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Press Release for Immediate Use

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Re: Safe Kids Walk This Way

Now that children are back in school, it's important to remind everyone about safety issues. October 5, 2011, is International Walk to School Day, and more than 250 schools nationwide will participate in the Safe Kids Walk This Way program.

The Washington County Health Department and the Washington County Injury Prevention Coalition along with the Safe Kids South East Wisconsin Coalition will be conducting a program called "Walk This Way – Walk Your Child To School Day," October 5, 2011, at all West Bend Elementary Schools including Jackson Elementary School.

Nationwide, pedestrian injuries are the second cause of accidental death among children ages 5 to 14. Each year in the United States, approximately 650 children are killed and 43,000 treated in emergency rooms as a result of pedestrian injuries.

Teach your child safety:

Practical, skills-based training has been demonstrated to improve child pedestrian behavior. Take the time to teach your child to:

- Look left, right and left again before crossing the street. Cross when the street is clear, and keep looking both ways while crossing. Walk - Don't Run
- Understand and obey traffic signals and signs.
- Cross at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks when available. Do not enter the street from between parked cars or behind bushes or shrubs.
- Stop at the curb, or at the edge of the road if there is no curb, before crossing the street. Never run into a street without stopping - even for a ball, pet or any other reason. Darting into the street accounts for the majority of child pedestrian fatalities.
- Walk facing traffic, on sidewalks or paths. Walk as far to the left as possible if there are no sidewalks.
- Watch for cars that are turning or backing up

For more information on the walk meeting places and time please contact Michelle Large at 262-335-4742.



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Safe Kids

Southeast Wisconsin
LEAD AGENCY: CHILDREN'S
HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER

Contact: NAME, PHONE NUMBER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Keep your children safe on their walk to school

*Local elementary schools to participate in Safe Kids Southeast Wisconsin Coalition's
Walk This Way event Wednesday, Oct. 5*

MILWAUKEE (10/03/11) — Pedestrian injuries are the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children ages 5 to 14. Children younger than 10 never should cross the street alone. Make sure your children follow these safety guidelines when walking to school:

- Choose the safest route and walk it with your children. Look for the most direct route with the fewest street crossings. Advise them to take the same route every day and avoid shortcuts.
- Obey all traffic signals and markings. A “walk” sign is not an automatic “go” signal. It means you have permission to cross, but you must first stop and look both ways.
- Stop at the curb or edge of the road and to look left, right and left again for traffic before and while crossing.
- Never enter the street from between parked cars or from behind bushes or shrubs. Darting into the street accounts for the majority of pedestrian deaths among children.
- Cross the street at corners or crosswalks. Make sure children allow plenty of time to cross. Teach them to walk, not run, across intersections. Tell your children to listen to adult crossing guards and safety patrols.
- Warn children to be extra alert in bad weather. Visibility might be poor and motorists might not be able to stop quickly.
- Demonstrate proper pedestrian safety by being a good role model. Your children need you to tell them and show them how to be safe.

International Walk to School Day is Wednesday, Oct. 5. Communities across Wisconsin will participate in “Walk This Way” events. Safe Kids Southeast Wisconsin Coalition will partner with FedEx, and community leaders from West Bend and Jackson, to walk with children to advocate for safer walking environments for children.

“Walking is an important and healthy activity, but everyone needs to do their part to keep this activity safe for kids,” said Lisa Klindt Simpson, Safe Kids Southeast Wisconsin coordinator. “Parents and caregivers should teach children safe behaviors, and drivers must be aware and on the lookout for children on or near the road.”

Volunteers will walk children to school in order to demonstrate important safety behaviors as part of International Walk to School Day 2011.

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