



# Active School Travel Resource for Educators



Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District

**HEALTH UNIT**

*Your Partner in Public Health*

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## Teachers play an important role in creating a culture of walking & cycling at school!

Many parents walked or cycled to school when they were young. But, times have changed and car culture is taking over. Today, many students that live within walking distance of school are driven by their parents. This is a missed opportunity for much-needed physical activity, fresh air and quality interaction with parents, caregivers and friends. As well, driving increases school zone congestion, which makes conditions less safe for those who do walk or wheel, and adds to air pollution. [School Travel Planning](#) is a proven approach that supports students in using active transportation on their school journey, and contributes to healthy, active living.

Active school travel is a human powered means of getting to and from school. It includes:

- walking/jogging/running;
- cycling;
- in-line skating;
- skateboarding;
- non-mechanized wheelchairs; and
- snowshoeing/skiing.

Active school travel is a great way for children to be physically active, which is associated with improved physical and mental health, while making school zones safer, by reducing traffic volumes at and around schools.

# Activities To Promote Active School Travel

## **Weekly Walk to School Days:**

As a school, designate one day a week where everyone is encouraged to walk/wheel to school. Get creative with the name to engage students. For example, Move it Monday, Walk or Wheel Wednesday, and Footloose Friday. To mark the seasonal changes, participate in Canada's Winter Walk Day in February and Spring into Spring walk days leading up to Earth Hour.

## **Student Survey/Recognition Awards:**

Students can survey their peers and staff members to determine how they get to and from school each day. They can then record and communicate the results to the school community along with active transportation tips and suggestions. As incentive, create an award (e.g. Golden Shoe Award) for the class with the most participants of a designated walk/wheel day or event.

## **Cross Canada Walk:**

Post a large map of Canada on a bulletin board and determine the number of kilometres it takes to cross the country. Students can add up their walking kilometres as a class or whole school and see how quickly they can "walk across Canada." For students who cannot walk to school, encourage them to participate by walking/wheeling around the yard during recess.

## **Mapping Exercise:**

Create a map of the local neighbourhood that shows expected walking/wheeling times to the school. Students can place small stickers on the street where they live. Over time the map becomes populated with many stickers and students are able to visually understand that there are other students in their neighbourhood as potential walking/wheeling companions.

## **Poster Challenge:**

A poster challenge is a great way to creatively incorporate teamwork and other key skills with safety information. Provide students with safety tip ideas (e.g., wear bright colours to be more visible; walk/wheel in a group or with an adult; obey the crossing guards; stop, look and listen before crossing the street; wait for the school bus in a safe place; don't get distracted by cell phones or music when you are walking/wheeling; dress warm during the winter months). Have them create an eye-catching poster that effectively promotes the safety tip. Consider placing some of the posters in your school environment.

### **Sidewalk Chalk Walk of Fame:**

Create a Walk of Fame in the schoolyard where students can trace their footprint in sidewalk chalk and sign their name to recognize their participation in walk/wheel to school days.

### **Freddie the Footprint:**

Create a giant footprint and hide it a short distance from school. Challenge the students to find "Freddie the Footprint" as they walk/wheel to school and track their discoveries. Consider moving "Freddie the Footprint" on a daily or weekly basis. Classes can compete to see how many students find Freddie each day.

### **Kiss and Ride Count:**

Track the number of cars that idle during pick up and/or drop off each day. Tally the numbers each week and display the results in a graph in the school foyer or on the school website and/or social media sites. Encourage students and families to reduce school numbers each week by entering license plates of cars that do not idle into a raffle.

### **Walking School Bus:**

Encourage your school families to join up with two or more families and create a walking school bus of their own. The group of families will follow a predetermined route, pick up walkers along the way, and travel to school together. Families can also share the task, by scheduling dates that they would walk each others children. For example, Family A may walk the children to and from school on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and Family B walks with them on Tuesdays and Thursdays.



## Social Media Posts To Promote Active School Travel

- Do you remember your walk to school? Walking to school with friends creates life long memories! [http://healthunit.org/wp-content/uploads/Remember\\_Your\\_Walk\\_to\\_School.pdf](http://healthunit.org/wp-content/uploads/Remember_Your_Walk_to_School.pdf) #ActiveSchoolTravel #Walk2School
- Does your child walk or wheel to school? Here are some tips to help them stay safe on their journey: [https://healthunit.org/wp-content/uploads/Active\\_Transportation\\_Tips.pdf](https://healthunit.org/wp-content/uploads/Active_Transportation_Tips.pdf) #ActiveSchoolTravel #Walk2School
- You can help promote active school travel! Consider joining your kids or allowing them to walk/wheel on their own, or with older siblings and friends. Drop your kids off a few blocks away from school to help reduce traffic in the school zone. <http://bit.ly/ActiveSchoolTravel> #ActiveSchoolTravel #Walk2School
- Kids who are active have longer attention spans, more focus and are able to concentrate on a task for a longer period of time. Walking and wheeling to school is a great way to get kids moving and ready for the school day! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R7WWtT75cf0> #ActiveSchoolTravel #Walk2School #Wheel2School
- Being active outside in nature is good for your body and mind! Walking and wheeling to school is one way to get kids moving and feeling great! <http://bit.ly/ActiveSchoolTravel> #ActiveSchoolTravel #Walk2School #Wheel2School
- Breaking a sweat releases hormones that make you feel happy and better able to cope with daily stress! Walking and wheeling to school is one way to get kids moving and feeling great! <http://bit.ly/ActiveSchoolTravel> #ActiveSchoolTravel #Walk2School #Wheel2School
- #ActiveSchoolTravel has many benefits: healthier students, safer school zones, less pollution, and healthier communities. Help your child find a safe and active route to school! [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r59\\_rzKuAMA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r59_rzKuAMA) #Walk2School #Wheel2School
- Regular physical activity helps kids learn and be more creative! Walking or cycling to school is a great way for kids to get active and ready for the day! <http://bit.ly/ActiveSchoolTravel> #ActiveSchoolTravel #Walk2School #Wheel2School <http://bit.ly/ActiveSchoolTravel>
- Is school drop-off driving you crazy? Consider parking further away and walking to school. This helps relieve school traffic and is good for your child's health. <http://bit.ly/ActiveSchoolTravel> #ActiveSchoolTravel #Walk2School
- Walking/wheeling to school gives children the opportunity to experience the seasonal changes in their environment and to see firsthand what each season has to offer. Help your child have an enjoyable and comfortable walk to school with these tips: [https://healthunit.org/wp-content/uploads/Walking\\_School\\_Bus\\_Walking\\_Through\\_the\\_Seasons.pdf](https://healthunit.org/wp-content/uploads/Walking_School_Bus_Walking_Through_the_Seasons.pdf) #ActiveSchoolTravel #Walk2School
- Walking/wheeling to school with a heavy backpack can drag you down! Here are some tips to encourage safe backpack use! [https://healthunit.org/wp-content/uploads/Walking\\_School\\_Bus\\_Backpack\\_Tips.pdf](https://healthunit.org/wp-content/uploads/Walking_School_Bus_Backpack_Tips.pdf) #ActiveSchoolTravel #Walk2School
- Active and safe routes to school is more than just a walk/wheel! Support children getting to school in an active and safe way – we all have a role to play! [http://healthunit.org/wp-content/uploads/Walking\\_School\\_Bus\\_Active\\_and\\_Safe\\_Routes\\_to\\_School.pdf](http://healthunit.org/wp-content/uploads/Walking_School_Bus_Active_and_Safe_Routes_to_School.pdf) #ActiveSchoolTravel #Walk2School

## Special Events To Promote Active School Travel

Month	Event	Description	Resource
<b>October</b>	International Walk To School (i-walk) Month	An annual mass celebration of active transportation taking place around the world every October.  Hundreds of Ontario schools participate in iWALK each year, with many holding their events on iWALK Day, the first Wednesday of October.	<a href="#">International Walk To School (i-walk) Month</a>
	International Walk To School (i-walk) Day October 3, 2018	Resources include activity ideas, posters and stickers.	<a href="#">Activity Ideas</a> <a href="#">Sticker Order Form</a>
<b>February</b>	Winter Walk Day, Wednesday February 6, 2019	Join schools across Canada on the first Wednesday of February each year for Winter Walk Day!  Resources include activity ideas, tips, announcements, posters and stickers.	<a href="#">Winter Walk Day</a>  <a href="#">Activity Ideas</a> <a href="#">Sticker Order Form</a>
<b>April</b>	Earth Day Monday April 22, 2019	Recognize and celebrate the largest environmental event in the world	<a href="#">Earth Day Canada</a>
<b>May</b>	Bike to School Week May 27-31, 2019.	Schools across the province of Ontario celebrate Bike to School Week the first week in May.  Resources include a guide for schools, event calendars, and tools.	<a href="#">Bike to School Week</a>  <a href="#">Activity Ideas</a>
<b>Year Round</b>	i-walk-i wheel Club	Ontario program aims to encourage more students to walk or wheel (bicycle, scooter, skateboard) for their school journeys.  Resources include stickers, club cards for trip-tracking activities, raffles and competitions, a calendar of walking and wheeling events, activity ideas sheets, quarterly e-newsletter, featuring news, events, ideas and links to resources.	<a href="#">i-walk- i wheel Club</a>
<b>Year Round</b>	Road Safety Week	An event organized by community partners, parent teacher councils, school staff and/or students to promote road safety awareness.  Suggested time to run an event: beginning of the school year, or at the start of spring season.  Multiple resources including announcements, posters, quizzes, activities and lesson plans.	<a href="#">Road Safety Week</a>  <a href="#">School Zone Safety Brochure</a>

# Lesson Plans To Promote Active School Travel

Grade	Subject	Description
K-8	Health & Physical Education Daily Physical Activity Language and Literacy	<p><a href="#">Road Safety:</a></p> <p>Interactive in-class activities as well as opportunities to teach outdoors by doing things like taking a neighbourhood walk.</p> <p>The focus for this age group is around safety as a pedestrian, a new cyclist and a bus passenger.</p>
	Health & Physical Education Daily Physical Activity Language and Literacy Arts Media Literacy	<p><a href="#">Road Safety:</a></p> <p>Lesson plans provide scenarios for decision making around cycling, inline skating and skateboarding, as well as opportunities to visually identify risks and express ways to minimize those risks.</p> <p>There is also an outdoor group activity on pedestrian safety that includes instruction on a variety of communication skills.</p>
	Health & Physical Education Language and Literacy	<p><a href="#">Road Safety:</a></p> <p>Lesson plans incorporate technology and its impact on distraction in all modes of transportation.</p> <p>These lessons have classroom, gym and outdoor activities that can be adapted for the settings that you have available to you.</p>
Grade 1	Science and Technology	<p><a href="#">Active and Sustainable School Transportation:</a></p> <p>This lesson plan can help teachers and students with the Curriculum/ Ecological Literacy section of their EcoSchools program by engaging students in classroom lessons on the environmental, health and social benefits of making active and sustainable travel choices.</p>
4-6	Safe Cycling	<p><a href="#">Guide To Ride:</a></p> <p>A free resource for teachers or after school leaders of children in grades 4, 5 or 6 to promote safe cycling.</p> <p>Each grade contains 10 lesson plans designed for use in a classroom setting regardless of whether students have bicycles readily available or not.</p>

## Lesson Plans To Promote Active School Travel

Grade	Subject	Description
<b>4-8</b>	Language Social Studies	<a href="#">Lesson Plan: Cars and bikes. Can they share the road?</a>
<b>Grade 5</b>	Social Studies	<a href="#">Active and Sustainable School Transportation:</a> This lesson plan can help teachers and students with the Curriculum/ Ecological Literacy section of their EcoSchools program by engaging students in classroom lessons on the environmental, health and social benefits of making active and sustainable travel choices
<b>Grade 6</b>	FSL	<a href="#">Lesson Plan: Active Transportation Vocabulary</a>
<b>Grade 7-8</b>	Drama	<a href="#">Lesson Plan: Campaign for Active Transportation</a>
<b>Grade 8</b>	Geography Social Science	<a href="#">Lesson Plan: Active Transportation Neighborhood Walk</a>

For more information on how to support [active school travel](#) in your school, contact your school's [Public Health Nurse](#).