



Walk to School 2018 key messages

Here are some important points to know about the program:

- VicHealth's Walk to School program is a free, easy and fun way to get primary school kids and their families active this October!
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- Victorian primary school kids are encouraged to walk, ride or scoot to and from school throughout October to help build healthy habits for life.
- Getting active is even more fun when we do it together! Walking, riding or scooting to and from school every day helps kids get some of the physical activity they need to be healthy.
- Join thousands of Victorian families for Walk to School 2018 – find out more at walktoschool.vic.gov.au

School messages

- Join the hundreds of primary schools across Victoria in this year's Walk to School program. Register today: walktoschool.vic.gov.au
- Primary schools who register for Walk to School can order free materials, including student certificates, posters, stickers and more. Plus, registered schools will be in the running for some fantastic prizes – get your school community involved today: www.walktoschool.vic.gov.au
- Victorian kids are encouraged to put their best foot forward by decorating their shoes, bikes or scooters to make Walk to School even more fun. Participating schools can download a free art kit and lesson plans at walktoschool.vic.gov.au

Parent and carer messages

- Join hundreds of thousands of Victorian primary school kids this October! Register for Walk to School today: walktoschool.vic.gov.au
- Part way is okay! If you can't walk the whole way, why not try parking the car a few blocks from your school and walk, ride or scoot the rest.
- Walk to School with your kids and enjoy the chance to talk and teach road safety skills while getting active yourself. It's a great way of getting quality time together.
- Victorian kids are encouraged to put their best foot forward by decorating their shoes, bikes or scooters to make Walk to School even more fun. See our fun and creative decorating tips at walktoschool.vic.gov.au

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AFL Players messages

- Victorian kids will be inspired by their AFL and AFLW heroes to walk, ride or scoot to school this October.
- VicHealth is teaming up with the AFL Players' Association for Walk to School 2018 to encourage even more kids to get walking, riding and scooting to help them build healthy habits for life.
- Participating schools have the opportunity to win a footy clinic led by an AFL or AFLW player.
- It's great to have the support of talented AFL and AFLW players in Walk to School this year.
- When kids see their heroes on board, they're even more likely to get involved.

Secondary messages

- Walking, riding or scooting to and from school instead of driving is great for our health, environment and community. It helps to reduce traffic congestion, save money on parking, connect with family and friends and even reduces air pollution.
- Last year, more than 140,000 kids took part and walked the equivalent of two return trips to the moon!

We want kids to Walk to School in style and deck out their shoes, bike or scooter – schools

- Encourage your students to put their creativity on show and decorate their shoes, bike or scooter this October for Walk to School.
- Combining creativity with physical activity, Walk to School is inviting kids to decorate their shoes, bike or scooter to make their journey to and from school even better.
- If your school has a uniform policy, show your students how to add some accessories which can easily be removed during school hours. Shoe design templates and ideas are available on the Walk to School website.
- The Walk to School website has all the information and inspiration you need to help your students get creative and participate.
- Visit the walktoschool.vic.gov.au for educational classroom resources including shoe design templates and lesson plans.

We want kids to Walk to School in style and deck out their shoes, bike or scooter – parents and carers

- Inspire your kids to walk to school this October by helping them decorate their shoes, bike or scooter for the journey.

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Walk to School 2018

Walk, ride or scoot and build healthy habits for life.



- Combine active travel with creativity by helping your kids decorate their shoes, bike or scooter and make their journey to and from school even more fun.
- Does your kid want to decorate their shoes but their school isn't involved? The [Walk to School website](#) has everything you need to get started including templates and design inspiration.
- Can't commit to any permanent shoe decorations? Don't worry we have some great ideas on [our website](#) to deck out your kids shoes, bike or scooter that can be easily removed, like pipe cleaners, pom poms and stickers.
- Students with the best shoe designs will be in the running for some amazing prizes. Share your designs by sending your videos or photos to walktoschool@vichealth.vic.gov.au or share on our [Facebook page](#).
- Use this opportunity to get creative and be more active with your kids. Decorate your shoes together and show them just how much fun it can be to walk, ride or scoot to and from school!

Safety concerns information

- We encourage parents and carers to walk with their child until they feel their child is ready to walk alone. Ultimately, you know your child best.
- As you walk, ride or scoot to school, you can teach your child about road safety, stranger danger and build their confidence to be able to walk by themselves.
- Your child will gain all the health benefits of active travel, along with building their self-esteem, social skills and more.
- Many parents have told us that once they started walking with their child many of the concerns they had previously faded away.
- Learn more about helping your kids with safe travel to and from school by downloading VicHealth's practical guide: www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/parental-fear

Supporting facts and information

- Established in 2006, Walk to School aims to help Victorian kids increase their daily physical activity to improve their health.
- In 2017, more than 140,000 Victorian primary school kids from 759 schools took part in Walk to School.
- In 2016, almost 150,000 Victorian primary school kids from more than 750 schools took part in Walk to School.
- In 2015, more than 108,000 Victorian primary school kids from 620 schools took part in Walk to School.
- In 2014, more than 78,000 Victorian primary school kids from 499 schools took part

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in Walk to School.

Research and evidence

- National guidelines recommend that primary school aged children do at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day (e.g. fast walking, riding a bike or scooting)¹.
- In 2013, around one in five Australian children walked or rode to school (18% walked and 3% rode a bike)².
- Victorian figures are slightly higher – with one in four children walking or riding to school (20% walk, and 4% ride a bike)².
- The proportion of children walking to school has halved in recent decades. In the 1970s, around 50% of Australian primary school aged children were regularly walking to school³. In Victoria, this had reduced to 25% in 2013².
- More than 60% of Victorian parents want their child to walk to school more regularly⁴.
- Parents in rural and regional Victoria are less likely to have the option to walk their child to school than those in metro areas⁴.
- Perceptions of stranger danger, traffic concerns and neighbourhood crime are the most common parental barriers to allowing children to walk to school⁵.
- Only one in five children aged 5–17 years get the recommended amount of physical activity every day⁶.
- Childhood obesity levels are on the rise. By 2025, one in three children will be overweight or obese⁷.
- Kids who are regularly physically active are more likely to continue to be active as they grow up⁸.
- Active travel choices – walking and cycling instead of driving – contribute to helping people meet the recommended physical activity levels⁹.

¹ Department of Health and Ageing 2004, *Australia's physical activity recommendations for 5-12 year olds*, Department of Health and Ageing, Canberra. ² Australian Bureau of Statistics 2013d, *Census at School Australia – 2013 National Summary Tables*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra. ³ van der Ploeg HP, et al. 2008, 'Trends in Australian children traveling to school 1971–2003: Burning petrol or carbohydrates?', *Preventive Medicine*, 46: 60-62. ⁴ Ipsos Public Affairs Limited 2017, *VicHealth Community Attitudes Survey 2017*, Internal Victorian Health Promotion Foundation report. Unpublished. ⁵ VicHealth 2015, *Parental fear: a barrier to the independent mobility of children*, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne. ⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2013, *Australian health survey: physical activity, 2011-12*, 4364.0.55.004, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra. ⁷ Department of Human Services 2008, *Future prevalence of overweight and obesity in Australian children and adolescents, 2005-2025*, State Government of Victoria, Melbourne. ⁸ Telama, R, Yang, X, Viikari, J, Välimäki, I, Wanne, O & Raitakari, O 2005, 'Physical activity from childhood to

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adulthood: a 21-year tracking study', American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 3, pp. 267-273. ⁹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2012, *Risk factors contributing to chronic disease*. Cat. no. PHE 157. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra. <www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=10737421466>.

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