



Mayors Wellness Campaign  
Put your community in motion.

## Physical Health & Nutrition



# WALKING SCHOOL BUS

## SWITCH UP YOUR MORNING COMMUTE

- Studies have shown that more children are at risk of becoming obese or overweight.
- The increase of sedentary lifestyles among youth is a large contributor to this public health crisis.
- Providing community-based social **support** for physical activity increases knowledge of the importance of physical activity, and fitness among participants.
- Encourage youth in your community to form a “walking school bus” where children meet to walk to school under the supervision of local adults such as parents, police officers, or the mayor.

## ACTION STEPS

### Invite Families to Walk

- Reach out to identify parents and children who are interested in forming a “**walking school bus**”. Consider using this **guide** to help you get started.
- Advertise in schools and promote the health benefits of walking.

### Pick a Route

- Working with local law enforcement and a few parents from each neighborhood, help each “bus” identify a route to the school that provides enough room to walk safely at a steady pace.
- Evaluate safe walking routes using resources offered by **Safe Routes**.
- Test the route without the children first to ensure safety.
- Once routes are set, draw maps to distribute to those who signed up to be part of their “walking school bus.”

### FOLLOW THEIR LEAD!

Elsinboro Township implemented a walk to school program to encourage K-8 students to participate in International Walk to School Day to promote community engagement and exercise. Elsinboro also has a “Bike to School with the Mayor” program where participants have their safety gear checked and are engaged with their Mayor while choosing a healthy alternative to being driven to school.

### **Select Volunteers and Coordinators**

- Decide how often the walks will take place and how many volunteers and coordinators will be involved. The CDC recommends one adult supervisor for every six children.
- Identify a liaison within the school that will help coordinate the volunteer adults and help trouble-shoot any issues with walking safely.
- Celebrate! After a predetermined time, celebrate the different walking school buses at an all school assembly and encourage even more children and parents to join in the effort.



### **MORE RESOURCES**

**The CDC Guide to Strategies to Increase Physical Activity in the Community**