

# WALK & ROLL TO SCHOOL GUIDEBOOK





# Table

## of contents

---

02

**It's time to walk and roll to school**

---

03

**A school champion**

---

04

**Great ideas for a walk and roll day**

---

05

**Steps to planning a walk and roll day**

---

07

**When walking or biking from home is not an option**

---

08

**Safety on the walk and roll day**

---

09

**Moving towards lasting change**

---

# Its time

## to walk and roll to school

**Walk to School Day** and **Bike to School Day** are energizing events that remind both students and adults of the simple joys of walking and bicycling to school. For many communities, these events help spark continued walking and biking throughout the school year.

Walk to School Day takes place each **October - Pedestrian Safety Month**, while Bike to School Day occurs in **May - National Bike Safety Month**. Each walk and roll day is typically held on the first Wednesday of the month, but schools may choose a different day that better fits their schedule.

Walk and roll days can look different in every school community. Whether in October or May, schools may host a walk-focused event, a bike-focused event, or a combination of walking and rolling. There is no single right approach—walk and roll days can be as simple or as large as works best for your school.

By hosting a walk and roll day, schools are able to promote physical activity as well as build a sense of neighborhood and school spirit. Studies have shown that physical activity can positively impact:

- Academic achievement
- Student morning energy levels and attention
- Truancy and absenteeism
- Social bonding and connection to community

From your Regional Safe Routes to School team here at East Central, we thank you for encouraging students to use active transportation to get to their destination.

**Jennie, Kate, and Kim**



### For More Information



#### **[eastcentralsrts.org](http://eastcentralsrts.org)**

Visit our website for educational and promotional materials.



#### **click on**

Click on the **Events** tab then click on **Walk or Bike to School Day**



#### **scroll**

Downloadable materials at the bottom of page

# A school champion

Each walk and roll day is led by a school champion who steps forward to lead the initiative at their school. A school champion can be a parent, teacher, administrator, community member, or even a student – the only requirement is being passionate about the benefits of active transportation! A school champion ensures they have spoken with their school's administration and gotten approval, then rally the support of others in their school community.



**Confirm** with the school administration you have their support to host a walk and roll day.



**Register** your school with East Central WI Regional Safe Routes to School for a free toolkit of safety gear and incentives. Schools will be sent a link each spring to register, or email Kim Dieck at [kdieck@ecwrpc.org](mailto:kdieck@ecwrpc.org) to let her know you will be hosting a walk and roll day.

*Your school must fall within our seven-county region in Wisconsin to be eligible for a toolkit – Calumet, Fond du Lac, Menominee, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, and Winnebago.*



**Find your team** -Walk and Roll to School Days are often organized by an enthusiastic team of teachers, parents, administrators and students with support from community partners like grocery stores and bike shops.



**Determine a date** for your event. You may choose to celebrate on the nationally recognized date or a different day of the month that works best for your school.



**Spread the word** – make sure others in your school community know the school is hosting a walk and roll day. Add events to the school calendars, include information in school newsletters, or use our downloadable posters: [Walk to School Day](#) or [Bike to School Day](#).



**Plan** walk and roll day activities – these can include safety instruction, school spirit celebration, or other creative ways to encourage an active commute to school.



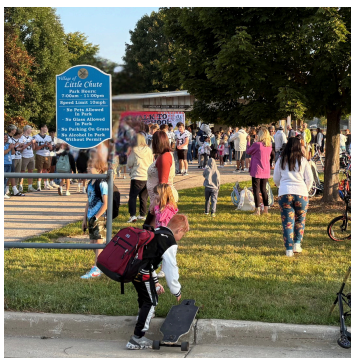
**Connect** with other schools in your district to learn who else is participating and promote for the larger community.



Check [walkbiketoschool.org](http://walkbiketoschool.org) for the date of each national event.

# Great ideas for a walk and roll day

- **Provide** nutritious breakfast or snack. Ask the PTO or another school organization for food donations.
- **Incorporate** a pedestrian or bicycling theme into a physical education class.
- **Wear** school colors while walking and biking and **invite** the school mascot to walk and roll to school also.
- **Form** a bicycle train. See more information on the [Walk & Roll website](#).
- **Ask** all participating students to sign a banner proclaiming “We Walked and Rolled to School Today!”
- **Greet** students with fun music as they arrive at school and wait to enter.
- **Provide** parents with maps of suggested walking and rolling routes. Note crosswalks, crossing guards, sidewalks, and bike lanes.
- **Ask** students to help plan the day. Members of student council, student safety patrol, and other leadership groups can provide good peer role modeling.
- **Designate** an area for parents to park then walk and roll the final few blocks so that children who live further away can participate. Some schools will allow school buses to drop off students at a meeting point so they can walk the remainder of the route with school staff.
- **Invite** local celebrities to walk and roll to school with students. Consider asking the mayor, superintendent, law enforcement, firefighters, and high school sport teams. If inviting others, give enough advance notice for them to plan accordingly.



## Steps to planning a walk and roll day

### one month or more before

- **Obtain** the school principal's approval for a walk and roll day then together **choose** a date.
- **Decide** if the day will encourage bicycling, walking, or both.
- **Determine** if the starting point will be from individual homes or a central location (park, public parking lot, etc.)
- **Plan** the activities for the morning, what materials are needed and **invite** local celebrities if they will be joining.
- **Watch** for your toolkit to arrive if you registered your walk and roll day with the East Central WI Regional SRTS program.
- **Notify** the school community of the upcoming event.

### two weeks before

- **Invite** students and parents/guardians to participate.
- **Reproduce** fliers found on our website: [eastcentralsrts.org](http://eastcentralsrts.org)
- **Think safety.** Check with the school, the resource officer, or the local police department to see if there are any special safety issues. You may want to ask for police assistance with traffic along the route, possibly by accompanying a large group or providing traffic control at major crossings.
- **Recruit** volunteers to greet bicyclist and walkers on the big day, assist with the distribution of incentives, and take photos.
- Daily announcements will **build excitement** and encourage participation.
- **Determine** how you will distribute incentives to students on the walk and roll day.

# Steps to planning a walk and roll day

## one day before

- **Hype** up tomorrow's event, reminding students to walk and roll to school.
- **Encourage** students to join neighbors, and invite parents and guardians.
- At the **end of the school day** make sure everything is ready to go for the morning.
  - Banner (with proper materials for hanging)
  - Incentives organized and system in place for distributing
  - Volunteers informed on their role

## event day

- **CELEBRATE**
- Have students who walked and rolled **sign** a banner
- **Distribute** incentives
- **Play** music
- If allowed by the school, **take photos** of riders and walkers. Once you have the school's permission, share your event photos on social media. Please remember to tag Safe Routes to School – East Central WI.



# When walking or biking from home

## is not an option

There are two main factors that get in the way of walking or biking to school. Some students live too far away to walk or bike and for others there is no safe route leading to school. If distance is an issue but there is a friendly route leading to school, then a remote meeting point can work well. If the school cannot be safely accessed by foot or bicycle, then consider holding an event on the school campus. These events can bring visibility to the reasons why students cannot walk or bike from home and provide a venue to talk about the needed changes.

### Walk and roll days with remote meeting points

- Look for a remote meeting point where families can meet and walk and roll the remainder of the route together. Pick somewhere with a parking lot that does not get much use in the mornings, such as a shopping center or church.
- Communicate weeks in advance so families have time to plan.
- Have staff head over to the alternate meeting point the morning of the event to walk and roll to school with the students.



### Walk or Bike at School events

Recess, physical education, or even class time can be dedicated to walking and rolling together. Students can use the school field or playground. With a little planning they may also walk and roll around the school campus.

- Walk and roll laps around the track or create a route around the school campus.
- Teach bicycle safety before, after, or as part of the walk and roll day.
- Invite media to the activity and talk about the benefits of active travel to school and why students currently cannot.

# Safety on the walk and roll day

Be intentional on teaching safety. The safety skills students learn leading up to an event and practiced on their walk and roll to school are carried with them whenever they walk or bike. Whether you are planning a specific event route or families are walking and biking from their homes, these guidelines can help.

## Places to walk and roll

- Choose sidewalks or paths that are separate from traffic where possible, even if the trip will take a little longer. If there are not sidewalks or paths, make sure adults are available to walk and roll with students.
- Check local bicycle regulations for riding on sidewalks. Most communities have age and location restrictions.
- Parents should walk and ride with their children beforehand to evaluate the route and their child's skills. Parent and child should both feel confident in their ability to walk and roll alone before they are allowed to do so.

## Places to cross

- When planning a route, minimize the number of street crossings. Avoid busy, high-speed or multi-lane roads wherever possible.
- When available, cross at a location with an adult crossing guard.
- Dismounting and walking a bicycle and scooter at a crosswalk is the best option.

## Make a safety plan for the event

Discuss with the planning team potential issues and how to address them. Potential ideas include:

- Heavy traffic areas may need involvement from law enforcement to direct traffic and assist with crossing students.
- If there are particular streets that should be avoided but alternate routes exist, create and distribute maps to show walking and bicycling routes.
- Prepare participants with safety education. Students pedestrians and bicyclists can benefit from education about safe skills before the event. Contact the East Central WI Regional Safe Routes to School team for more information. [kdieck@ecwrpc.org](mailto:kdieck@ecwrpc.org)
- Share this [Tip Sheet](#) with families for safe walking and bicycling.
- Notify drivers about the upcoming walk and roll to school day by using the school's changeable signage, community newsletters, and other communication channels. Remind drivers to slow down and yield to pedestrians and bicyclists.

# Moving towards

## lasting change

### Connect

Connect with our Safe Routes to School team. Our program is funded through government agencies to be of service to your school at no cost. We can provide assistance as you move towards lasting change in the following ways.

### Start small

Start small. Have a walk and roll to school day once a month, or choose a month to walk and roll once a week. The goal is to build awareness and increase participation. Some options include:

- **Family Ride Friday:** Encourage families within a 2 mile radius of school to ride bikes once a week.
- **Walking Wednesdays:** Encourage families who drive their children to school to park a short distance away and walk the final 2 or 3 blocks.

### Provide

Provide families with a map of infrastructure that encourages walking and biking. Our team can provide your school with a map showing sidewalks, trails, crosswalks, crossing guards and pedestrian signals to help families plan the best route to walk and ride.

### Organize

Organize a Walking School Bus or Bike Train. The Walking School Bus and Bike Train are lead by adults, have a designated route, and students can join along the way. The Safe Routes to School team will help you launch a successful program.

### Educate

Educate students on basic travel safety knowledge. Our team can bring education to your students through presentations and interactive skills training.

[eastcentralsrts.org](http://eastcentralsrts.org)



