



MEDIA ALERT

March 2022: Primary school aged children across Australia will make those important steps towards a healthier future by participating in National Walk Safely to School Day on Friday 20 May 2022. **Please save the date.**

National Walk Safely to School Day is a community initiative that aims to raise awareness of the health, road safety, transport and environmental benefits that regular walking (especially to and from school) can provide for the long term well-being of our children. Apart from the physical benefits, regular walking also has a favourable impact on children's cognitive and academic performance.

Now in its 23rd year, the annual event has joined forces with National Road Safety Week (15 - 22 May) to further draw the spotlight on road safety and support the importance of regular walking, not just on 20 May, but every day.

Harold Scruby, Chairman and CEO of the Pedestrian Council of Australia said that "until they are 10, children must always hold the hand of an adult when crossing the road".



Walk Safely to School Day also encourages positive environmental action, better use of public transport with reduced car-dependency and encourages parents and carers to walk more, reducing dangerous traffic congestion around schools.

The national initiative also promotes healthy eating and encourages schools and P&Cs to *Host a Healthy Breakfast* on the day.

"The extremely disturbing childhood obesity epidemic continues to affect 1 in 4* children at critical levels across Australia."

"The best exercise for all Australians is walking regularly. Children need at least 60 minutes of physical activity a day. We should encourage them to take a walk before school, during and at end of their day," Harold Scruby said.

*ABS: National Health Survey: First Results, 2017-18

Top 5 tips for parents to get their kids walking to school:

1. Walk some or if you can, walk all the way to school
2. Get off the bus, train, or tram a few stops earlier and walk the rest of the way
3. Leave the car at least 1km away from school and walk the rest of the way
4. Set your alarm 30 minutes earlier to fit in a walk to school
5. If you can't walk in the morning, walk home after school

ENDS.

Key Spokesperson: Harold Scruby, CEO of the Pedestrian Council of Australia 0418 110 011

For media information, including images and interviews contact:
Chrystal Bowman | 0430 917 764 | chrystal@littlelion.com.au



FAST FACTS:

- WHAT:** National Walk Safely to School Day
- WHEN:** Friday 20 May 2022
- WHERE:** In all primary schools across Australia
- WHY:** This national initiative aims to encourage children to lead a healthier, more active lifestyle by simply including a walk at the beginning, at lunchtime and at the end of each day. The event also promotes reduced car-dependency, greater use of public transport, cleaner air, improved diets and road safety to primary school children throughout Australia.
- HOW:** Encourage children to build regular walking in their daily routine by walking to, during, and from school
- IMAGES:** Please click [here](#) for images.
- MORE INFO:** www.walk.com.au/wstsd

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