1. Introduction

What is a Walking School Bus?

A Walking School Bus is a group of children walking to school with one or more adults. The “bus” follows the same route every time and picks up children from their homes or designated “bus stops” at designated times. Ideally, the program runs every day or on a regular schedule so families can count on it. Some programs only travel to school, because many children have after-school programs, go somewhere other than their home after school, or may not have a parent waiting for them at home. A Walking School Bus can be as informal as a few parents alternating to walk their children to school, but often it is a well-organized, PTA-led effort to encourage walking to school.

Some schools choose to have Bike Trains, instead of Walking School Buses, if conditions – such as traffic and weather – are appropriate for bicycling. A Bike Train is just like a Walking School Bus, except students ride their bikes to school with one or more adults. A Bike Train can be started using similar steps to the ones outlined in this guidebook. A few more details will need sorting, such as acquiring safety gear and learning and teaching safe bicycling behavior and rules of the road. Where appropriate, we have included some additional details about Bike Trains in this guidebook.

Why a Walking School Bus?

Health statistics tell us that most children are not walking or bicycling to school today and that many are not getting enough physical activity in their daily routines. Air quality in many American neighborhoods is deteriorating, as well. Walking School Bus programs offer many community benefits that address these growing issues. Schools around the country provide examples of
successful Walking School Bus programs that have made a tremendous difference in the daily lives of students and parents alike.

Benefits

**Children**
- Have fun (As one child in Columbia, Missouri said, “I love the Walking School Bus - it’s like recess before school!”)
- Learn pedestrian safety through adult guidance & supervision
- Incorporate physical activity into daily routines
- Foster healthy habits that could last a lifetime
- Learn more about their neighborhoods
- Socialize with friends and get to know children of other ages
- Gain a sense of independence
- Arrive at school alert and ready to learn

**Parents**
- Meet other families
- Save gas by not driving to and from school
- Address concerns, such as traffic, personal safety, and lack of time

**Route Leaders/Volunteers**
- Enjoy physical activity
- Meet other families
- Provide a service to schools and communities

**Schools**
- Reduce traffic congestion around schools
- Address reduced or lack of bus service
- Have students arrive on time and alert

**Community**
- Travel with fewer cars on the road
- Gain improved air quality
- Gain a sense of community
- Learn that walking is a viable transportation option
Statistics

♦ Today, only **13% of all trips to school are made by walking and bicycling**. Of school trips one mile or less, only 31% are made by walking; within two miles of school, 2% are made by bicycling. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

♦ Children in cars are exposed to up to **three times higher levels of exhaust** fumes than children walking or biking. (Institute for European Environmental Policy)

♦ A British survey of teachers revealed that **nine in 10 teachers believe that children who walk to school arrive more alert and ready** for the day ahead. (Marin County Safe Routes to School)

♦ Each day, choosing to bike or walk to school each day keeps **15 pounds of car exhaust** from polluting the air we breathe. (WorldWatch Institute)

♦ **Sixteen percent** of children and adolescents in the U.S. are overweight and **34%** are at risk of overweight. (Wang Y, Beydoun, 2007)

♦ **Half to two-thirds** of U.S. children live in **areas that violate EPA air quality standards** for car-pollution-caused ozone. (EPA)

♦ **Walking one mile** in 20 minutes uses **as much energy** as running a mile in 10 minutes or doing aerobics for 16 minutes. (Marin County Safe Routes to School)

♦ Large groups **increase visibility** and **make walking to school safer** than if children walk alone. Children are also more apt to obey traffic laws when part of a group with adult supervision. (Marin County Safe Routes to School)

Case Studies

♦ The Woodlands Walking School Bus at **Bacich Elementary School** in **Kentland, California** is a group of 10, sometimes 20, students that walk every Wednesday. This is one of six Walking School Buses launched by parents at the school in fall 2008. Each route has a parent organizer who is committed to leading the pack each week. One parent says, “My kids love it—they look forward to it. They get to school energized, pumped, and ready to go.” The parents say they enjoy the Walking School Bus, too. They get to take a healthy walk and meet new neighbors.

♦ At **C.P. Smith Elementary School** in **Burlington, Vermont**, the Walking School Bus has operated every Wednesday since March 2005. Before the program began, approximately six children walked the route to school. Now, on Walking Wednesdays 25 to 40 children walk to school and the traffic congestion along the route has all but disappeared.
2. Identifying Program Partners

The greatest assets to any Walking School Bus program are its community partners. You will need to assess the resources available to you, your school, and your community. Be creative! Partners include people, groups, organizations, agencies, and companies that can help by building excitement and promoting the program, volunteering their time, or providing funding, materials, or other resources. Consider partners that will be able to help you get started, as well as those that will stick around well into the future of the program. The following list identifies potential partners to get you started, but there are many other potential community partners out there. Use the next two pages to write down the names and phone numbers or email addresses for good contacts.

- School District or Administration
- School Faculty or Staff
- PTA, PTO, or PTSA
- Parents
- Students
- Local College Students
- Active Seniors
- Neighbors
- Health Professionals of Organizations
- Traffic Engineers or Planners
- Local Walking, Bicycling, Traffic Safety, or Environmental Groups
- Groups planning relevant events, such as Earth Day, Health and Fitness Walks and Rides, etc.
Use the spaces below to fill in the names of contacts you already know and ones that you find along the way.

**School District/Administration** can provide support:

______________________________________________________________________________

**Faculty and Staff**, such as teachers, school nurse, PE teacher, etc. can act as liaisons or partners:

______________________________________________________________________________

**The PTA, PTO, or PTSA** can organize the entire effort. They can also provide time on meeting agenda, space in communications, or funding:

______________________________________________________________________________

**Parents** can act as volunteer leaders, organizers, or financial sponsors:

______________________________________________________________________________

**Students** can help sell the idea to their parents:

______________________________________________________________________________

**Local college students** can be volunteer route leaders:

______________________________________________________________________________

**Active seniors** can be volunteer route leaders:

______________________________________________________________________________
Neighbors can be volunteer route leaders, supporters, and emergency contacts:
______________________________________________________________________________

Health professionals or organizations can provide funding, sponsorship, materials, etc.:
______________________________________________________________________________

Local law enforcement officers can provide increased enforcement or route planning assistance or act as route leaders:
______________________________________________________________________________

Traffic engineers and planners can provide route planning assistance:
______________________________________________________________________________

Local walking, bicycling, traffic safety, or environmental groups can provide potential volunteer route leaders, assistance with promotion, materials, etc.:
______________________________________________________________________________

Relevant existing events, such as Walk to School Day or Earth Day can help with getting started and attracting attention:
______________________________________________________________________________
3. Identifying Program Need

Before launching a Walking School Bus program, you will want to know how many families are interested, where they live, and the conditions of the physical walking environment between homes and the school.

Identify Community Characteristics

Do children live within walking distance? If not, is there a drop-off point where a Walking School Bus can gather or stop? If traffic conditions make it unsafe, those conditions should be addressed before the program begins. The exception is where children already must walk in poor conditions and adult supervision would be beneficial to safety. Adult involvement may also be a good way to take steps towards improving conditions.

Conduct a Survey

Before getting started, you need to assess both your available resources (such as parent volunteers) and interest in the program. A school-wide survey distributed to parents can help to collect this kind of information. The survey can be paper or electronic and can be mailed, emailed, handed out at an event, or sent home with children. The survey should measure interest in a Walking School Bus program, identify potential route leaders, and uncover reasons why families may not want to participate. You can also collect baseline data to use in evaluating the impact of the program after it has been implemented.

Have Informal Conversations

Informal conversations can be good way to gather information and may be especially important for reaching families who do not speak English as a first language or have limited literacy.

There is a sample Parent Survey at the end of this packet for identifying interest.
4. Finding Route Leaders

Walking School Bus route leaders are often parents, but there are many community partners who make great route leaders. This section discusses where to find route leaders, the logistics of selecting and coordinating them, and other things to think about when identifying route leaders. If your school or the district is sponsoring the program, be sure to check policies about who can serve as a volunteer with children.

Opportunities for Recruiting Volunteers

◆ When initially asking for support from the school, district, or other groups
◆ When identifying interested families
◆ During Back to School night or other school-wide events
◆ During school arrival and drop-off
◆ Through an article in the school newsletter or local paper
◆ Sending a letter home
◆ Asking other parents to spread the word
◆ Asking the school counselor/social worker, nurse, and PE teacher for ideas
◆ Contacting local community groups, senior groups, colleges/universities, etc.
◆ Other ideas:

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________
Finding Good Route Leaders

“Bus drivers” (aka route leaders) are usually volunteers, but it is important to make sure that the volunteers are dedicated, responsible, and well-supported. There is also the option to pay route leaders a small stipend (as some crossing guard programs do).

Some communities have had outstanding success partnering with a local college or university, where volunteers are recruited at the beginning of the semester each year. While students do not receive payment, they do receive college credit, which can increase their commitment to the program. An active senior group may also be a good partner organization to find “drivers” who are available during the day. Interested parents are also natural leaders. It may be important to recruit bilingual leaders, depending on routes and the children who sign up.

Require an application and background check for each potential volunteer. For background checks, use a system that is already in place, such as the school, district, or PTA’s system for vetting volunteers. All route leaders should also go through a training session to go over all of the necessary details.

Offer incentives to entice and reward volunteers, such as gift cards.

Use the Volunteer Leader Application and Leader Policies and Responsibilities agreement at the end of this packet to get you started.
5. Planning Routes

Choosing safe and appropriate walking routes is extremely important to achieving the goals of a Walking School Bus. Your route selection will be influenced by a number of factors, including locations of interested families, safety considerations, routes already designated as “safe routes to school”, the location of adult crossing guards (if necessary and/or applicable), and where volunteers/route leaders live.

Try sorting returned “interested” surveys into neighborhoods or by street names and get a map of the school catchment area to help you plan routes.

Stops may either be at each child’s house or at gathering points (e.g. one meeting place per block, as well as gathering spaces at parks). Stopping at children’s homes is more convenient for parents and won’t require parents to accompany their

When picking a route, answer these four questions:

1. **Do you have a place to walk?** Are there sidewalks and paths? Choose sidewalks or paths wherever possible, even if the trip will take a little longer.
2. **Is it easy to cross the street?** Is there too much traffic? Minimize the number of street crossings and avoid busy, high-speed, or multi-lane roads.
3. **Do drivers behave well?** Streets where drivers yield to pedestrians and drive more slowly are generally better.
4. **Does the environment feel safe?** Find a route that avoids potential problems such as loose pets, criminal activity, vacant buildings, and poor lighting.

_You can also use the “Walkability Checklist” listed in Resources (under Route Planning)._
children to a general meeting point, but may take longer, and it may be more difficult to keep children moving. “Bus stops” can be designated where families who live far from the school can drop off children to join the bus. A park or community center is ideal for this purpose. For gathering points and bus stops, there should be sufficient room for students to gather safely. Suggested route to school maps, provided by the city, can also help you plan your route.

A law enforcement officer or local traffic engineer may have helpful input regarding more complex routes.

For a Bike Train, use a local bike map or talk to a professional at a local bike shop or bicycling group.

Once interested households have been identified, the coordinator should map out draft walking routes. Routes should be tested and timed by an adult. To play it safe when starting out, allow two to three times as much time in the schedule to account for the pace of walking with and picking up children. Finalized routes and stop locations should be mapped out for parent and volunteer reference.

Use the Route Planning Sheet document at the end of this guidebook to write out the details of each route. You can also use Google Maps or a hand-drawn map to plan the route and distribute to parents.

Route Schedule

Set departure times for every “stop” on each route based on what you learned from the test walk. Be generous with time estimates as groups of children will move more slowly than a few children or adults. If there are a number of large groups in the same area of the neighborhood, design routes and times so that the groups don’t arrive at busy intersections at the same time.
6. Logistics and Communication

Beyond identifying interested families, route leaders, and safe routes, starting a Walking School Bus program will require a number of simple, yet very important logistics. Further, as all the details are planned and executed, it will be critical to share the appropriate, up-to-date details with parents and children on an ongoing basis.

Leader Training

The Walking School Bus coordinator should screen each potential volunteer through an interview and criminal background check. All route leaders must also attend a detailed training covering:

- The goals and outline of the Walking School Bus program
- Expectations for route leaders
- Detailed route information
- Traffic safety (this should be taught to children as well)
- Group management techniques or how to handle inappropriate child behavior
- Emergency procedures (including injury protocol and what to do if a route leader cannot serve on a given day)
- Liability issues
- School delay schedule and inclement weather policy
- What to do if a child is late, does not meet the Walking School Bus as expected, or shows up unexpected. See Creative Solutions to Common Problems.
- Any tracking protocols that should be followed, such as a daily attendance worksheet

Leader Materials

The coordinator should provide first aid kits, safety vests, and/or whistles to each volunteer, along with the route map and parent contact information for each participating family.
Pedestrian Safety

It is critical that pedestrian safety skills be reviewed or taught to adults and children alike.

Background Checks

Consider using the school, district, or PTA’s existing systems for conducting background checks. These systems are often already in place for tutors, after-school activity leaders, etc.

Liability

A parent or PTA-led effort should consider using liability waivers to avoid any issues of liability. The organizers can work with a lawyer to draft the appropriate language for a liability waiver. Parents should sign permission slips and liability waivers once the appropriate language is determined. Some walking school bus programs have parent leaders take on the liability of the children on their Walking School Bus route. These programs also have a strict rule that if children misbehave in an unsafe manner, they can no longer walk with the Walking School Bus. This helps keep kids safe and deters potential liability issues.

Promotion

In many programs, outreach begins two weeks after the start of school to foster good habits for the whole school year. Alternatively, just start promoting whenever you are ready. Strategies to promote the program can include:

- Sending home materials with other PTA materials
- School newsletter or email
- Posters at school
- PTA meeting or communications
- Hosting a booth at back to school night
- Hosting an informational workshop or meeting for parents and children
Local news article or feature
Creating an easy-to-use website where families can sign up online
Neighborhood association meetings or communications
Door-to-door invitations
Promotional events: In Chittenden County, VT, a promotional event featured a nearby high school’s drum line leading the Walking School Bus. Celebrity walkers, such as athletes at the University of Vermont and mascots, such as the American Heart Association's "Ticker," helped increase interest. (iwalktoschool.org)

Other promotional ideas:

Promotional Tips and Talking Points

Promotional Message: The Walking School Bus is easy and fun!

Make sign-up convenient: Use an online form, email, or a permission slip that is easy to complete and submit.

Use these talking points to help families understand why the Walking School Bus is a great idea:

- Time savings – From reducing the number of days you drive your children to and from school
- Reduced traffic congestion – Fewer vehicles on our streets and in front of our schools means fewer accidents, less stress, and a safer commute environment
- Increased safety – Fewer cars in front of school mean greater safety for students
- Cost savings – Save money by reducing the amount of driving you do
- Meeting new friends – Every Walking School Bus is a social opportunity for children and parents
- Less pollution – Fewer vehicles means cleaner air for all of us
- Improved health – Walking provides the minimum daily exercise children need

Information for Parents

Parents should sign a permission slip or consent form, emergency contact form, and liability waiver in order for their child to participate in the program. Parents will also need to receive the following information (an information packet with a welcome letter would work well):
The route map
Where the child will join the Walking School Bus
Whether parents are required to walk with their child to meet the bus
Protocol for if a child is late to a stop
What to do if their child will not attend on a given day
What to tell their child about pedestrian safety and appropriate behavior
School delay and inclement weather policy
Phone numbers for their route leader(s) and the Walking School Bus coordinator

Information for Children

Children should receive pedestrian safety training and other important information before joining the Walking School Bus. Parents or routes leaders may go over the information with children, or the information can be incorporated into classroom activities, PE classes, or special assemblies. Parent information packets could also include something to get children excited about the Walking School Bus, such as a book bag tag, sticker, or t-shirt. Children’s information should include:

- Pedestrian safety behaviors
- Walking School Bus rules or code of conduct

Communication

Once families are signed up, the route leader can call the family to introduce him- or herself, or there may be an informational meeting where families and route leaders can meet and important information can be explained. A welcome letter or newsletter, with subsequent update newsletters, is a great way to inform parents. Parents get to know the route leader, and they also know that if the bus gets canceled for any reason, or if there will be a substitute “driver,” they will receive prompt updates.

- Phone call or one-on-one meeting with parents
- Informational meeting for families who are going to participate
- Program website for information and updates
- Program newsletters for information and updates

Sustainability

- You should diversify your volunteer base to make sure you have the person power needed to keep the program going. Some volunteers may continue to “drive” their route even after their children are no longer at the school; they come to feel a sense of ownership about their route.
This might not always be the case, however, so it is important to identify leaders that are likely to stick with the school. Also, consider providing a stipend to route leaders.

✦ Seek a long-term champion in the PTA to act as a coordinator.
✦ After a while, it becomes much easier to recruit families to participate in a Walking School Bus because it has become part of the school and community culture.
✦ Look for stable funding to have a paid coordinator.

Keep the Walking School Bus Visible and Exciting

✦ Make announcements about the number of kids or miles walked.
✦ Write newsletter articles about adventures.
✦ Have children write or draw about their experiences and share the results.
✦ Encourage kids to name their bus.
✦ Have a theme day.
✦ Talk to the kids about why the Walking School Bus is important (health, community, environment).
✦ Recognize walkers publicly.
✦ Reward walkers with prizes for the number of days or miles walked.
✦ Make it special to be part of the Walking School Bus with a button, book-bag tag, silicon wristband, or other emblem.
✦ Provide surprise rewards.
✦ Thank volunteers with incentives or small gifts.
✦ Help children write thank you notes to route leaders or volunteers.

Measuring Impact

✦ It can be pretty easy to measure the impact of your program, and it is necessary for receiving federal Safe Routes to School funding.
✦ Count the numbers of children getting to school each way (walk, bike, car, etc.).
  • Parent survey
  • Hand-raising classroom survey
✦ Do a re-count after a full school term or a full year of the Walking School Bus.
✦ Ask for feedback from parents, kids, and volunteers about what they like and don’t like about the program.
✦ Find resources to help you online.

Use the Fun Walking Ideas worksheet at the end of this packet to generate more ideas.
7. Establishing a Pilot Program

Now that we have addressed all the nuts and bolts of a Walking School Bus program, it is time to decide what kind of program is best for your school or neighborhood. There are a few decisions to be made about how big and how frequent the program will be and how to coordinate and administer it. Below are some items to consider.

Choose a Structure

You will want to decide on a structure for your Walking School Bus program. Consider the following:

- Amount of time available to coordinate the program
- Level of interest among students and parents
- Number of volunteers available
- Desired impact, such as whether the goal is to reach a neighborhood or an entire school
- Resources and funding available for recruiting materials, safety materials, and incentives
Convene a Walking School Bus Team
Consider starting a working group or taskforce to make decisions and delegate tasks.

Determine the Frequency
Ideally, the program should run every day so families can count on it. However, it is possible to start small by selecting one or two days per week or by targeting specific neighborhoods (e.g. a housing development close to the school) as a way to begin developing the program. You might even start with a special one-time Walking School Bus, such as one that coincides with International Walk to School day in October.

Address Concerns
Identify concerns and those interested in getting involved: Go to the PTA meeting, back to school night, ask in a survey. For a school-wide program, it is important to designate a dedicated coordinator. In some cases a committed volunteer coordinator can be successful, but it is highly recommended that this be a paid position to ensure consistency and reliability.

Throw a Kick-off Event
A kick-off event can build excitement and gather support from school faculty and staff, parents, and children. The event can coincide with an existing event, such as Walk and Bike to School Day, or it can stand alone. To get parents and children to participate, use some of the promotional ideas mentioned in the Logistics and Communication section. Put up signs along the routes and provide neighbors with information in the form of flyers or letters. Organizers can also invite the principal and administrators, community leaders, and local media.
8. Funding Strategies

Funding a new school program can be intimidating, but there are many resources available for Safe Routes to School activities. Further, a Walking School Bus program does not have to cost a lot of money. With the help of volunteers, creative partnerships, and local sponsorships, you can work to minimize the costs of a Walking School Bus. At the least, you will need time and some basic materials, such as a safety vest for the leader of each route. For more elaborate programs that include paid staff and/or incentives and prizes, see the funding ideas below.

Partner with a Group That Shares Interests

In Chicago, as well as many other cities around the country, the Active Living by Design partnership, which encourages active living and healthy eating through community design, funds the Walking School Bus program in a number of schools. Active Living by Design applies for various grants to run its program, including federal Safe Routes to School funds.

A local business sponsors the Walking School Bus at Natomas Park Elementary School in Sacramento, California. The employees of the business help lead the routes as well.
Apply for Safe Routes to School Funding

Federal legislation and funding currently exist to support Safe Routes to School efforts. For more information on federal funding, contact your state Safe Routes to School coordinator:

Joyce Parks  
*California Safe Routes to School Coordinator*  
Division of Local Assistance  
California Department of Transportation  
P.O. Box 942874  
Sacramento, CA  95814  
Phone: (916) 653-6920  
Fax: (916) 653-1905  
Email: joyce_parks@dot.ca.gov

In Santa Clarita, local schools can work with the city to apply for state funding. There are also Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) grants for starting safety programs. There may be other local area grants available for this type of program. Work with the City to learn more:

Ian Pari  
Senior Traffic Engineer  
23920 Valencia Blvd., Suite 300  
Santa Clarita, CA 91355  
Phone: (661) 284-1402  
Email: ipari@santa-clarita.com

Hire an AmeriCorps Member

The Logan Square neighborhood in Chicago uses parent volunteers for its route leaders, but hires an AmeriCorps member each year, also a resident of the community, to act as the program coordinator. The AmeriCorps member is funded through the Active Living by Design partnership, but PTAs, school districts, and local community groups can also fund AmeriCorps members.

Gather Funding from Various Sources

Most Walking School Bus programs combine funding from a variety of sources, including but not limited to school, district, local (city/county), state, federal, and private funds. PTAs and local community groups can be good sources of funding, as well as groups that promote and advocate for public health, air quality, walking for transportation, public safety, or other children’s issues. Marin County’s Safe Routes to School program launched in 2000 with funding from federal, state, and community foundation grants.
9. Creative Solutions to Common Problems

Any Walking School Bus program is bound to hit a few snags, but having a few tricks stowed away can make trouble-shooting much easier. Below is a list of common problems and some creative solutions to address those potential snags.

Most of the hurdles a Walking School Bus program may experience are easy to fix with a little bit of creativity.

- **Problem:** Parents are concerned about safety or security.
  
  **Solution:** Have parents walk along first time or as often as they like to get more comfortable.
  
  **Other Ideas:**
  
  ____________________________________________________________
  
  ____________________________________________________________

- **Problem:** The distance is too far for walking.
  
  **Solution:** Try a bicycle train! This is best suited for older elementary school children.
  
  - All riders must wear helmets.
  
  - Provide safe bicycling training for kids beforehand – rules of the road and tips for bike handling.
  
  - More adult supervision is needed than for walking. One adult for every 3 to 6 children is recommended.
  
  **Other Ideas:**
  
  ____________________________________________________________
  
  ____________________________________________________________
Problem: Cold weather

Solution: Take a break OR power through! "It's too cold to walk during the winter," may be an excuse heard elsewhere, but students in Chittenden County, VT are demonstrating that if you keep moving and dress properly, weather is no excuse!

Other Ideas: ______________________________________________________________

Problem: Rain

Solution: Walk rain or shine! Give out brightly-colored low-cost ponchos as prizes.

Other Ideas: ______________________________________________________________

Problem: The program is losing steam or participants.

Solution: Try some of the tips we covered for keeping it exciting.

Other Ideas: ______________________________________________________________

Problem: Neighborhood awareness and visibility

Solution: Put up lawn signs along the route or write an article for the neighborhood paper or newsletter.

Other Ideas: ______________________________________________________________

Problem: A child is late, not present, or shows up unexpected.

Solution: If everyone meets at a common location, a closed garage door or similar signal can let a family know that the Walking School Bus has already departed. If a child is late or not present, a good procedure is to proceed with the Walking School Bus unless you’ve heard from the parent by a given time and can adjust accordingly. This procedure and the appropriate time should be made clear to parents in writing at the start of the program. For children who are not part of the program, you could allow them to walk with the group if they are accompanied by a parent or adult who is responsible for their care. You could also choose not to allow children who are not pre-registered.

Other Ideas: ______________________________________________________________
Problem: What about heavy backpacks and large school projects?

Solution: You can pull a wagon to hold large, awkward projects and especially heavy backpacks. Decorate it to make it more festive or to represent the name the children have given to the Walking School Bus.

Other Ideas: ______________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

Problem: After-school activities

Solution: As part of your survey or other outreach methods, try to find out when most kids head home. Is it right after school or do most of them stay for after-school activities? If the latter is true, consider a later Walking School Bus schedule for the return trip. Work with school administration and parents to determine when most activities end and set up a return “bus” at the most appropriate time.

Other Ideas: ______________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

Problem: What if the route leader can’t make it?

Solution: An emergency communication and contingency plan is necessary. There should be a few back-up route leaders who can step in. You can also have parents of children on the route agree to be emergency back-up leaders, assuring them that they will only be contacted when there is no route leader or back-up route leader available. Program coordinators and route leaders should have contact lists on hand, so they can call an emergency route leader when needed.

Other Ideas: ______________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________
10. Helpful Resources

The following links offer additional information about Walking School Buses.

Consent Forms

♦ "Parental Consent Form." KidsWalk-to-School: A Guide to Promote Walking to School,  
http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnпа/kidswalk/pdf/kidswalk.pdf (pg. 59)

Evaluation Tools

♦ "Student Survey." Safe Routes to Schools: Marin County,  
http://www.saferoutestoschools.org/pdfs/StudentSurvey822.pdf
http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnпa/kidswalk/pdf/kidswalk.pdf (pg. 61)

Getting School and Community Support

♦ "Step One: Identify Interest." KidsWalk-to-School: A Guide to Promote Walking to School,  
http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnпa/kidswalk/pdf/kidswalk.pdf (pg. 7)
♦ "Walking and Bicycling to School: Community Presentation." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,  
http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnпa/kidswalk/resources.htm

International Walk to School Events

♦ International Walk to School in the USA, http://www.walktoschool.org
♦ International Walk to School Month, http://www.iwalktoschool.org

Liability

♦ 10 Tips for Safe Routes To School Programs and Liability,  
http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/collateral/liabilitytipsheet.pdf

Parent Surveys

♦ "Walk-to-School Survey." KidsWalk-to-School: A Guide to Promote Walking to School,  

Recruitment

♦ "Parent letter." Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority,  
http://www.pinnacleresearch.co.nz/wsb/WSB%20GUIDEPARENTS.pdf (pg. 5)

Route Planning
“Safe Routes to School Online Guide: Engineering, school route maps and the tools to create them.” National Center for Safe Routes to School, http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/guide/engineering/school_route_maps_and_the_tools_to_create_them.cfm


Safety Tips


Walking School Bus Guide


Walking School Bus Programs


References

The following sources were referenced in developing this guidebook:


♦ Columbia, MO PedNet Walking School Bus Program, Interview with Margy Tonnies

♦ Columbia, MO PedNet Walking School Bus Program Training Manual


♦ Logan Square Neighborhood Association (Chicago, IL), Walking School Bus Program, http://www.lsna.net/display.aspx:pointer=5183

♦ The National Center for Safe Routes to School, http://www.saferoutesinfo.org

♦ The Safe Routes to School National Partnership, http://www.saferoutespartnership.org


♦ “Starting a Walking School Bus,” http://www.walkingschoolbus.org/

