

## School Active Transportation

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[Supporting schools during COVID-19](#)

[\(/en/public-health-topics/covid-19-and-schools.aspx\)](https://en/public-health-topics/covid-19-and-schools.aspx)



[Being active during COVID-19](#)

[.OttawaPublicHealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/being-active-during-covid-19.aspx\)](https://OttawaPublicHealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/being-active-during-covid-19.aspx)

Walking and cycling are easy ways for children to become more independent. Getting to places they need to go, on foot or by bike also gives them the opportunity to spend time outdoors. Choosing to walk to places that are less than 2 km and cycle to places that are less than 7 km saves time.

## **To school we go!**

There are lots of benefits in the classroom for children that walk or cycle to school on a regular basis. Some of these benefits include improved concentration and better coping with stress. Being outside helps to prevent feelings of isolation and

increases their social interactions. Walking and biking to school can also save you money and lead to fewer cars on the road.

Visit our physical activity section for more tips on **walking** (</en/public-health-topics/walk-more.aspx>) and **cycling** (</en/public-health-topics/start-cycling.aspx>).

Visit the **Ottawa Public Health Cycling** (<http://ottawa.ca/en/residents/transportation-and-parking/cycling>) page for bike maps and tips. Check out the **Walking page** (</en/public-health-topics/walking.aspx>) for local walking and hiking resources. Ottawa.ca also has information on the new **pedestrian crossings** (<http://ottawa.ca/en/residents/transportation-and-parking/road-safety/pedestrian-crossings>) and **bike repair stations** (<http://ottawa.ca/en/residents/transportation-and-parking/road-safety/cycling-safety>). The Ontario Ministry of Transportation website reviews the **road safety laws** (<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/bill-31.shtml>).

## Walking School Bus and Active Transportation

Children need at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day. Finding ways to fit this in daily routine is hard for busy families. Making the choice to send your child to school on foot is a great way to be active.

Parents often worry about their child's safety while walking alone. A way to make sure your child is safe while walking to school is with a 'walking school bus.'

A **volunteer led** walking school bus is when a group of children walk to school with an adult. This is usually a parent or care giver of one of the students on the walking school bus.

While taking part in a walking school bus, your child will enjoy seeing friends on the way to school. They will be active more often. This is also a great opportunity for your child to socialize with school friends in a monitored and safe way where they can practice social distancing, modelled by a leader.

Here are some tips for a walking school bus:

- Invite families who live nearby to walk
- Pick a route and take a test walk
- Practice social distancing
- Take side streets and paths that are less busy with traffic
- Decide how often the group will walk together
- Talk with your boss to adjust your day
- Have fun!

For more information visit **School Active Transportation**

(<https://www.envirocentre.ca/transportation/school-travel-planning/>), or **Ottawa Public Health** (<http://www.ottawa.ca/health>) or contact Ottawa Public Health at 613-580-6744.

Learn more about **helmet cycling safety** (<https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ottawapublichealth.ca%2Fen%2Fpublic-health-topics%2Fhelmet-safety.aspx&data=02%7C01%7Cjulie.rutherford%40ottawa.ca%7C09191caac7434e32188e08d84458d645%7Cdfcc033ddf874c6ea1b88eaa73f1b72e%7C0%7C0%7C637334495623117587&sdata=udv55TzRljzqDDftaKJnxj9%2FPCmeIO2xBKQChjgaAR0%3D&reserved=0>).

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**Bruce was here.**

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