

Walking to school

In the “olden days,” children walked to school all the time from great distances. Certainly times have changed, but there *are* safe ways to recapture this healthy tradition and the benefits of doing so are many!



WALKING SAFELY

- Walk with your child to school
- Organize with your neighbours to have children walk together
- Teach your children the safe way to cross streets and intersections (use side-walks, make eye contact with motorists, make sure vehicles have stopped completely, cross with crossing guards where available)

BENEFITS OF WALKING

- Good exercise, a healthy part of the day for your child—and you!
- Less vehicles (congestion, pollution) in school zones, creating a safer, cleaner environment; it is the cleanest form of transportation
- Walking in groups fosters friendships and builds safer communities

International Walk to School Day is an international yearly event that takes place every October. It was initiated to encourage children to walk to school, with the hope of developing a lifelong habit. Please take this opportunity to walk to school with your child and see how fun and beneficial it can be!

**International
Walk To School Day is
Wed., Oct. 6, 2010**



THINK SAFETY FIRST

It may take extra time to act safely, but one more minute is always worth preventing accident or injury when it comes to your children and their friends.

Biking to school

The benefits to those who walk to school can also be applied to cyclists. Following are some tips to keep bikes and their riders safe on their “commute” to school.

EQUIPMENT

Every young cyclist needs:

- A helmet that fits properly (it’s the law!)
- A bell on their bicycle (it’s the law!)
- Appropriate clothing:
 - bright colours during the day, reflective material at night;
 - closed shoes (no open toes or bare feet);
 - secured pant leg and shoe laces to avoid catching the chain

FIVE POINT SAFETY CHECK FOR BIKES

- Firm brakes;
- Correct seat height;
- Air pressure in tires;
- Secure tire wheel nuts;
- Tight handlebars.

**Don't Text
and Ride!**

GETTING READY TO RIDE

Before setting out to ride to school, or for any ride, a cyclist should know:

- How to use the brakes for slowing down and stopping;
- How to ride smoothly in a straight line;
- How to shoulder check to see what is behind and beside you;
- How to communicate with hand signals, voice or a bell;
- How to turn and what to look for before turning.

RIDING

The rules of the road are the same for bicycles and cars. As a rider, you should:

- Think for yourself, ride single file and in a straight line;
- Ride in a predictable way and be aware of what is around you;
- On the road, ride one metre from the curb to avoid storm drains;
- Be aware of car doors that might open in your path;
- Keep both hands on the handle bars unless signalling;
- Make eye contact with motorists to ensure they see you;
- Ensure cars have stopped in all lanes before proceeding;
- Walk your bicycle on school property and across intersections.

Website: <http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/pubs/cycling-guide/index.shtml>

The Traffic Safety Times is a publication of the Traffic Safety Council (TSC), an advisory committee of the Council of the City of Mississauga. TSC considers matters related to the safety of students and makes recommendations to Council designed and intended to protect elementary and secondary students from the dangers of vehicular traffic and related hazards.

www.mississauga.ca/trafficsafetycouncil