



Walking & Bicycling to School: Community Presentation Lesson Plan

Lesson Title: Walking & Bicycling to School: Community Presentation

Lesson Goal: To encourage participation and collaboration in walk to school efforts in your community.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the lesson the learners will be able to

- 1) Describe a walking school bus
- 2) Describe safe routes to school
- 3) Name 3 benefits of a walk/bike to school program
- 4) Name 2 ways they think they could benefit from a walk/bike to school program in their community

Equipment and Materials Needed:

- Computer, PowerPoint, projection screen, LCD projector
OR
Overhead projector, transparencies # 1 – 15
OR
Handouts of printed slides #1 – 15
- A copy of the KidsWalk-to-School program for display
- Copies of the KidsWalk-to-School brochure
- Copies of the Walkable Routes to School Survey (found in *KidsWalk-to-School* guide)
- Copies of Walk to School Survey (found in *KidsWalk-to-School* guide)

Time Required: 5-15 minutes

Intended Audience: parents, neighbors, teachers, school administrators

Trainer Activities: Read supporting materials, present, facilitate discussion and brainstorm

Learner Activities: Participate in discussion, brainstorm, complete Walk to School Survey

Synopsis of Lesson: This lesson provides learners with an overview of Walk and Bicycle to School programs. This lesson can be the initial presentation to encourage people to participate in a walk to school program at a school PTA meeting, neighborhood meeting, or community meeting.

Evaluation and Feedback: Walk to School Survey (found in *KidsWalk-to-School* guide)



Walking & Bicycling to School: Community Presentation Presenter's Guide

Purpose of Presentation: To serve as an outline and template for a presentation that may be presented to a neighborhood, school, or community to increase knowledge and interest in participating in a Walk & Bicycle to School program.

How to Use Presentation: The presentation may be used “as is” or modified to meet the needs, purpose, and timeframe of your meeting. For example, you may choose to add some additional slides and include information specifically related to the community you are addressing or you may need to omit some of the slides in the interest of time. Keep in mind that many PTA meetings are conducted on a strict time schedule and you may only be allowed 5 – 10 minutes to make your point.

Equipment and Materials Needed: Depending on your community's resources, you may not have access to a computer, PowerPoint, and an LCD projector. Not to worry, any printing services company can print overheads (or transparencies) of these slides for use on an overhead projector. If you will not have access to any of these resources, you can always print handouts of the slides for each audience member.

To obtain copies of the KidsWalk-to-School guide and brochures you can

- Download them off the web site at www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk.htm
- Write to ccdinfo@cdc.gov
- Write to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity
KidsWalk-to-School
4770 Buford Hwy, NE, Mailstop K46
Atlanta, GA 30341
- Call 1-877-CDC-4NRG

You will need to make enough copies of the Walkable Routes to School Survey and the Walk to School Survey from the PDF or by photocopying them out of the *KidsWalk-to-School* guide to distribute to your audience.

Please be sure to send in your great ideas or success stories to ccdinfo@cdc.gov.

Things to Keep in Mind when Presenting:

- Be prepared for some initial resistance. It is normal and expected that people are hesitant to try new things. Listen to their reasons for being hesitant and help them to see how these programs can overcome their concerns.
- Parent's main concern is their child's safety so be sure to stress that Walk and Bicycle to School Programs focus on getting children to school safely and promote safe routes to school and adult supervision during the trip to school.
- Recognize and acknowledge that changes to community design cannot happen overnight. In fact, getting these changes made often requires persistence in working with your Department of Planning. In addition, these changes are expensive and generally require a lot of time to implement. Do not get discouraged.
- Be enthusiastic about the program and all of the benefits it will have for your neighborhood/school/community. Enthusiasm is contagious!



Walking & Bicycling to School: Community Presentation Speaker's Notes

Part I. Identify the Problem

1. Walking & Bicycling to School Title Slide:

Insert your name and contact information on the slide. You can also change the title of your presentation to include your community name (i.e., Fairview Elementary Walk to School Program). Introduce yourself and explain why you are presenting to them (i.e., I am John Doe, a parent at Fairview Elementary School and I am here to talk with you about the high traffic volume around the school and a possible solution – Walk and Bicycle to School programs).

2. Walking & Bicycling to School Presentation Outline Slide (What is the Problem?):

Provide an overview of what you will be covering during the presentation and approximately how long it will take so the audience knows what to expect. Then engage your audience by asking them a question and drawing them into the presentation.

This presentation will cover: an overview of the problem, followed by reasons that walking and bicycling to school are important, go over some things we can do in our community and then open it up to a discussion or questions and answers.

I'd like to open by asking if I could I get a show of hands ? How many of you walked to school when you were younger?

How many of you have children or grandchildren who walk to school?

As you looked around the room you could see that about 80% of you walked to school when you were younger, while far less of your children and grandchildren walk to school today.

Alternate (if the response to the first question is not greater than the second question): Typically about 80% of the audience raise their hand when asked if they walk to school, while far less of their children walk to school today.

3. Barriers to walking and biking to school Slide:

You may want to ask your audience for some of the reasons their children don't walk and bicycle to school. If their children already do walk or bicycle to school ask them to identify things that make it difficult for them to walk or bicycle to school. Try to repeat each individual response so the group can hear it. Then go through this slide to restate things your audience has already said or bring up things that were not mentioned. If you have additional reasons that are particular to your neighborhood/school state them here as well – remember it is important to make these issues relevant to your audience.

- Many neighborhoods weren't designed for the convenience of the pedestrian. They do not have sidewalks, or safe crossings, or are too far from the school to walk or bicycle.
- Safety is another big concern. Neighborhoods that have high traffic volumes and speeds cause fear for children's safety. In addition, perceptions of crime deter people from allowing their children to walk to school. For example, parent's concern about child abductions. [*It is important to acknowledge that children's safety is of the utmost importance and that is why walk and bike to school programs that promote safe walking and biking to school, including walking to school in groups accompanied by adults is an important aspect of these programs.*]
- Time and convenience are another common factor. People believe that it is more convenient to drop their child off at school on their way to work.

4. More Children Ride in a Car or School Bus to School than Walk or Bicycle (Trips 1 mile or less) Slide:

If you have some data on the number of children who live within one mile of your school and or the number of children who walk or bicycle to school in your neighborhood, community, or school, insert or state these. If you don't you may want to use the national data to indicate that nationally few children are walking and bicycling to school.

Let's take a look at actual data on the number of children walking and bicycling to school verses being driven to school.

- National data show that 65% of school trips that are within one mile of the school (one mile is considered a reasonable walking distance for elementary school-aged children, therefore, data on walk and bicycle to school trips is calculated using this one-mile radius) are made by car or school bus. Think how many extra automobiles are out on the streets in our neighborhoods and schools. Imagine if we could make these short distance trips safe and convenient so that children could and would walk and bicycle to school. (Calculations from the 1995 *Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey*. US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, unpublished data, 2000.)
- *Insert local data.*

Alternate Text: Far More Children Ride in a Car or School Bus to School than Walk or Bicycle (trips 1 mile or less).

51% ride in an automobile
14% ride in a school bus
31% walk
3% bike
1% other

5. Children's Health Risks Related to Physical Inactivity, Pedestrian Safety, and Air Quality

Health data indicate that our children are facing health risks that are related to physical inactivity, pedestrian safety, and air quality - all issues that Walk and Bicycle to School programs can attempt to address.

- Since 1980, the prevalence of overweight children has doubled (Troiano RP, Flegal KM. Pediatrics 1998;101:497-504.).
- Studies show recent sharp increases in cases of type 2 diabetes in children (American Diabetes Association. Type 2 Diabetes in Children. [Consensus Statement]. Diabetes Care 2000;23:381-9.).
- Pedestrian injuries are the 3rd leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children ages 5 - 9.
- Childhood asthma rates have increased 160% in the past 15 years in children under the age of five (www.epa.gov/children/asthma.htm).

Data that show health risks in your community can be a powerful tool for getting “buy-in” and participation from certain groups. Gather local and state level data to include on this slide. You can find this data by contacting your local or state health department or by gathering state level data at the following Web sites.

- *Obesity/Overweight* http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/obesity/trend/prev_reg.htm
- *Physical Inactivity* <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs/>
- *Cardiovascular Diseases* <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/BurdenBook/index.asp>
- *Air Quality* <http://www.epa.gov/airnow/>

Part II. Why is Walking and Bicycling to School Important?

6. Walking & Bicycling to School Presentation Outline (Why is Walking and Bicycling to School Important?)

7. Many Reasons to do a Walk and Bicycle to School Program slide:

There are many good reasons to begin a Walk and Bicycle to School program.

(1st Bubble – Increased Physical Activity): One reason to walk and bicycle to school is that it offers the opportunity for regular physical activity. Kids get a fresh start as they begin

their day with physical activity. Physical activity is so important to a child's day. Benefits of physical activity in childhood...

- May prevent or delay the development of high blood pressure
- Improves strength, builds lean muscle mass, decreases body fat
- Improves endurance, balance, flexibility
- Improves self-image
- Increases the likelihood they will lead more physically active lifestyles in adulthood

(2nd Bubble – Improved Pedestrian Skills): Walking and bicycling to school offers children the opportunity to learn AND practice safe pedestrian skills. We can prevent injuries by teaching and modeling safe pedestrian skills and accompanying them on the journey to school.

(3rd Bubble – Community Design): Pedestrian safety can be improved by creating safe routes to school. Walking and bicycling to school increases awareness of issues related to community design that can affect people's willingness to walk and bicycle in their communities. Identifying trouble spots in community design and working with community members to begin to address these barriers will make walking and bicycling a safe and enjoyable activity for everyone in the community.

(4th Bubble –Less reliance on the automobile): More children walking and bicycling to school decreases the reliance on the automobile.

(5th Bubble – Decreased neighborhood/school traffic): Neighborhood and school traffic and congestion is decreased as more children walk and less parents drive their children to school.

(6th Bubble – Reduce fear of crime): Fear of crime, bullying, or abduction is a factor in some neighborhoods and schools. Walk and Bicycle to School programs can help to reduce these fears by encouraging communities to join together to take back the streets through participating in neighborhood crime watches, including community police in the planning of your program, and getting to know your neighbors and making it a friendlier place to be.

(7th Bubble – More social interaction): Getting out and about on foot or bicycle provides an opportunity for more social interaction as you join other school children and their parents, say hello to neighbors as you pass by, and spend valuable time with your children and their friends. In addition, having more people out and about helps create a sense of community and reduces the risk of crime.

(8th Bubble – Increased independence): And children benefit by an increased sense of independence as they become confident and capable pedestrians and bicyclists that are able to get where they need to go without relying on their parent's to cart them around. And when they have reached an appropriate age and maturity level to venture out on their own you will feel more confident in their knowledge and skills as safe pedestrians and bicyclists.

Can you think of other benefits to walking and bicycling to school or reasons that our school should participate in a Walk and Bicycle to School program?

Part III. What Can We Do?

8. Walking & Bicycling to School Presentation Outline (What Can We Do?)

What can we do in our community to make walking and bicycling to school safer and more convenient for our children?

9. Walk and Bicycle to School Programs slide:

There are many variations of Walk and Bicycle to School programs that may suit our community's needs and resources. They range from participation in:

- A one-day kick off event, International Walk to School Day, celebrated every October to kick-off walking to school yearlong and raise awareness about the importance of walking and bicycling to school.
- Once a week walking programs like Walking Wednesdays, where one day a week is designated as a day to walk or bicycle to school in hopes that this small step will lead to larger change.
- Walking School Bus Programs encourage children to walk to school daily in groups led by adults. It is much like a carpool, but everyone is walking.
- Safe Routes to School programs encourage communities to identify barriers to safe walking and bicycling to school, such as a lack of sidewalks or a dangerous crossing and work with community partners to create safe routes to school.

Other variations, such as Classroom Learning and No Idling to School projects, are ways to involve the entire school, even children who live too far from the school to walk or bicycle, in Walk and Bicycle to School programs.

- Classroom Learning: Teachers can incorporate lessons on safe pedestrian and bicycle skills, air pollution, and physical activity into the school curriculum.
- No Idling Project: You can reduce automobile emissions by walking and bicycling to school, but if you must drive to school you can also reduce emissions by turning your car off when waiting to pick your child up from school. Greenest City's No Idling Project was responsible for 247 hours of reduced idling. That is similar to 10 cars running 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for four months.

To find out more about the No Idling Project visit
<http://oe.nrcan.gc.ca/autosmart/idling/TheKit.cfm>

You may want to provide success stories about what other communities have been able to accomplish through Walk and Bicycle to School programs. Visit the CDC's KidsWalk-to-School Web site for examples of great things people are doing across the country with Walk and Bicycle to School programs.

Let's look a little more closely at some of these.

If you are limited in the amount of time you have to present you can either skip this slide or skip the following three slides.

10. International Walk to School Day slide:

On International Walk to School Day entire neighborhoods or schools pick a place to meet and walk to school as a large group. Many schools get local celebrities and elected officials to participate; make banners and signs to carry and promote walking to school; get media to cover their walk and raise awareness; and get donations from local businesses for a breakfast when they arrive at school.

Each October children across the globe join in to walk and bike to school on the same day to support daily physical activity, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and healthy environments. In 2001 nearly 3 million walkers from 21 countries walked to school together.

This would be a great event for our school and neighborhood to participate in to kick-off walk to school events this year.

To find out more about International Walk to School Day and for more information on how to coordinate one of these events and to receive materials on participating in Walk to School Day you can visit www.walktoschool-usa.org and www.iwalktoschool.org.

If your school has participated in this event in the past, talk about the event and suggest that you participate again this year.

11. KidsWalk-to-School slide:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed a walk to school program that is based on both the Walking School Bus and the Safe Routes to School concept. It is designed to take Walk to School Day to the next step and get children walking to school yearlong.

The purpose of *KidsWalk-to-School* program is to

- Increase levels of physical activity in children by teaching them the pleasure of walking and bicycling and building physical activity back into their daily routine.
- To improve safety by giving children the opportunity to learn and practice safe pedestrian and bicycle skills.
- To educate and empower community members to work together with police, Department of Public Works, the school, and other partners to create safe routes to

school. For example if the problem was a need for sidewalks, you would work with the Department of Public Works to get sidewalks installed; and if the issue were high speed traffic you would work with police to lower speed limits and enforce them.

12. KidsWalk-to-School Materials slide:

The KidsWalk-to-School program includes a step-by-step guide on how to tailor a walk to school program based on your community's needs and resources. The guide includes sample letters, a press release, and surveys.

One survey in particular, the Walkable Routes to School Survey (on page 57 of the *KidsWalk-to-School* guide), is a good activity to start with as a way to build interest, identify barriers, and begin to build partnerships. This survey is completed by taking a walk around your neighborhood and along a route to school and identifying things that make walking to school unsafe or difficult. The results of these surveys can be used as a starting point to begin working with partners to address issues of concern.

Other KidsWalk-to-School materials include a brochure and Web site. To get copies of the *KidsWalk-to-School* guide and brochure you can download them at www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk, E-mail ccdinfo@cdc.gov, or call 1-888-CDC-4NRG.

13. Safe Routes to School Legislation slide:

And finally, as mentioned earlier, another type of program to encourage walking and bicycling to school are Safe Routes to School Programs that encourage community members to identify barriers to safe walking and bicycling to school and identify ways to make them safe. Making these community design improvements require funding and although there are some ways to work with your Department of Transportation or Public Works to make these changes, Safe Routes to School Legislation is becoming a popular way to guarantee a funding mechanism for these projects.

- An excellent example of success at the state level is the work California has done to secure \$20 million dollars a year towards Safe Routes to School Legislation. This legislation sets federal transportation dollars aside for projects like traffic calming, and installing crosswalks, sidewalks and bike lanes around schools. To find out more information visit <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/>.
- It is a model that other states are hoping to emulate and are drafting up similar legislation.
- And now as a result of state level interest and success efforts have begun to create national SR2S legislation.

14. Great Ideas! slide:

Great ideas to keep in mind as you get started are to...

- Involve as many different groups as possible. Police may be able to help you with pedestrian and bicycle safety training, crossing guards, or extra enforcement during school hours or special walk and bike to school events; your state or local health department may be willing to help you plan your program; senior groups may be interested in joining forces to make walking and bicycling safe and convenient in the neighborhood and may be interested in walking with the children to school; local SAFE KIDS groups can apply for a mini-grant to fund activities for Walk to School Day, and teachers can include learning activities related to walking and bicycling to school in their curriculum.
- Teachers can encourage children to keep a journal. Children may enjoy writing down their personal experiences on their way to school, conversations they had, or things they saw. They can encourage students to write letters to their school officials, police department, or DOT to ask them to address safety hazards. Or they could have monthly or weekly contests – have children record the amount of miles they walk each day (doesn't have to be to school trips only) on a bar chart, whoever reaches a certain number of miles wins an extra privilege.
- Walk to school efforts can work in any community if you tailor your program to meet the needs and resources of that community. If you do not have many parents that are available to lead walking school buses see if older people in the neighborhood would be interested in walking each morning in the company of some children. If you live too far from the school to walk to school you can always drive part of the way to school and park at a closer neighborhood and form a walking school bus from there. Remember to start small; people may not be willing to walk everyday in the beginning. For example, you could begin by planning “Walking Wednesdays”.
- Most important, make it fun! Play games on the way to and from school like Eye Spy or pick a theme day each week where everyone wears the same color, etc.

15. Walking & Bicycling to School Presentation Outline (Discussion)

Provide your audience with the opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns. Visit the CDC's KidsWalk-to-School Web site for more ideas and information. If time permits, begin a discussion about your community's next steps towards developing a Walk and Bicycle to School program.

Encourage people that there are no obstacle that cannot be overcome if you work together on this! Ask people if they have questions or concerns or some additional ideas. Hand out the Walk to School Surveys from in the KidsWalk-to-School guide and ask them to fill them out and leave them with you before leaving. Thank them for coming – great job!