

## ACTIVE TRAVEL NEWSLETTER INSERTS

Here are a range of short inserts you can add into your school newsletter to promote and encourage active travel.

### HOW TO LET YOUR CHILDREN WALK AND RIDE TO SCHOOL SAFELY

1. Talk with other parents in your street/ neighbourhood about taking turns to walk with each other's young children to/from school.

2. Develop buddy groups of older children who can walk together without adults.

3. Drive just part of the way to school and drop your children 500m away so they can walk the remainder - or walk with them that distance.

4. Pack bags and make lunches the night before, to maximise walking time in the morning.

5. Teach your children road safety and navigation skills by walking with them around the neighbourhood – practice on weekends when roads are quieter, and you have more time.

If we have more children walking and cycling than being driven as we had just a couple of decades ago, the streets will be safer for those children and the community in general.

### HELP YOUR CHILD MEET THEIR RECOMMENDED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS THROUGH ACTIVE TRAVEL!

Did you know that it is recommended that children between the ages of 5-12 get at least 60 MINUTES of physical activity per day? Help your children stay healthy by helping them to walk or ride to and from school. If you feel it is too far, drive part of the way so your child can walk, ride, scoot or skate the remainder. If your child is too young to walk on their own, try parking and walking or riding with them! This will also help you meet your recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day.

### ACTIVE TRAVEL IS POSSIBLE EVEN IF YOU LIVE TOO FAR FROM THE SCHOOL

Active travel is all about using physical activity to get around. Many of us live at a distance from the school and think that it is way too far for our children to use active travel. Try dropping your child small distances away from the school (500m - 1.5km) so they can walk, ride, scoot or skate the remainder of the way. If your child is younger, or you don't want your child to walk alone, organise a 'drop off point' with other parents. There are many ways to make active travel work for you and your children.

### HELP US CREATE A SAFER SCHOOL BY USING ACTIVE TRAVEL

Help protect your children and the school community by encouraging them to use active travel. Studies show that more walkers on the streets make drivers slow down. If most of our school community walks or rides their bikes to and from the school, there would be less cars parking and moving around the school. For those of us that live a distance from the school and feel that it is way too far for our children to use active travel, there is a solution... Try dropping your child small distances away from the school (500m - 1.5km) so they can walk, ride, scoot or skate the remainder of the way. If your child is younger, or you don't want your child to walk alone, organise a 'drop off point' or a buddy system with other parents. There are many ways to make active travel work for you and your children.

### **CHILDREN ARE HAPPIER AND HEALTHIER WHEN THEY TRAVEL TO SCHOOL ACTIVELY**

Did you know it has been proven that physical activity helps to reduce the risk of obesity, reduce chronic diseases, and improves mental health and wellbeing? The research shows that students who walk, ride, scoot, and skate to and from school are often happier, healthier, and more socially connected than children who are driven to school. If your child is not old enough to walk or ride to school on their own yet, try parking the car a little distance from the school (500m – 1.5km) and walk or ride the remainder of the way. Walking and riding with your children will also help you reach your recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day which is great for your health and wellbeing.

### **ACTIVE TRAVEL WILL HELP YOUR CHILDREN BUILD VERY IMPORTANT ROAD AND SAFETY SKILLS**

Children do not just 'get' road sense automatically, and they can't get it from the back seat of a car. The only way for them to build important road and safety skill is to practice under supervision when they are younger. Walking or riding with your child to school, even just a couple of days a week, will help them learn these necessary skills. When your child is older and starts to walk and ride in the community on their own, you will also feel more confident, because you have seen them practise their road and safety skills. Also, many people do not realise it is legal for children under 12 and adults riding with them to ride on the footpath, so do not feel you or your children must practise on the road.

### **DID YOU KNOW THAT ACTIVE TRAVEL CAN HELP YOUR CHILD FOCUS IN SCHOOL?**

Research is showing that children who participate in physical activity before school are more alert and ready to learn than inactive children. Actively travelling to school using means such as walking or riding will help your child to be more active in the morning and concentrate better in class.