



## PHOENIX – WALK TO SCHOOL DAY INFORMATION SHEET

# What is International Walk to School Day?

International Walk to School Day, held in Phoenix from the 4<sup>th</sup> week of September until Halloween (October 31<sup>st</sup>) each year, joins children and adults to celebrate walking to school. This event can be a fun way to kick off a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. In fact, many participating communities use the event to work towards creating safe environments that support walking every day.

Since it began in the US in 1997, participation both within the US and in other countries has grown every year. The event's popularity led to the establishment of October as Walk to School Month, giving communities the flexibility to celebrate on a single day, week or throughout the month.

## Quick Facts and Figures: The History of Walk to School Day

- The Partnership for a Walkable America sponsored the first National Walk Our Children to School Day in Chicago in 1997, modeled after the United Kingdom's walk to school events, and communities around the United States have been celebrating Walk to School Day ever since.
- The event was established as "International" in 2000, when Canada and the U.K. joined with the U.S. to celebrate. Around the globe, International Walk to School Month brings together more than 40 countries in recognition of the common interest in walking to school.
- In August 2005, federal legislation established a National Safe Routes to School Program that provided \$612 million towards Safe Routes to School from 2005 to 2010. In July 2012, transportation legislation, MAP-21, was enacted that no longer provides dedicated funding for SRTS but instead places SRTS under a program called the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). However, many states still have dedicated SRTS funds.
- More than 14,800 schools in all 50 states and the District of Columbia have been awarded federal funds for Safe Routes to School activities.
- More than half of Walk to School events are part of ongoing activities to promote walking and bicycling throughout the year.

- In 2006, world-wide interest led the International Walk to School Committee to establish International Walk to School Month – countries choose a day, week or use the entire month of October to promote walking to school.
- Participation in Walk to School Day 2013 reached a record high, with more than 4,400 events registered from all fifty states and the District of Columbia. Many more communities held events but did not register.

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