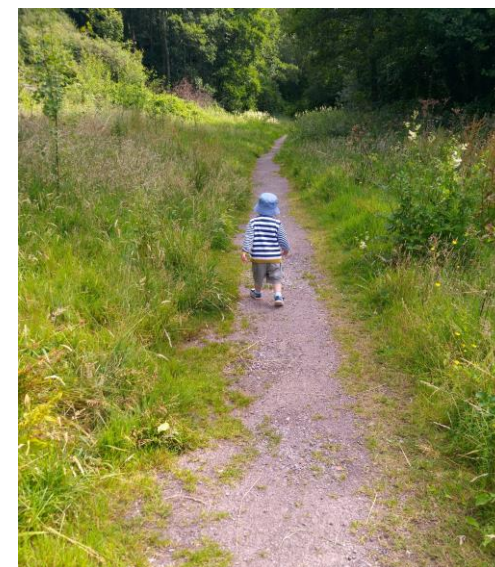


Where do you feel happy when outdoors?

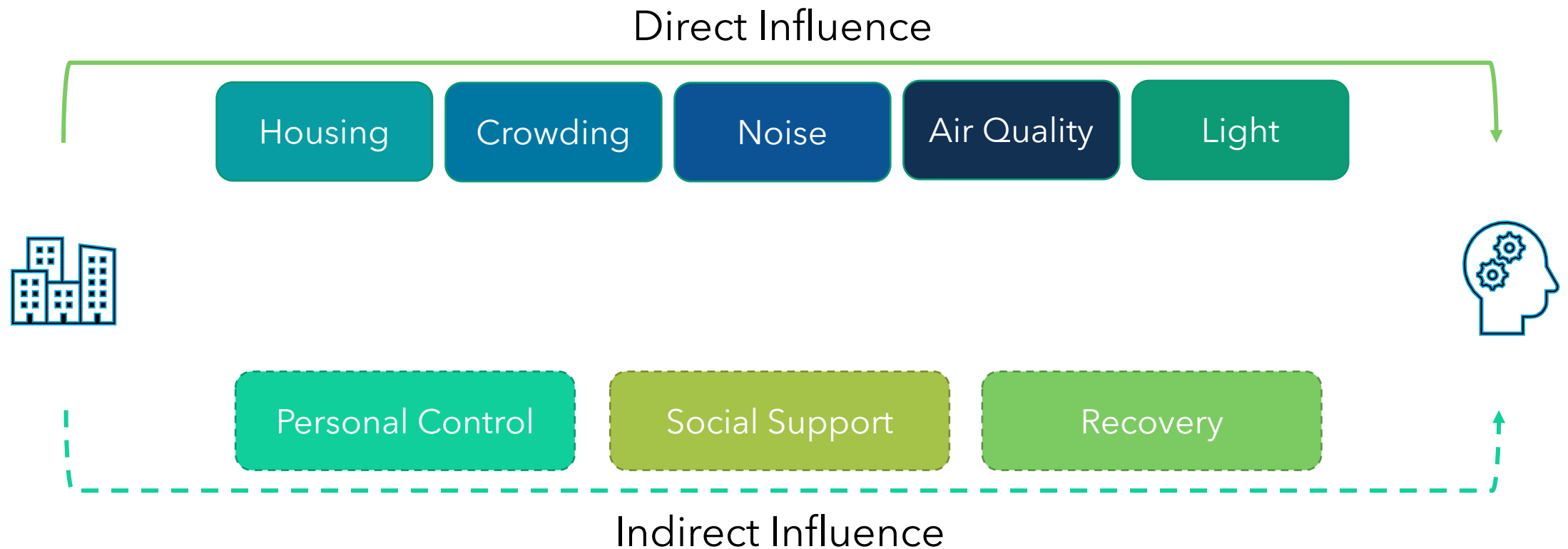




Where do you feel happy when outdoors?



Is urban design really powerful enough to make or break happiness? (C. Montgomery)



Evans (2003): Built environment effect on mental health

What Urban Spaces for Happiness?

Mind the GAPS Framework



Formulated by The Centre for Urban Design and Mental Health
www.urbandesignmentalhealth.com

THE
CENTRE



Design for Active Travel = Design for Happy Citizens



Pedestrian Cork Survey (2020) - Why people like walking in places that are green, safe, accessible

City Centre: The **vibrancy** of the city and the many varied routes which can be taken to both walk and experience the variety of the city

Fitzgerald's park is calm and **suitable for reflection** and thinking

The Line: An oasis of **calm** amid the bustle. Lovely for a lunchtime stroll or nature walk with the kids.

The Lough: Good sense of **community**

Fitzgerald Park: Sense of **freedom**

UCC campus: Surrounded by greenery, multiple routes which provide a sense of **choice** and **variety**

Oliver Plunkett Street: During the day, it is a busy, pedestrianised space that is **open**, has lots of space for pedestrians, and has a **great buzz**.

Personal Control

Social Support

Recovery



Active Travel: The importance of choice for vulnerable groups

Cassarino, Bantry-White, Setti (2019):
Easy access to different walking places associated with higher cognitive wellbeing in older adults

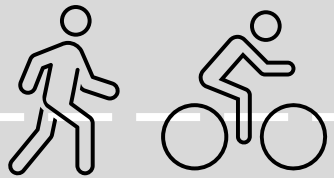
"If I go for coffee or to the shops, I walk in the town, but if I walk for exercise, I need to be somewhere like the park"

"[In nature] I might be able to solve problems, my thinking process... you know, I might work through things. But, then, I also like the busy-ness of the city"

Active Travel and Happiness...How?



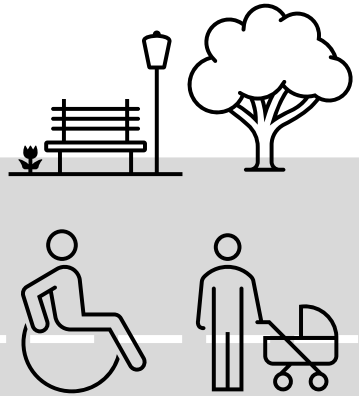
De Vos & Singleton (2020): Mechanisms of impact



Experience of
trips

Participation in
spatially
separated
activities

Spill-over effect



Satisfaction



Social cohesion



Mood &
Performance



Why Active Travel for Happiness?

5 Km

Urban design is powerful enough to make or break happiness

"It's taken a pandemic to really elevate mental health"

Poppy Jaman, CEO of City Mental Health Alliance, UK

*"It's just interesting that I think, like, every time I'm out somewhere I see the **benches blocked** and other people probably don't even, like, care. But to me it makes a huge difference"*

*"There's a little bit of a walk around here, but it's kind of **on the roads** so, I wouldn't really walk there too much, unless I was with someone. Just cause in a wheelchair you are a bit too low, and I would, sort of, be **afraid of cars and stuff.**"*

Atkins & Cassarino (2021) – Spatial inequalities for your people with disabilities during Covid-19

Active Communities as Happy Hotspots Post-Covid



Ask children



Russell & Stenning, 2020. Photo: Marek Tobolewski, Nottingham, April 2020.