

Climb aboard the Walking School Bus and get ready ... to make friends, have fun, get fit and stay safe!



Getting the bus going:

1. Through the school, find out how many other families on your route are interested in trying the Walking School Bus.
2. Ask your school to organize an informal meeting with these families.
3. Determine which days your Walking School Bus will operate – everyday or just two or three? Will each family participate in the walking of the children or will you take turns as 'bus drivers'? You can all walk together if you prefer.
4. Three to four children per adult is recommended for maximum safety. Always try to position one parent at the front of the bus and one parent at the back of the bus.
5. If your Walking School Bus group has concerns about the safety along your route to school, contact your community police officer and your local municipal councillor. Tell them about the Walking School Bus project and ask if they can address your concerns. Ask if they might be able to walk the route with you before your Walking School Bus gets underway.
6. Start your Walking School Bus by walking just one way – to school or from school. As people feel more comfortable, and schedules allow, expand the program to include two-way trips.



Preparing everyone for the walk to school:

1. Ensure each member of your family has their Walking School Bus identification tag and is wearing something reflective.
2. Review pedestrian safety rules with your children before you start the Walking School Bus and then regularly remind the children as you walk together. Parents need to review road safety rules too!
3. Ensure you have a list of home and work phone numbers for each participating Walking School Bus family.

On the walk to school:

1. Children do not go inside people's houses – they are picked up on the street outside their house or at a safe designated "bus stop" agreed upon by the group.
2. Escort all children right into the schoolyard. Kindergarten students should be taken to, and picked up from, their classrooms.
3. Ensure you and your children are dressed appropriately for the weather.

Safety messages to review with your children:

- Children under nine should always be **accompanied by adults or older children** when crossing the street.
- Teach your children the **rules of the road** -- and start when they're young. Think of it as gradually programming your children's brains until all the connections are in place. By the time your child reaches age nine and can act responsibly, the road safety rules will be second nature.
- Teach your children through play. Play act with toy cars; set up obstacle courses in the park. Make learning fun and you'll make it memorable. **Talk about safety rules** and your observations of safe or unsafe behaviour as you walk.
- Follow the same rules that you want your child to follow. You may want to cut across the street in the middle of the block, but you want your child to learn to cross at the intersection. **Be a good role model.**
- Teach children **how to cross the street safely**. Teach them to stop (before stepping onto the road), look left, right and left again, and listen for traffic before stepping out into the street. Children should wait until the street is

clear and should keep looking until they have crossed the street. They should also look the driver in the eye before crossing.

- Children need to be extra alert when crossing at a **corner with no traffic lights**.
- Teach your children to always stop at driveways and areas without curbs and to **never run out onto the street**.

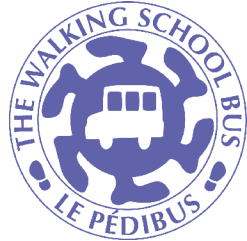
Eyes on the street:

- Walking with others improves your safety. The more people out and about, the safer your streets become.



And remember:

- Even if you are wearing white clothes, drivers will have a hard time seeing you on dark winter days. Always wear reflective clothing.
- Street signs, signals and pavement markings are installed for everyone's use, not just drivers. Teach your children to follow the rules of the road all the time.



The Walking School Bus is part of Green Communities Canada's Active & Safe Routes to School program. Visit our Web site at www.saferoutestoschool.ca



Moving On Sustainable Transportation
Sur la route du transport durable



A few more tips for the road...

Dress for the weather, all year long.

Walking in a Winter Wonderland

Don't avoid walking when the weather doesn't cooperate - it's actually the best way to keep warm outdoors. Just be sure to dress properly:

- Keep hands and head covered to prevent heat loss
- Wear warm, waterproof boots in cold weather and rain boots in wet weather
- Carry umbrellas for those rainy days
- Wear a coat that is waterproof and deflects the wind
- In extreme cold keep skin covered - wear a scarf over your face and mouth
- Woollen clothing helps to retain the heat
- Change wet clothes - tuck an extra pair of socks and mitts into your child's knapsack



Walking in the Sunshine

In the warmer months of the year:

- Apply sun screen at the start of the day and pop a small container in your child's school bag.
- Wear wide brimmed hats to protect face, ears and neck from the sun.
- Drink lots of water throughout the day and carry a bottle of water on your walk to and from school.



Behaviour Expectations for Children Participating in a Walking School Bus:

- Listen to the adult 'bus drivers' at all times.
- Be on time.
- Obey all traffic rules and signs.
- Be very careful when crossing streets.
- Stay with the group, no lagging behind or running ahead.
- No pushing or fooling around while walking or waiting.
- Look out for each other.
- Respect neighbourhood property.
- HAVE FUN!

Walking School Bus Identification

We recommend using ID tags as identification of Walking School Bus participants. Below is a sample tag.



Family name: _____

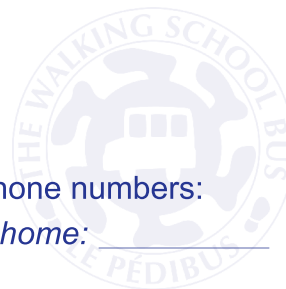
School: _____

WSB Route: _____

Parent / Guardian phone numbers:

work: _____ home: _____

WSB Route: _____



Climb Aboard the Walking School Bus!

Everything you need to know to organize your own Walking School Bus



Your family has indicated an interest in participating in a Walking School Bus. This kit is intended to help you organize a Walking School Bus along your route to school and to prepare your family to walk.

