

Lifestyle Tips



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Active Transportation

You have to get to school, work, and run errands anyway, so why not choose an active way to get there? Walking, cycling or inline skating are easy ways to get around—and they're easy ways to incorporate physical activity into your daily schedule. According to research, almost everyone does some walking, but only 23% of Canadians walk regularly to work, school or errands. And only 10% of men and 6% of women cycle for transportation. Those who do walk or cycle for transportation tend to be younger, have lower incomes and be more active during their leisure time.

Not surprisingly, similar patterns hold true for children. Kids who walk or ride their bikes to school have higher levels of daily physical activity and come from families in lower socioeconomic brackets. Active transportation is accessible and affordable, and more families should be doing it.

Children who actively commute to school are more likely to have parents who actively commuted to school or who currently commute actively to work. So, the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. Active commuting in childhood encourages active commuting in adulthood, so the time to establish these healthy patterns is when your kids are young. Enjoying the fresh air, getting your heart pumping and having some time with your thoughts are all great reasons to get into these active habits. There are quite a few programs that provide support, information and encouragement

in the movement to get children walking or biking to school. Here are some ideas from around the world:

Green Communities Canada – Active & Safe Routes to School

Provides resources, tools, information and links for schools and communities to create their own unique Active & Safe Routes to School program.
www.saferoutestoschool.ca

Walk and Bike for Life

A Canadian-based, internationally-focused organization focused on raising awareness of the benefits of walking and cycling.
www.walkandbikeforlife.org

Way to Go School Program

British Columbia school initiative for active and safe routes to school.
www.waytogo.icbc.bc.ca

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Kids Walk-to-School

US program offers research and resources to support opportunities for children to walk or cycle safely to school.
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/

Ride2School

Australian behaviour change program aims to increase the number of students walking and riding to school.
www.bv.com.au/join-us/125

Walking School Bus

Creative US solutions to inactivity that are safe and fun.
www.walkingschoolbus.org

International Walk to School Month

A global event that celebrates the many benefits of walking.
www.iwalktoschool.org

While walking is mostly about putting one foot in front of the other, there are a few more things to remember if you are going to cycle to school or work.

- Protect your head and wear a helmet.
- Obey traffic rules and learn and use your hand signals.
- Make sure the cars can see you! Use a light and reflectors.
- Equip yourself with the sound of safety with a bell or horn.
- Protect your clothes and comfort, and consider fenders—especially for rainy days!

Active commuting is a great way to be physically active, but it's also good for the environment, saves you money, and gives you a great opportunity to socialize. Do you need any more reasons? Get out of your car and get moving.

