

Information for Schools



Walk to School Wednesday Wednesday 4 November 2009

Walk to School Wednesday is a *Walk Week* event coordinated by the Heart Foundation in partnership with the Departments of Education and Training, Planning and Infrastructure, Sport and Recreation and Main Roads WA.

This event aims to encourage West Australian children and their families to lead a more active lifestyle by walking to school.

To assist your school to participate in Walk to School Wednesday and to develop an Excursion Management Plan the following information is provided.

INFORMATION TO HELP YOU PLAN YOUR WALK TO SCHOOL WEDNESDAY EVENT

The Environment

- To participate on Wednesday 4 November, students will be asked to walk **to** school. Students may choose to participate by walking part or all of the way to school.
- To ensure the **safest route to school** is chosen, teachers/parents should **discuss** the safe routes to school with their students/children. Please refer to 'Supervision' for additional information.

The Student's Capacity

In creating an inclusive *Walk to School Wednesday* program, the school community is encouraged to provide opportunities for all students to participate and achieve.

The school community needs to consider participation strategies for students who for a range of reasons, are unable to walk to school. Consider students who:

- live a distance from the school and/or travel by bus to school experience difficulty walking
- have special needs
- do not have access to adult supervision on the route to school

To encourage whole-school participation an additional on-site activity could be organised to ensure all students have the opportunity to participate and achieve. For more information about inclusion visit www.countusin.com.au

Supervision

We advise you to provide as much information as possible to assist parents/ carers to ensure their child's safety from their home to your school. Schools should consider the following recommendations:

- It is recommended that **students under 10 years are accompanied to school by a parent or carer**. Children under the age of 10 are considered vulnerable road users because they can be easily distracted and have difficulty judging the speed and distance of approaching traffic. Parents/carers should consider their child's level of development for this activity.

- From the age of 11-12 years, children begin to approach adult levels of performance and may better understand where it is safer to cross the road.
- To prepare for this event, your school may wish to advise parents/carers to plan their journey and walk with their child to school prior to *Walk to School Wednesday* on Wednesday 4 November. The purpose of this activity is to assess the safest route to school and ensure that both the parent/carer and child are familiar with the environment.
- Teachers should keep a record of those students who are intending to walk to school and as students submit parental consent forms, they can be marked against this record. **Please note: Only** students who have returned their signed parental consent form should participate in *Walk to School Wednesday*.
- Prior to Wednesday 4 November, the school's Traffic Warden/s should be informed that there may be an increased volume of students using the Children's Crossing on *Walk to School Wednesday*.
- If your school does not have a Children's Crossing but you are considering implementing one, an application pack for a Review of Students Pedestrian Needs can be downloaded as a PDF from the WA Police website (Traffic Warden State Management Unit).
www.police.wa.gov.au/TRAFFIC/SchoolCrossings/tabid/1004/Default.aspx

Information to Parents/Carers for their Consent

- Provide Parents/Carers with full details of your school's involvement in *Walk to School Wednesday*.
- Provide Parents/Carers with relevant safety information for students to walk from their home to your school. The Information for Parents/Carers and Parent Consent Form can be downloaded and adapted for your school at www.dpi.wa.gov.au/walking
- Parents/Carers need to return a signed consent form before their child can participate.
- Parents/Carers will need to be reminded to inform the school of any changes to their child's participation before this event.

Emergency Response

It is recommended that:

- The classroom teacher is to immediately notify the Principal if a student participating in *Walk to School Wednesday* does not arrive at school. In this situation, the Principal is to contact the student's parent/carer to investigate.

Briefing Participants

Schools should provide information to students about how to safely participate in *Walk to School Wednesday*. Recommended classroom activities for teachers are provided in the *Walk to School Wednesday* Activity Kit which will be sent to you after your school has registered.

More Information

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact the Heart Foundation's *Walk Week* Project Coordinator on 9382 5939 or email anna.sheppard@heartfoundation.org.au