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The WalkStreet Journal

A NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI WALKSAFE™ PROGRAM

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Letter from the Director

Welcome to our latest issue of the WalkStreet Journal! As the calendar year comes to an end, WalkSafe is also wrapping up the implementation of our educational curriculum. More schools than ever before have taught the curriculum in their schools this year!

We are also very excited to announce our 2009 WalkSafe™ Poster Contest winners. Choosing a statewide winner was a difficult task. The winning poster, created by Tangi Parry from J. Colin English Elementary in Lee County, will be reprinted as an official WalkSafe™ program poster for 2010!

I am also pleased to announce WalkSafe's receipt of a 2009 Nike "Back Your Block" grant! Nike has donated sneakers for all of our Poster Contest winners and will be selling gift cards to benefit our program. We look forward to future collaborations with the Nike Factory Store in Florida City!

Our hope is that this new year will see more people than ever Walk More and Walk Safe!

Gillian Hotz, PhD
Director, WalkSafe
University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

Kids Everywhere Learn to Walk More and Walk Safe!

In early October, schools across the State of Florida did their part to reduce rates of pedestrian injury and increase daily physical activity levels of elementary school children. More than 200 elementary schools in Miami-Dade County and 50 schools in other Florida counties taught the WalkSafe™ three-day curriculum this year. As a result, more than 150,000 Kindergarten – 5th grade students learned about road signs and signals, safe and unsafe street-crossing behaviors, and the many benefits of walking to and from school. WalkSafe celebrates its most successful year since the program's inception in 2001, and congratulates this year's participating counties (Brevard, Broward, Collier, Duval, Lee, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Orange, Palm Beach, Polk, and Santa Rosa) for prioritizing the safety and health of the children in our communities!

2009 Poster Contest…Saving Lives with Crayons!

Thousands of elementary school students throughout Florida showcased their artistic abilities and safety knowledge in the first annual statewide WalkSafe™ Poster Contest. This creative portion of the WalkSafe™ curriculum encouraged students to illustrate the messages learned from the WalkSafe™ videos and outside simulation. The contest was a huge success, receiving entries from more than 200 schools throughout the State!

WalkSafe congratulates all the County winners for their hard work, talent, and creativity. Each County winner received a new pair of Nike running shoes! The State winner from Lee County also received a new laptop computer! WalkSafe thanks all of the art teachers and school administrators that contributed to the success of the contest. We look forward to offering even more prizes and opportunities for students next year!

2009 WalkSafe™ Poster Contest Winners	
Lee	Tangi Parry (Gr. 5)
Brevard	Pierce Talbert (Gr. 5)
Collier	Marisela Bustillo-Guevara (Gr. 5)
Duval	Ariya Salvi (Gr. K)
Miami-Dade	Sean Schraffl (Gr. 5)
Monroe	William Horn (Gr. 3)
Orange	Naomi Nuñez (Gr. 5)
Palm Beach	Shaylla Renejuste (Gr. 5)
Polk County	Summer Wells (Gr. 5)

Miami's Poster Contest Winner Honored at School Ceremony

For Sean Schraffl, a 4th grader at Wesley Matthews Elementary, the WalkSafe™ Poster Contest represented a chance to teach children how to walk safely and avoid getting hit by cars. Sadly, one of Sean's family members recently incurred severe injuries in a pedestrian-struck accident. As a result, Sean was inspired to create a poster that would prevent this from happening to other children and families. His County-winning poster features a mouse situated in a shoe, affectionately reminding its owner to "always look both ways before crossing the street." As a 2009 WalkSafe™ Poster Contest winner, Sean was honored with a certificate and a new pair of Nike running shoes at his school's Honor Roll Ceremony in November.

Peskoe Elementary IWALK Event
Homestead, FL

Peskoe Elementary IWALK Event
Homestead, FL

Home Depot Safety Fair
North Miami, FL

'Strides for Safety' Fair
Aventura, FL

Community Health Fair
Westchester, FL

IWALK 2009 at Peskoe Elementary

International Walk to School Day (IWALK) is a global, annual event that promotes pedestrian safety and encourages walking to and from school. WalkSafe's 2009 IWALK event was held on October 7th at Irving and Beatrice Peskoe Elementary in Homestead, Florida. The event was kicked off with a high-energy pep rally where the children learned cheers about pedestrian safety. Then, over 800 students, faculty, parents, and community members participated in a walk around the perimeter of the school to raise awareness of pedestrian safety and health issues.

The children of Peskoe elementary were joined by Mayor Lynda Bell and Councilwoman Nazy Sierra from the City of Homestead, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) Region V Superintendant Valtena Brown, MDCPS Executive Director of Physical Education Jayne Greenberg, School Board Member Dr. Lawrence Feldman, McGruff the Crime Dog, University of Miami athletes and cheerleaders, and Miami-Dade County Police. Overall, the event was a success. The children of Peskoe Elementary beamed with excitement about walking while demonstrating their newly acquired safety skills. IWALK was filled with meaningful experiences that will help the children of Homestead to remember to walk more and walk safe!

WalkSafe Teaches Safety Skills at Home Depot Fair

On October 3rd, WalkSafe joined Home Depot, the North Miami Fire Station, and many other organizations in promoting safety in the North Miami Community. During the event, children received small work aprons and took a hands-on approach to learning about safety. WalkSafe encouraged children at the event to participate in a street-crossing simulation and distributed materials containing information about the WalkSafe™ program and pedestrian safety in Miami-Dade. WalkSafe™ staff was successful in educating nearly 100 children and parents throughout the event.

WalkSafe Makes "Strides for Safety" in Aventura

On September 13th, WalkSafe joined the William Lehman Injury Research Center at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine in educating Miami-Dade County residents about the importance of injury prevention in our community. The second annual "Strides for Safety" event consisted of a 5K run and safety fair, where attendees could participate in a live WalkSafe™ street-crossing simulation. During the simulations, more than 30 elementary school-aged children and their parents learned visual screen safety steps, scanning left-right-left while crossing, and other pedestrian safety behaviors on a simulated road. Participants also answered pedestrian safety and health trivia about safe and unsafe pedestrian behaviors and the health benefits associated with walking daily.

WalkSafe Promotes Safety & Health in Westchester

WalkSafe was invited to participate in a community health fair hosted by the Westchester 7th Day Adventist Church. The event took place on the church grounds and involved multiple organizations. The main focus of the fair was preventing injury and chronic disease, and improving overall health. During the event, WalkSafe conducted a street-crossing simulation that reached nearly every child participating in the event. Children enthusiastically engaged in the activity and mastered pedestrian safety behaviors while participating in the simulation.

WHAT'S NEW ONLINE

www.walksafe.us

See all of the WalkSafe™ Poster Contest Winners online! Click on the 'News' tab to view the County and Statewide winning posters!

WalkSafe was featured in the recent Safe Routes to School national report *Putting Traffic Safety First*! Visit the 'News' tab to access this, and other articles, about WalkSafe and pedestrian safety!

The WalkStreet Journal Archives are available on the WalkSafe Website. Just click on the archives icon!

Voice your opinions about pedestrian safety on our Community Survey! Visit http://walksafe.us/community-survey.html

Visit WalkSafe on Facebook and Twitter!

Become a fan of WalkSafe by searching for the fan page on Facebook at www.facebook.com

Follow WalkSafe on Twitter by going to www.twitter.com/WalkSafe

What's New at WalkSafe

WalkSafe™ Director Receives Hovda Angel Award

The WalkSafe™ program is proud to announce that Dr. Gillian Hotz, the WalKSafe™ Director, has been named a recipient of one of this year's Sarah Jane Brain Foundation/Dr. David Hovda Angel Awards. This prestigious honor is awarded to the most accomplished members of the Pediatric Acquired Brain Injury community, in recognition of their dedication to advancing the field and commitment to the children they serve. Dr. Hotz received the award on November 17th 2009, at the annual Angel Awards Reception in New York.

WalkSafe Wins a 2009 Nike "Back Your Block" Grant

WalkSafe is the proud recipient of a $2,500 Nike "Back Your Block" grant! The funds are being used to purchase Nike running shoes for children living in high-risk areas for pedestrian injury. These shoes will serve as a reminder to children about the importance of pedestrian safety and daily physical activity. WalkSafe extends a special "thank you" to all of our community partners for voting during the "Back Your Block" grant selection process. Your continued support is integral to our success. We would also like to thank Heather Marini and the Nike Factory Store in Florida City for their ongoing support.

WalkSafe and IFC at Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital

In hopes of reducing the number of child collisions with motor vehicles in New Haven, the Injury Free Coalition (IFC) for Kids plans to implement the WalkSafe™ program this year. The IFC initiated their efforts by introducing the concept of "street smarts" at the Edgewood Avenue Magnet School International Walk (IWALK) to School Day event on October 7th. More than 500 residents participated, including the Mayor, Superintendent of schools, and many other special guests.

Read about the IFC at Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital and their plans to implement WalkSafe in *Establishing an Injury Prevention Program to Address Pediatric Pedestrian Collisions*. The article is available in the Dec. 2009 Journal of Trauma Nursing.

Injury Free coalition for Kids®

Advocacy

Some Roads are Dangerous by Design

The recent report *Dangerous by Design* finds that pedestrians continue to suffer from high fatality rates in the U.S., even as walking rates have declined. Many streets are 'dangerous by design' and were engineered for speeding cars with little or no infrastructure to ensure the safety of pedestrians or cyclists.

The report reveals that Orlando, Tampa, and Miami are among the most dangerous cities for pedestrians. This information is of great concern to Florida residents, as the people that walk in these cities face a high risk of being killed by a motor vehicle.

According to the report, states are not spending enough resources on needed infrastructure improvements. Yet, some communities have managed to make walking safer using the following 'tools for change': traffic calming, street design improvements, and expansion of policies and programs that enhance pedestrian safety skills (e.g., Safe Routes to School). It is WalkSafe's hope that these tools for change are adopted by communities throughout Miami-Dade County, the State of Florida, and the country in order to make streets safer for pedestrians!

View the full *Dangerous by Design* report at: http://t4america.org/resources/dangerousbydesign/.

Thank You!

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
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Questions or comments? Contact the WalkSafe™ office at (305)243-8115.

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