

WALK TO SCHOOL DAY

2019

COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY CELEBRATE WALK TO SCHOOL DAY

On October 2, 2019, thousands of schools across the country joined the celebration of Walk to School Day. This year saw events held at 5,129 schools in all 50 states and DC. From first timers to yearly participants, students were joined by teachers, volunteers, parents, law enforcement, and community and school leaders to celebrate the day. Participants walked or biked from home, from a central meeting spot, or at school after arriving — any way to get out and enjoy some physical activity before the day began.

“Event went excellent, since then we have implemented a monthly walk to school day. November’s was during the first snowfall of the year and the kids loved it!
- ROCHESTER, MN



CREATING A WALKING AND BIKING CULTURE

Walk to School Day organizers held events for a variety of reasons. In a survey of organizers administered after the event, the top reasons selected that motivated communities to participate were physical activity and obesity prevention, increasing school spirit, and building a sense of neighborhood. This year, many event organizers offered other responses that highlight general motivation beyond the options specified in the survey. They include promoting a culture that supports wellness and healthy habits, carrying on Walk to School Day as a school tradition, and promoting “green” values. These responses show how Walk to School Day fits into school and community culture, celebrating the chance to walk to school as well as promoting wider concerns.



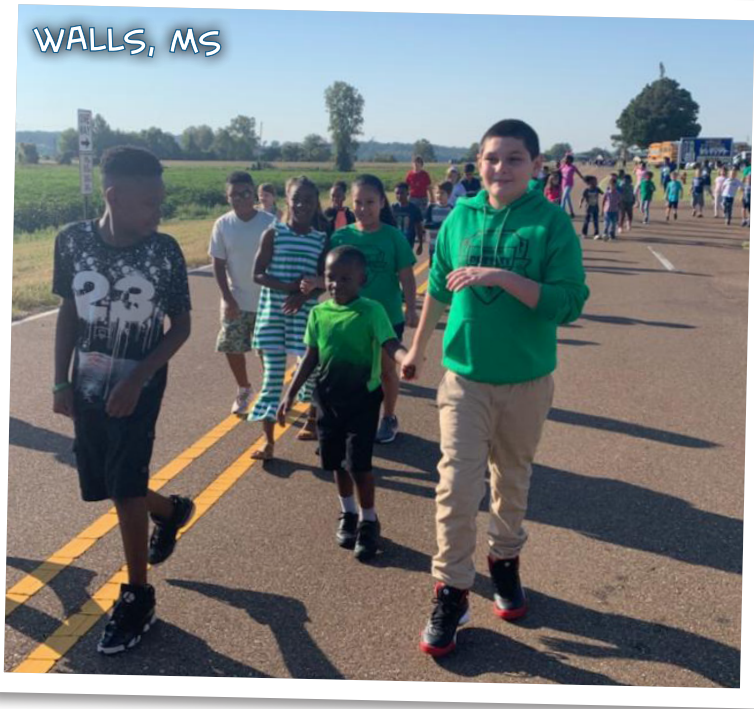
PHILADELPHIA'S MAYOR SIGNS ON TO VISION ZERO FOR YOUTH

The 2019 Walk to School Day National Event was held in Philadelphia, PA to promote the launch of a walking school bus program to encourage regular, on-time attendance. Representatives from FIA Foundation, Federal Highway Administration, the City of Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia Police Department joined students and community leaders in the event. Prior to the event, Mayor Jim Kenney signed the [Mayors' Statement on Safe Walking and Biking](#).



Since starting a weekly Walk to School Wednesday program through Sidewalk Stompers in 2016, Roosevelt’s walker/biker participation has more than tripled. In response to this level of community engagement, the city has installed new crosswalks, 4-way stops, and safety signage. The county has hired two crossing guards where there were previously none. The school district has installed several new bike racks to accommodate more and more bikers.

– TAMPA, FL



CONTINUING TO INSPIRE CHANGE

Over the years, Walk to School Day has proven to inspire change for schools and communities aimed at improving the ability for student to walk or bike to school. In 2019, organizers showed again that Walk to School Day events continue to lead to change.

THIS YEAR, NEARLY 60% OF ORGANIZERS REPORTED AT LEAST ONE CHANGE AS A RESULT OF THEIR EVENT.

The top three changes sparked by events this year were the addition of safety education to curriculum, the addition of walking or bicycling promotion to existing school policies, and increased traffic enforcement near school. Many schools start with Walk to School Day and begin holding regular walking days that inspire further change.

COMMUNITY LEADERS JOIN THE CELEBRATION

Each year, students across the country are joined in celebrating Walk to School Day by leaders in their community including mayors, school leaders, elected officials, and law enforcement. This year, one in four events included a mayor or other elected official. Leaders have the opportunity to show their support for safe walking and biking for youth in the different ways they participate in events. In Tucker, GA, city council members welcomed walkers as they arrived at school. The school had been requesting assistance to address speeding around the school, and the council members’ participation helped them see all the students who would benefit from making the streets safer around the school.



The mayor has been walking to school with students, families, teachers, etc. for the past 15 years!

– DUNELLEN, NJ



The police department set up a table for “Coffee with a Cop” and were there to talk with parents about safety concerns and ideas for changes.

– FOX POINT, WI



LET'S DO IT AGAIN!

2020 brings more chances to give walking and biking to school a try. Bike to School Day will be on May 6, 2020 and Walk to School Day will be on October 7, 2020. Keep an eye on walkbiketoschool.org for Bike to School Day registration in March.