



Tips For Walking and Biking To School



A Lifetime of being active can begin on the way to school.

An easy and enjoyable way to practice a healthy lifestyle is by walking and biking to school. Whether it's with your friends or family, walking and biking to school can make all the difference.

A little bit can go a long way.





Safe Routes to School Program



Dear U-46 Families:

The safety and welfare of our students is of utmost importance to the staff at U-46. The following are safety procedures for you to discuss with your child for walking to school or the bus stop. Also included are the expectations for drivers who pick up or drop off students.

Walking Directions:

- Stop, look, and listen before crossing the street.
- Make eye contact with drivers before crossing to be sure they see you.
- Walk, don't run, and move slowly when entering the crosswalk.
- Always remain on the side walk, if one is available.
- Walk to the side of the road facing traffic when a side walk is not available.
- Cross the street at intersections and remain inside the crosswalk, if one is available.
- Look both ways twice for any on-coming traffic.
- Make sure there is no driver in a parked car where you are crossing, and then go to the edge of the car, look left-right-left until no cars are coming and keep looking as you cross.
- Walk to school with a buddy when possible.

Time and Weather Changes:

- Wear bright colors to be visible to drivers.
- Use reflective materials on coats or backpacks when walking during darkness, or use an illuminating device such as a flashlight.
- Put reflective tape on all sides of umbrellas to ensure visibility when it is raining.
- Use flashing bicycle lights during darker hours of the day when riding a bicycle.
- Bundle up by wearing hats, gloves, warm socks, and layering clothing in cold weather.

Drivers' Responsibility and Pedestrian Safety:

- Stop for pedestrians at crosswalks and intersections.
- Don't block crosswalks when stopping at intersections.
- Slow down and obey the posted speed limit.
- Take extra care around schools, playgrounds and neighborhoods.
- Look for pedestrians, especially before turning at a green light or making a "right turn on red."
- Be careful when passing stopped vehicles. They might be stopped for pedestrians.
- Remember to share the road. It's the driver's responsibility to look out for pedestrians.

Please do not hesitate in contacting your principal should you have any questions or concerns.

Walking School BUS

School District U-46 is promoting a program called “Safe Routes to School.” The purpose of the program is to:

- Enable and encourage children to walk and bike to school
- Encourage a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age
- Improve safety and reduce traffic around schools.



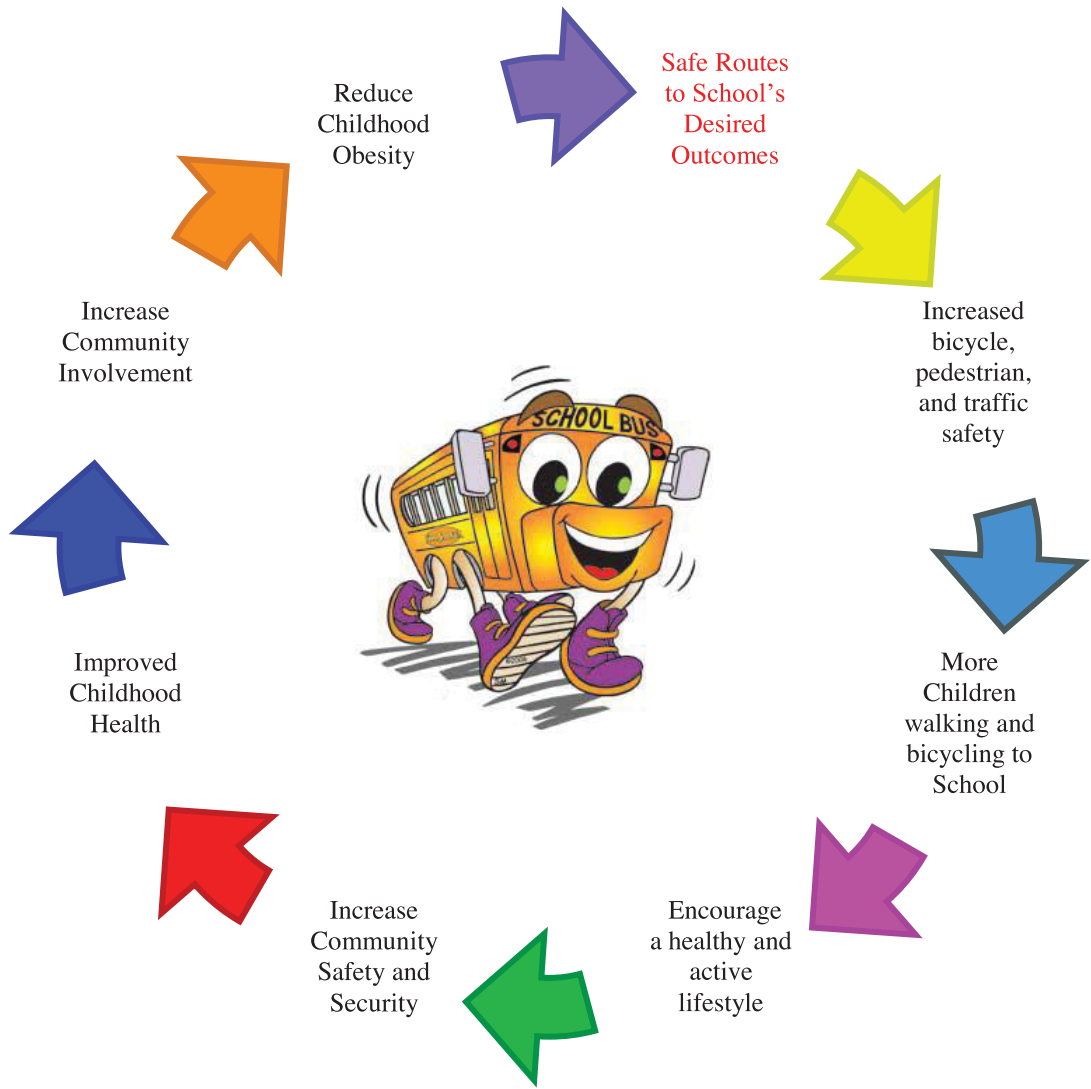
The “Walking School Bus” is the latest safe, fun and healthy way to travel to and from school. Each “Walking School Bus” has an adult ‘driver’ at the front and an adult ‘conductor’ bringing up the rear. The children walk to school in a group along a set route picking up additional ‘passengers’ at specific ‘bus-stops’ along the way. The bus runs rain or shine, and parents wear a reflective vest. Along the way, children can chat to their friends, learn valuable road safety skills, gain some independence and get some exercise.

All walking buses are different. They vary to suit the needs of the children and their parents. Some schools have a number of “Walking School Buses” and some only have one “Walking School Bus.” Some “Walking School Buses” operate only on certain days; other “Walking School Buses” operate only in the morning or afternoon. A “Walking School Bus” at your school could be set up to match the availability of the volunteers.

Walking School Bus Guide Lines



- Parents are encouraged to be in groups of two or more. With One “Conductor” and 1 for the “Caboose.”
- Pick a time to meet at the start of the route. Give yourself time to collect additional students as the “Bus” Progresses.
- Coordinate with families along your route to inform them of pick up and drop-off times.
- Follow the map that is provided to you by the school.
- Encourage participation from many families.
- Have Fun!!



Starting a walking school bus: the basics

Why develop a walking school bus?

Studies show that fewer children are walking and biking to school, and more children are at risk of becoming overweight. Changing behaviors of children and parents require creative solutions that are safe and fun.

Implementing a walking school bus can be both.

What is a walking school bus?

A walking school bus is a group of children walking to school with one or more adults. If that sounds simple, it is, and that's part of the beauty of the walking school bus. It can be as informal as two families taking turns walking their children to school to as structured as a route with meeting points, a timetable and a regularly rotated schedule of trained volunteers.

A variation on the walking school bus is the bicycle train, in which adults supervise children riding their bikes to school. The flexibility of the walking school bus makes it appealing to communities of all sizes with varying needs.

Parents often cite safety issues as one of the primary reasons they are reluctant to allow their children to walk to school. Providing adult supervision may help reduce those worries for families who live within walking or bicycling distance to school.

Starting simple

When beginning a walking school bus, remember that the program can always grow. It often makes sense to start with a small bus and see how it works. Pick a single neighborhood that has a group of parents and children who are interested. It's like a carpool—without the car—with the added benefits of exercise and visits with friends and neighbors. For an informal bus:

1. Invite families who live nearby to walk.
2. Pick a route and take a test walk.
3. Decide how often the group will walk together.
4. Have fun!

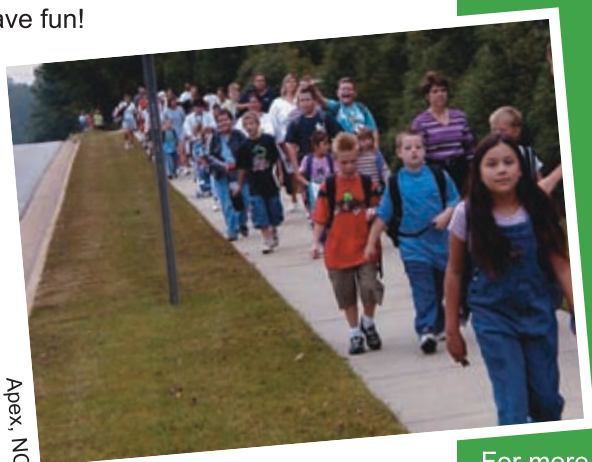
When picking a route, answer these four questions:

1. **Do you have room to walk?**
Are there sidewalks or paths?
Is there too much traffic?
2. **Is it easy to cross the street?**
3. **Do drivers behave well?**
Do they yield to walkers?
Do they speed?
4. **Does the environment feel safe?**
Are there loose dogs?
Is there criminal activity?

For more help identifying walkable routes, use the Walkability Checklist that can be found at www.walktoschool.org/buildevent/checklists.cfm.



Chester, VT



Apex, NC

SafeRoutes
National Center for Safe Routes to School



www.walktoschool.org www.saferoutesinfo.org

Reaching more children

Success with a simple walking school bus or a desire to be more inclusive may inspire a community to build a more structured program. This may include more routes, more days of walking and more children. Such programs require coordination, volunteers and potential attention to other issues, such as safety training and liability. The school principal and administration, law enforcement and other community leaders will likely be involved.

► **First, determine the amount of interest in a walking school bus program. Contact potential participants and partners:**

Parents and children Principal and school officials
Law enforcement officers Other community leaders

►► **Second, identify the route(s).**

The amount of interest will determine the number of walking routes.

Walk the route(s) without children first.



Mill Valley, CA



Sacramento, CA

►►► **Third, identify a sufficient number of adults to supervise walkers.**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend one adult for every six children. If children are age 10 or older, fewer adults may be needed. If children are ages 4 to 6, one adult per three children is recommended.

►►►► **Next, finalize the logistical details.**

Who will participate?

How often will the walking school bus operate? Will the bus operate once a week or every day?

When do children meet the bus? It's important to allow enough time for the slower pace of children, but also to

ensure that everyone arrives at school on time.

Where will the bus meet children—at each child's home or at a few meeting spots?

Will the bus operate after school?

What training do volunteers need?

What safety training do children need? See "Walking School Bus: Guidelines for talking to children about pedestrian safety" at <http://www.walkingschoolbus.org/safety.pdf>.

►►►►► **Finally, kick-off the program.**

A good time to begin is during International Walk to School Month each October. Walk and look for ways to encourage more children and families to be involved. Have fun!

For more detailed instructions on how to organize a walking school bus, go to:

- ➔ How to Organize a Walking/Cycling School Bus, Go for Green Canada, <http://www.goforgreen.ca/asrts>. Pick "English," then "Tools and Resources."
- ➔ The walking bus: A safe way for children to walk to school, Friends of the Earth UK, <http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/transport/resource/parents.html>
- ➔ Walking School Bus - A Guide for Parents and Teachers, VicHealth Australia, <http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au>. Select "Local Government," then "Walking School Bus." Scroll to bottom to find link to download the guide.
- ➔ KidsWalk-to-School Guide, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/resources.htm>

Tips for Walking Safely to School

Walking is fun, but you need to be safe while doing it. Follow these tips to make sure you get to and from school without any problems.

Walk together

Younger children should always walk with an adult. Tell your parents that walking is great exercise and a nice way to spend time together.

If your parents say that you can walk to school on your own, remember these tips:

- Walk with a friend when possible.
- Ask your parents to help you pick a safe route to school; one that avoids dangers.
- Stick to the route you picked with your parents. Don't let friends talk you into shortcuts that are more dangerous.
- When you are near the street, don't push, shove, or chase each other.
- Never hitchhike or take rides from people not arranged by your parents.
- Talk to your parents and teacher about any bullying that may happen during your walk.

Be seen

Remember, drivers may not be able to see you well. Always wear bright-colored clothes and if it is dark or hard to see, carry flashlights or wear reflective gear.

Look for traffic

Watch out for cars and trucks at every driveway and intersection on your walk to school. Look for drivers in parked cars. They may be getting ready to move.

Cross the street safely

1. Stop at the curb or edge of the street.
2. Look left, right, left and behind you and in front of you for traffic.
3. Wait until no traffic is coming and begin crossing.
4. Keep looking for traffic until you have finished crossing.
5. Walk, don't run across the street.

Obey traffic signs, signals and adult school crossing guards

For more resources and information on Safe Routes to School, please visit the National Center for Safe Routes to School Web site at www.saferoutesinfo.org.

Tips for Parents and Other Adults For Teaching Pedestrian Safety to Children

SafeRoutes
National Center for Safe Routes to School



TIP SHEET

Walking is a fun and healthy way to spend time with your children while teaching them skills that can serve them well throughout life. The walk to school is a great time to use these safety tips.

Be a walking role model

Children learn through experience. Walking with parents or another caregiver is an important way for children to practice crossing real streets and picking safe places to walk. There is no magic age when children are old enough to walk without an adult. But, as a parent, you should decide when your child has the skills and experience to deal with traffic safely without you.

As you walk with your child, remember these safety tips:

- Wear bright-colored clothes, and carry flashlights or wear reflective gear if it is dark or hard to see.
- Look for traffic at every driveway and intersection. Be aware of drivers in parked cars that may be getting ready to move.
- Obey all traffic signs and signals.
- Cross the street safely:
 1. Stop at the curb or edge of the street.
 2. Look left, right, left and behind you and in front of you for traffic.
 3. Wait until no traffic is coming and begin crossing.
 4. Keep looking for traffic until you have finished crossing.
 5. Walk, don't run across the street.



Choose the safest route to school

Select a walking route with less traffic and intersections.

- Pick places where there are sidewalks or paths separated from traffic. If there are no sidewalks or paths, walk as far from the motor vehicles as possible and, if possible, on the side of the street facing traffic.
- Limit the number of street crossings. When available, cross at a location with an adult school crossing guard.
- Avoid crossing busy or high-speed streets.

Understand your child's limitations

Children are not small adults. It will take time and practice for a child to develop the ability to deal with lots of traffic. Over time, children develop the ability to accurately judge the speed and distance of oncoming traffic. Young children may think that a car is able to stop, when in fact, it is not. Also, children may think that if they can see a driver, the driver can see them. But, children are smaller and harder for drivers to see. Get down to a child's height to experience their perspective and see what they see.

For more resources and information on Safe Routes to School, please visit the National Center for Safe Routes to School Web site at www.saferoutesinfo.org.

Kids and Bicycle Safety










Bicycle riding is fun, healthy, and a great way to be independent. But it is important to remember that a bicycle is not a toy; it's a vehicle!

Be cool – follow some basic safety tips when you ride.

Safe Riding Tips

Before using your bicycle, make sure it is ready to ride. You should always inspect your bike to make sure all parts are secure and working properly.

Remember to:








-  **Wear a Properly Fitted Bicycle Helmet.** Protect your brain, save your life. For more information see the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration publication “Easy Steps to Properly Fit a Bicycle Helmet.”
-  **Adjust Your Bicycle to Fit.** Stand over your bicycle. There should be 1 to 2 inches between you and the top tube (bar) if using a road bike and 3 to 4 inches if a mountain bicycle. The seat should be level front to back. The seat height should be adjusted to allow a slight bend at the knee when the leg is fully extended. The handlebar height should be at the same level with the seat.
-  **Check Your Equipment.** Before riding, inflate tires properly and check that your brakes work.
-  **See and Be Seen.** Whether daytime, dawn, dusk, foul weather, or at night, you need to be seen by others. Wearing white has not been shown to make you more visible. Rather, always wear neon, fluorescent, or other bright colors when riding day or night. Also wear something that reflects light, such as reflective tape or markings, or flashing lights. Remember, just because *you* can see a driver doesn't mean the driver can see *you*.
-  **Control Your Bicycle.** Always ride with at least one hand on the handlebars. Carry books and other items in a bicycle carrier or backpack.
-  **Watch for and Avoid Road Hazards.** Be on the lookout for hazards such as potholes, broken glass, gravel, puddles, leaves, and dogs. All these hazards can cause a crash. If you are riding with friends and you are in the lead, yell out and point to the hazard to alert the riders behind you.
-  **Avoid Riding at Night.** It is far more dangerous to ride at night than during the day because you are harder for others to see. If you have to ride at night, wear something that makes you more easily seen by others. Make sure you have reflectors on the front and rear of your bicycle (white lights on the front and red rear reflectors are required by law in many States), in addition to reflectors on your tires, so others can see you.

Many bicycle-related crashes resulting in injury or death are associated with the bicyclist's behavior, including such things as not wearing a bicycle helmet, riding into a street without stopping, turning left or swerving into traffic that is coming from behind, running a stop sign, and riding the wrong way in traffic. To maximize your safety, always wear a helmet AND follow the rules of the road.

Rules of the Road – Bicycling on the Road










Bicycles in many States are considered vehicles, and cyclists have the same rights and the same responsibilities to follow the rules of the road as motorists. When riding, always:

-  **Go With the Traffic Flow.** Ride on the right in the same direction as other vehicles. Go with the flow – not against it.
-  **Obey All Traffic Laws.** A bicycle is a vehicle and you're a driver. When you ride in the street, obey all traffic signs, signals, and lane markings.
-  **Yield to Traffic When Appropriate.** Almost always, drivers on a smaller road must yield (wait) for traffic on a major or larger road. If there is no stop sign or traffic signal and you are coming from a smaller roadway (out of a driveway, from a sidewalk, a bike path, etc.), you must slow down and look to see if the way is clear before proceeding. This also means yielding to pedestrians who have already entered a crosswalk.
-  **Be Predictable.** Ride in a straight line, not in and out of cars. Signal your moves to others.
-  **Stay Alert at All Times.** Use your eyes AND ears. Watch out for potholes, cracks, wet leaves, storm grates, railroad tracks, or anything that could make you lose control of your bike. You need your ears to hear traffic and avoid dangerous situations; don't wear a headset when you ride.
-  **Look Before Turning.** When turning left or right, always look behind you for a break in traffic, then signal before making the turn. Watch for left- or right-turning traffic.
-  **Watch for Parked Cars.** Ride far enough out from the curb to avoid the unexpected from parked cars (like doors opening, or cars pulling out).

Sidewalk versus Street Riding

The safest place for bicycle riding is on the street, where bicycles are expected to follow the same rules of the road as motorists and ride in the same direction.

-  Children less than 10 years old, however, are not mature enough to make the decisions necessary to safely ride in the street.
-  Children less than 10 years old are better off riding on the sidewalk.
-  For anyone riding on a sidewalk:
 -  Check the law in your State or jurisdiction to make sure sidewalk riding is allowed.
 -  Watch for vehicles coming out of or turning into driveways.
 -  Stop at corners of sidewalks and streets to look for cars and to make sure the drivers see you before crossing.
 -  Enter a street at a corner and not between parked cars. Alert pedestrians that you are near by saying, "Excuse me," or, "Passing on your left," or use a bell or horn.



For more information on bicycle safety, visit the
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
(NHTSA) Web site at: www.nhtsa.dot.gov

www.nhtsa.dot.gov
nhtsa 
people saving people
DOT HS 810 601
April 2006

Easy Steps to Properly Fit a Bicycle Helmet

It's not enough to simply buy a bicycle helmet – it should be properly fitted, adjusted, and worn each time you ride.

The Proper Helmet Fit

Helmets come in various sizes, just like hats. Size can vary between manufacturers. For the most comprehensive list of helmet sizes according to manufacturers, go to the Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute (BHSI) site: <http://www.danscomp.com/products/charts/helmetchart.htm>

To select and properly fit a bicycle helmet, follow the helmet fitting instructions in this flyer.

It may take some time to ensure a proper fit.

It is easier if you have someone help you adjust the straps.

Step 1 Size:

Measure your head for approximate size. Try the helmet on to ensure it fits snugly. While it is sitting flat on top of your head, make sure the helmet doesn't rock side to side. Sizing pads come with new helmets; use the pads to securely fit to your head. Mix or match the sizing pads for the greatest comfort. In your child's helmet, remove the padding when your child's head grows. If the helmet has a universal fit ring instead of sizing pads, adjust the ring size to fit the head.



Step 2 Position:

The helmet should sit level on your head and low on your forehead—one or two finger-widths above your eyebrow.



Step 3 Buckles:

Center the left buckle under the chin. On most helmets, the straps can be pulled from the back of the helmet to lengthen or shorten the chin straps. This task is easier if you take the helmet off to make these adjustments.



Step 4 Side Straps:

Adjust the slider on both straps to form a “V” shape under, and slightly in front of, the ears. Lock the slider if possible.



Step 5 Chin Strap:

Buckle your chin strap. Tighten the strap until it is snug, so that no more than one or two fingers fit under the strap.



Step 6 Final Fitting:

- A. Does your helmet fit right? Open your mouth wide...big yawn! The helmet should pull down on the head. If not, refer back to step 5 and tighten the chin strap.
- B. Does your helmet rock back more than two fingers above the eyebrows? If so, unbuckle, shorten the front strap by moving the slider forward. Buckle, retighten the chin strap, and test again.
- C. Does your helmet rock forward into your eyes? If so, unbuckle, tighten the back strap by moving the slider back toward the ear. Buckle, retighten the chin strap, and test again.
- D. Roll the rubber band down to the buckle. All four straps must go through the rubber band and be close to the buckle to prevent the buckle from slipping.

When to Replace a Helmet.

Replace any helmet that has been involved in a crash, or is damaged.

The Helmet Should Fit Now.

Buy a helmet that fits your head now, not a helmet to “grow into.”

Replace any helmet that has been outgrown.

The Helmet Should Be Comfortable.

If it feels small, put in the thinner sizing pads or purchase a larger helmet. Ideally, select a helmet brand and size that fits well prior to any adjustments. If you buy a helmet that you find comfortable and attractive, you are more likely to wear it.

The Helmet Must Cover Your Forehead.

The Chin Strap Must Be Tight and Properly Adjusted.

The Helmet Should Not Rock Forward or Backward on Your Head.

If it does, see step 6.

A bicycle helmet can protect your head and brain ONLY if you wear it each time you ride!

Helmet Laws

Many States and local jurisdictions have bicycle helmet laws; please refer to your State or local jurisdiction. To find this information go to www.helmets.org/mandator.htm

A bicycle crash can happen at any time. A properly fitted bicycle helmet reduces the risk of head injury by as much as 85 percent and the risk of brain injury by as much as 88 percent.

More children age 5 to 14 go to hospital emergency rooms for injuries associated with bicycles than with any other sport. Many of these injuries involve the head. Helmet laws ensure the safety of our children.



For more information on bicycle safety, visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Web site at: www.nhtsa.dot.gov



Model Safe Behavior

Everyone — adult and child — should wear bicycle helmets each time they ride. Helmets are the single most effective way to prevent head injuries resulting from bicycle crashes. Wearing a helmet each ride can encourage the same smart behavior in others.

Helmet Certification

Buy a new helmet that has been tested and meets the uniform safety standard issued by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC); use an old helmet only if it has a seal from one or more of the voluntary bicycle helmet standards, such as ASTM, Snell, or ANSI. Look for the certification seal labeled on the helmet.

DOT HS 810 600
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www.nhtsa.gov
NHTSA