



# October Walk to School Month

## Ways to Get the Word Out

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### **Sending Information Home to Parents**

Ask the school for permission to distribute information about walking and biking via student backpacks. Count out the sheets according to the amount of children in each class and place them in teachers' mailboxes. Flyers to send home in student backpacks can include: parent letter, Walkability Checklist, and safety tips for parents.



### **Principal or Teacher Emails/Newsletter**

Find out how teachers and the principal communicate with parents. Ask the principal and teachers to include Walk and Bike to School events in their announcements.

### **School Newsletter**

Double check on deadlines for getting something into the school newsletter. Here is a sample: *"(Enter the date) is Walk and Bike to School Day! On this day we will celebrate healthy and non-polluting ways of getting to school. Students will be rewarded with (enter incentives) when they arrive at school and check in at the welcome table. Families should plan to leave early enough to allow enough time to walk or bike with their children to school. This is also a great time for a conversation and reinforcement of walking and biking safety skills on the way to school. If you're interested in volunteering for this event, please call or email (enter contact information)."*

### **School Marquee**

Put up a sign on the school marquee announcing Walk and Bike to School events.



### **Parent Phone Trees**

If your school has one, ask to use it to notify parents about Walk and Bike to School events.

### **Loudspeaker Announcements**

If your school does these, they are a great way to inform students and get them excited about the event. For example:

*"Don't forget tomorrow is Walk and Bike to School Day! Stop by the tables located at (enter location) to pick up (enter incentives) tomorrow morning. Walk with a friend or parent – it's always safer and more fun to walk with a buddy!"*

## Hanging Banners, Posters, and Signs

Involving students in the process of making banners, posters, and signs or buttons gives Walk to School events a unique feel and helps to generate enthusiasm. When you involve students in the planning, they are more likely to participate in the event. Also, having students decorate their bikes or carry signs when walking is a great way to encourage participation, inform those who are just passing by, and provide a photo opportunity for media.



## Media Advisory

About two-to-three weeks prior to the event, distribute the media advisory to local media contacts (television, radio, and newspaper) that might be interested in covering a Walk to School event. Email, fax, mail, and hand-delivery are all ways to distribute the media advisory. *Make sure that your principal is aware that this is in the works and provide a courtesy copy before you send it out to the media.*

## Press Release

A few days or the day before the event, distribute the press release to local media contacts (television, radio, and newspaper). Email, fax, mail, and hand-delivery are all ways to distribute the press release. Have copies of the press release available at the event. In addition, you may also compile a press kit, including fact sheets, backgrounders, and biographies of event speakers. You may need informed consent/release forms signed for photos of youngsters—double check what the policy is in your school district.

## Public Service Announcements

Call local radio stations or television station, and ask to speak with someone in the News department, Promotions/Marketing department or Public Affairs department, respectively (whichever is applicable to that station). Request to submit an on-air PSA(s). You may want to ask what the station's rotation schedule is for PSAs just so you know when to listen or watch for it to ensure the content is correct. If your radio or television station tends to work particularly closely with your town/city happenings and causes, talk with your contact about the possibility of an on-air personality promoting the event during peak hours (morning drive times, evening news, etc.) .

