

FOUR KEY MEDIA MESSAGES

Last year, 228 schools registered for Oregon's Walk and Bike to School Day. This year our goal is 250, and we think it can happen! With 250 schools throughout Oregon participating on October 3rd, expect to see over 25,000 children, parents, teachers and community members walking and biking to (and from) school.

1. To enhance the health of children

Thirty years ago, 50% of students walked or biked to school. Today, only 15% do. Walking or biking to and from school is an excellent way to make physical activity a part of students' daily routines. Children need at least sixty minutes of physical activity every day to keep them healthy – and many kids in Oregon just don't get enough! Walking and biking to school can help improve strength and endurance, decrease anxiety and stress, and help maintain weight. Positive experiences walking and biking to school will pave the way for being physically active throughout life.

2. To improve the health of the community

Studies show that 20-30% of morning traffic is parents driving their kids to school. More walking and biking reduces this congestion and associated pollution around schools. It can also encourage parents to walk and bike to school and throughout the community with their kids.

3. To create permanent, safe walking and biking routes

Well-maintained routes designed for walking and biking calm traffic and reduce collisions. Walking and biking to school creates driver awareness in school zones. This increases safety for all!

4. To improve neighborhood livability

Studies show that more people walking and biking in a neighborhood makes people feel safer and better about their community. It helps make public streets lively and friendly, encourages community interaction, and attracts people to commercial, civic and recreational areas.

