



Walk to School Day – October 5, 2011

Walking to school is a perfect way to enjoy physical activity and to increase the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. In 1969, approximately half of all schoolchildren walked or bicycled to or from school, and 87 percent of those living within one mile of school walked or bicycled. Today, fewer than 15 percent of children and adolescents use active modes of transportation. On October 5 we are recognizing the benefits of walking to school and encouraging children to walk safely to school.

Physical Activity

Kids need to move! Lack of physical activity is a major cause of chronic illness and death for our country's adults. Being overweight can cause health problems like diabetes during childhood. Physically inactive kids are more likely to grow up to be physically inactive adults, at high risk for obesity and related illnesses. More than 30 percent of Ohio children and adolescents are classified as overweight or obese. More than one-third of Ohio's third graders are overweight or obese and specifically, 18 percent of Ohio's third graders are obese.

Benefits of Walking to School

Children who walk to school:

- Enjoy increased levels of daily physical activity.
- Arrive at school energized and ready to learn.
- Choose to walk and bike for other short distance trips, and may influence parents to walk and bicycle.

Neighborhoods may benefit from:

- Fewer cars traveling through the neighborhood.
- Fewer cars congesting the pick-up and drop-off points at the school.
- Friendlier neighborhoods as people get out and about interacting with one another.
- Improved neighborhood safety.

Create Supportive Environments for Walking to School

- Build sidewalks, bicycle paths and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure.
- Reduce speeds in school zones and neighborhoods.
- Address distracted driving among drivers of all ages.
- Educate all generations on pedestrian and bicycle safety.

[Click here](#) to read more about the benefits of active living!

Who's Walking in Ohio?

- Chagrin Falls
- Columbus
- Dayton
- Fremont
- Gibsonburg
- Grand Rapids
- Madeira
- Mentor
- Oakwood
- Paulding
- Reading
- Troy
- Upper Arlington

Getting Started

- Get partners: principals, police, parents, public officials.
- Plan: work with partners to plan the walk to school celebration.
- Register your event at <http://www.walktoschool.org/register/index.cfm>.
- Promote your event! [Click here](#) for some great promotional ideas.

Resources:

- Centers for Disease Control:
 - Kids Walk to School:
<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/>
 - Barriers to Children Walking to or from School:
<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5438a2.htm>
- Get Active:
<http://www.healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTopic.aspx?topicID=22&cnt=1&areaID=0>
- Get Started:
<http://www.walktoschool.org/getstarted/index.cfm>
- Walkability Checklist:
http://katana.hsrb.unc.edu/cms/downloads/walkability_checklist.pdf

