



How to encourage walking and riding in your school community

Why should parents and carers encourage walking and riding?

Walking, bike riding, scooting and skating are cheap and healthy activities which are fun. Walking and bike riding can help children:

- Build strong bones and muscles
- Keep a healthy weight
- Improve self esteem
- Learn about road safety
- Add to the 60 minutes of physical activity that children need every day

Walking and riding in the community is also great for the environment. For families, walking or riding to school can save money on petrol costs and stop the stress of finding a car park at school!

How can I encourage walking and riding?

- Find out if anything walking or riding activities are already happening at your school. There may be a walking school bus, Part Way is OK drop off points or a riding club.
- Trial walking or riding to school (or part way to school) with your child. Knowing that they know the way will make you feel comfortable.
- Set a day each week that your child can walk or ride to school.
- If the walking or riding routes concern you take a walk or ride around your schools community with your child and take notes on how walkable or bikable it is. Use the [Heart Foundation's Walkability Checklist](#).
- Talk with other parents and school parent groups.
- Talk with the teachers or principal at your child's school.

Some more formal steps

Using the information you have gathered from discussions and the walkability checklist you could do the following:

- Arrange a meeting with the school principal or the school association.
- Approach your local council to discuss how they can help.
- Put an article about the importance of walking and riding and the issues found in your community into the school newsletter.
- Develop an action plan with the issues and possible solutions. Invite school, council and other stakeholders to partner to work towards the plan.

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This is a Healthy Tasmania initiative