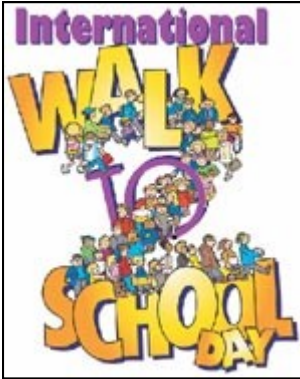


October 6, 2008



WJHG Panama

FDOT Promotes International Walk to School

Chipley - The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Three Safety Office, in partnership with the National Safe Routes to School Program, local school districts, and local Community Traffic Safety Teams (CTST), invite parents and children to participate in International Walk to School Day, Wednesday, October 8, 2008. This is an exciting event where kids and families in the U.S. join the world in celebration as they walk and bike to school. To encourage participation, we will be providing promotional items to local Community Traffic Safety Teams. Parents may want to create a "walking school bus" where children are escorted to school under supervision. While students are encouraged to walk or bike to and from school, students should be given the opportunity to walk during physical education class and recess where walking/biking to school may not be feasible. Please ask your elementary and middle school administrators and/or Community Traffic Safety Teams for more information.

The need for safer walking and biking to school is more essential than ever. With more children using these modes of travel, there will be fewer vehicles contributing to air pollution, with less fuel and energy used and a cleaner, healthier environment for everyone. Most importantly, we are rapidly approaching a health crisis involving obesity rates for our nation's children, which have doubled in the last twenty years and increases the risk for childhood illnesses such as diabetes.

International Walk to School Day will foster community interest and create awareness in making our streets and sidewalks safer, and will support Governor Crist's Fitness Challenge for a healthier Florida. You will find valuable information at the following websites:

www.walktoschool.org (Local events can be registered here)

www.dcp.ufl.edu/centers/trafficsafetyed/

www.saferoutesinfo.org/guide/education/resources.cfm