GIS and Qualitative Data on Young Mothers’ Use of Urban Neighbourhoods for Physical Activity.

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Public health research consistently demonstrates the salience of neighbourhood as a determinant of both health-related behaviours and outcomes across the human life course. This paper will report on the findings from a mixed-methods Brisbane-based study that explores how mothers with primary school children from both high and low socioeconomic suburbs use the local urban environment for the purpose of physical activity. Firstly, we demonstrate findings from an innovative methodology using the geographic information systems (GIS) embedded in social media platforms on mobile phones to track locations, resource-use, distances travelled, and modes of transport of the families in real-time; and secondly, we report on qualitative data that provides insight into reasons for differential use of the environment by both groups. Spatial/mapping and statistical data showed that while the mothers from both groups demonstrated similar daily routines, the mothers from the high SEP suburb engaged in increased levels of physical activity, travelled less frequently and less distance by car, and walked more for transport. The qualitative data revealed differences in the psychosocial processes and characteristics of the households and neighbourhoods of the respective groups, with mothers in the lower SEP suburb reporting more stress, higher conflict, and lower quality relationships with neighbours.