



THE WALKING SCHOOL BUS

Here's a great **Walk to School Month idea**, one with staying power: start a Walking School Bus. Recruit adult volunteers to take turns leading small groups of neighborhood children to or from school. The watchful eye of an adult can provide a safer environment, and it allows children to reap the benefits of walking regularly – during Walk to School Month or any month. (The same idea works for bicycling: start a Bike Train!)



A Walking School Bus has many benefits:

- It increases supervision, safety – and fun! – for students who already walk.
- It permits additional students to walk, introducing them to an important and easy habit.
- It reduces auto traffic, particularly near schools during drop-off and pick-up times.
- It creates a sense of community by getting neighbors to take turns as walking school bus escorts.

5 steps to start a Walking School Bus

1. Form a working group

Invite parents, students, the school principal, teachers and local businesses to explore options – routes, coordinators, resources, and sponsors.

2. Recruit walking school bus escorts

Ask neighbors and families of students to take a turn as a volunteer in the mornings or afternoons.

3. Organize the walking school bus escorts

Work out a regular schedule among the escorts; determine who can walk with the students and when. Create back-up plans with substitute escorts.

4. Designate walking school bus routes

Many parents already know how best to get around their neighborhood on foot, but in some instances routes may need to be mapped out. Work with the police department and the school to determine the safest routes.

5. Promote the walking school bus

Once the escorts and routes are set, let everyone in the neighborhood know about the project. More walking school buses will create safer, healthier children and communities.



Adapted by CA Walk to School Headquarters from: National Highway and Transportation Safety Administration, June 2001

Visit our website for more ideas to promote walking to school: www.caactivecommunities.org
Download a guidebook to help you start a walking school bus: www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/index.htm

