

Why Walk to School?



Walking to school has many benefits, not only is it good for your health and the environment, but it's also fun and a great opportunity to socialise with your child, so why not try and include a ten minute walk in your journey to school.

1. Saves money

- Walking to school instead of driving saves, on average, £400 per year¹
- One in five cars in the morning rush hour is on the school run.²

2. Develops your children's independence, road safety and social skills

- Walking can help develop independence. Children will learn road safety skills which will help them with the journey to secondary school later in life³
- Children who walk to school have better knowledge of their local area and get to spend more time with their class mates: In a study by Living Streets, 84 per cent of the children who walked to school often meet up with classmates on the way to school, while only 66 per cent of those who were driven to school had the opportunity to do so⁴
- Walking to school improves children's social development in future years.⁵



3. It's healthy

- Children need at least 60 minutes (1 hour) of physical activity every day.⁶ The journey to and from school is an ideal time for children and other family members to be active.⁷
- According to the NHS, 9 out of 10 children could grow up with life threatening diseases such as cancer, Type 2 Diabetes and heart disease partly because they aren't getting enough exercise⁸
- Children who generally travel to and from school by car, bus or other vehicle are more likely to be overweight at age five than those who walk or cycle.⁹



4. It's better for the environment

- People in cars regularly suffer three times as much pollution as pedestrians because they are sitting in the line of the exhaust fumes from the car in front¹⁰
- One person switching five journeys of fewer than 2 km a week from the car to walking would reduce their carbon footprint by 86 kg a year.¹¹

¹ Based on approved mileage rates from the Inland Revenue

² *National Travel Survey* (Department for Transport 2009)

³ *Backseat Children: How our Car Dependent Culture Compromises Safety on our Streets* (Living Streets May 2008)

⁴ *Backseat Children: How our Car Dependent Culture Compromises Safety on our Streets* (Living Streets May 2008)

⁵ *Beyond Public Health: Benefits of Walking on Children's Social Development* (Tolley, R 2003: Centre for Alternative and Sustainable Transport)

⁶ *Start Active, Stay Healthy: A Report on Physical Activity for Health from the Four Home Countries' Chief Medical Officers*. (Chief Medical Officers of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland July 2011)

⁷ Foreword by Chief Medical Officer; *Evaluation of WoW Scheme for Living Streets* (Wavehill 2009)

⁸ Change 4 Life. Available at <http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/Pages/WhyWhat.aspx>, accessed August 2011

⁹ *Millennium Cohort Study Briefing 14: Childhood Overweight and Obesity* (Based on Chapter 13 of *Children of the 21st Century (Volume 2): The First Five Years*- Lucy Jane Griffiths; Summer Sherburne Hawkins; Tim Cole; Catherine Law and Carol Dezateu)

¹⁰ *Road User Exposure to Air Pollution: A Literature Review* (Environmental Transport Association 1997)

¹¹ *Transport Energy and Emissions: Urban Public Transport* (Stephen Potter 2004, in David Hensher and Kenneth Button, *Handbook of Transport and the Environment, Volume 4*, Pergamon/Elsevier)