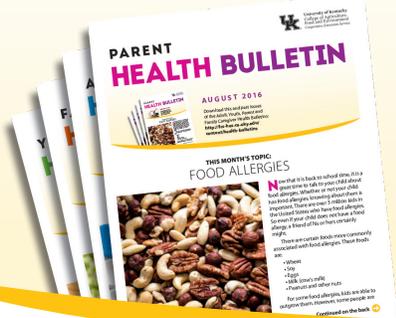


PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN



OCTOBER 2018

Download this and past issues of the Adult, Youth, Parent and Family Caregiver Health Bulletins:
<http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins>

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

WALK AND BIKE TO SCHOOL DAY



Are you frustrated with your child's school drop-off/pick-up traffic? If yes, walk or bike to get to and from school while avoiding the school traffic. October 10, 2018 is this year's official Walk and Bike to School Day!

Walking and bicycling to and from school allows children to get regular physical activity they need while also forming healthy habits for the future. Regular physical activity helps children build strong bones, muscles, joints and it decreases the risk of obesity.

Physical activity is also great for helping your child to be happy and well in other areas of life. For example, active children have better concentration, memory and classroom behavior during school.

When more kids walk and bike to school, there is also a dramatic reduction in traffic. With fewer cars trying to get in and out of a school drop-off zone, streets become safer and more manageable.

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Make sure your child knows to say “no” if someone they do not know offers a ride, and that they yell and run for help if needed.

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Walking or biking to school is a fun and healthy way to spend time with your children, while developing the habit of regular physical activity early.

Here is what parents need to know to keep kids safe as they walk to school:

- Children usually are not ready to start walking to school without an adult until about fifth grade, or around age 10. Children are each different, so consider their individual developmental and maturity level when deciding if it is safe for them to walk to school without an adult.
- When crossing streets, hold your child’s hand and always observe the traffic safety laws.
- Consider starting a walking school bus by inviting families in your neighborhood to walk children to school together as a group. Adults may take turns walking with the group, so make sure each child knows the adults in their walking group.
- Choose the safest route to school by picking places with sidewalks or paths separated from traffic.

For students walking to school without an adult:

- Make sure your child knows to say “no” if someone they do not know offers a ride, and that they yell and run for help if needed.
- Explain to your child that it is not safe to use a cell phone or text while walking. Using a cell phone makes them less aware of traffic.
- Choose brightly colored backpacks, jackets and other accessories, ideally with reflective materials for days when it is dark on the way to school and begins to get dark earlier.

Here is what parents need to know to keep kids safe as they bike to school:

- Always wear a bicycle helmet! This includes you. One of the best ways to help kids learn safe bike riding is to set a good example by following the rules of the road yourself and always wearing your helmet.



- All bicycle riders should follow the basic rules of the road, which also apply to skateboards, scooters and other non-motorized vehicles:
 - Stop at all stop signs and obey traffic lights just as cars do. Yield to pedestrians, stop at red lights and be especially careful at intersections.
 - Always ride in the same direction as cars do. Never ride against traffic.
 - Older kids should try to use bike lanes or designated bike routes whenever they can — not the sidewalk! Kids less than 10 years old should ride on the sidewalk.
- When turning or changing lanes, always use the correct hand signals.
 - Left turn: Hold your left arm straight out to your left side.
 - Right turn: Hold your right arm straight out from your right side.
- Practice the bike route to school before the first day of school to make sure your child can manage it.

RESOURCES:

- <http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/learn-more/why-walkbike>
- <http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/education/parents.cfm>
- <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/on-the-go/Pages/Safety-On-The-Way-To-School.aspx>
- <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/bike-safety.html>

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Written by: Natalie Jones
Edited by: Connee Wheeler
Designed by: Rusty Manseau
Stock images: 123RF.com

