INTERNATIONAL WALK TO SCHOOL MONTH

Event Tasks and Timeline

The simple goal is to have as many students and their parents, faculty, and staff as possible walk to school that day. The benefits are tremendous.

- Everyone will become familiar with an accessible, enjoyable, and effective way to exercise.
- Parents can teach children about pedestrian safety, and help find safe routes to school.
- Everyone will become aware of how "walkable" the community is, and where improvements can be made such as: constructing or improving sidewalks; marking, signaling, or improving visibility at crosswalks; placing crossing guards; and enhancing street lighting.

Here's a schedule of steps to a successful Walk to School Day event:

- 1. RIGHT NOW. Contact key authorities (principal, teachers, crossing guards, safety/security staff, Lake Washington School District Public Information Officers, Lake Washington School District Risk Manager). The goal is to make people aware of the event, get their support, and solicit advice.
- 2. THE NEXT WEEK. Pick a walking schedule for your school just one day, a week, one day each week or each month for the rest of the year, it's up to you. Gather educational materials on pedestrian safety.
- 3. SIX WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT. Approach local businesses for sponsorships like juice and bagels for a walkers breakfast at school.
- 4. FIVE WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT. Approach a business a mile or so from school to request its parking lot as an intermediate

parking/drop-off spot. Then everyone can participate - faculty, students, and parents who live too far to walk can park there and walk the remaining distance to school. Buses could even drop off there. Your ultimate goal could be a completely empty parking lot at the school.

- 5. FOUR WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT. Create a simple announcement flyer for kids to take home. Promote the physical, emotional, environmental, and even fiscal benefits of walking.
- 6. THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT. Interested teachers can have students make awareness posters, and offer related topics in school: safe walking instruction, measuring and mapping safe routes to school, discussing the health benefits of regular physical activity.
- 7. TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT. Provide short, written public service announcements to local radio, television, and newspapers announcing the event. Include the dates, times of day, and areas where drivers should be especially aware of walkers, and a number to call for parents wanting more information.
- 8. THE WEEK BEFORE THE EVENT. Be sure the event is announced daily at school (kids tend to forget).
- 9. WALK TO SCHOOL DAY EVENT. Be a role model WALK.
- 10. AFTERWARDS. Write notes and observations of how the event went. What went well? What would you do differently? What would you add? What would you subtract?

For assistance and/or resources, please contact: Susan Byszeski, Traffic Safety Education Specialist <u>sbyszeski@redmond.gov</u> 425.556.2882