
Providing safe and secure communities

September 26, 2007

Young Albertans "Walk the Talk" for traffic safety

Edmonton... Students from two Edmonton-area schools joined Alberta's Lieutenant Governor, enforcement officers and traffic safety stakeholders at the Legislature grounds to learn how to stay safe on roads and streets.

Students from St. Leo Catholic Elementary School in Edmonton and from Colchester Elementary School in Sherwood Park took part in this year's Walk the Talk Day, an annual event aimed at teaching young children traffic safety practices.

"Walk the Talk is a great program that helps young Albertans to stay safe around traffic, whether they're walking to school, taking a bike ride or playing outside with friends," said Hon. Norman Kwong, Lieutenant Governor of Alberta. "It's important for young people to get outside to enjoy some daily physical activity. Walk the Talk helps to keep them safe when they're doing so."

"Each year approximately 350 children are injured or killed while walking or bicycling," said Luke Ouellette, Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation. "This is unacceptable. With the Walk the Talk program, children are doing their part by learning to cross the road safely. Motorists also need to do their part by being alert for children on our roads."

The event is part of the government's Walk the Talk About Back to School Safety program. It brings together the Alberta Motor Association's School Patrol, Alberta Centre for Injury Control and Research (ACICR), KIDSAFE Connection, CN Police, and the Golden Arrow Bus Lines to teach children about safe ways to walk to and from school. These groups offer traffic safety tips for bicycle, skateboard, in-line skating and school bus safety, as well as railway crossing for those children who need to cross railway tracks.

Last year, more than 158,837 elementary school children from 261 schools participated in the Walk the Talk program through activities with their schools or community organizations.

The Walk the Talk Back to School Safety program was launched in 1997 to help prevent child cyclists and pedestrian injuries and deaths. A tool kit was produced for this program. The kit includes a teacher's resource guide and three interactive activity books, for children five -12 years of age, featuring the Kinetic Kids and their safety sidekicks.

Improving traffic safety is one of the actions under Premier Ed Stelmach's plan to provide Albertans with safe and secure communities. Other priorities for the government are to govern with integrity and transparency, improve Albertans' quality of life, manage growth pressures, and build a stronger Alberta. For more information about traffic safety, contact the Office of Traffic Safety at (780) 422-8839 or visit www.saferoads.com.

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Media enquiries may be directed to:

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Alberta's Walk the Talk Program

History of Walk the Talk

- Launched in 1997 by the government to help prevent the more than 350 child cyclist and pedestrian injuries and deaths that occur in Alberta each year.
- Designed to give children and their parents the tools necessary to increase their personal safety on Alberta's roads.
- Consists of traffic safety tips such as the POINT, PAUSE and PROCEED pedestrian crossing safety system. Also includes safety practices for bicycling, skateboarding, in-line skating, railway crossing and bus safety.
- Alberta educators played a critical role in the development of the program.

Walk the Talk Day

- September 26 is Walk the Talk Day.
- It encourages families to walk through their children's routes to-and-from-school and to provide safety tips to help avoid any potential dangers along the way.
- It highlights the importance of traffic safety, year-round.
- Alberta educators, parents, caregivers, motorists, school bus drivers, decision-makers and media are all part of the Walk the Talk team and can help spread its messages.
- Partners include: Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation, Alberta Motor Association's School Safety Patrol; KIDSAFE Connection; and Alberta Centre for Injury Control and Research (ACICR).

Program Activity Books

- The tool kit consists of a teacher resource guide, three activity books for children 5 - 12 years of age.
- The Kinetic Kids are five, fun characters and their safety sidekicks who appear in the interactive Walk the Talk activity books. The Kinetic Kids promote traffic safety through the Walk the Talk program, year-round.

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