



Media Release

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WALK-TO-SCHOOL DAY 20 OCTOBER 2010 – ENCOURAGES HEALTHY HABITS

Walk-to-School Day is on again throughout Victoria and schools around the state are supporting the initiative by encouraging students to walk to and from school this Wednesday 20 October.

With support from VicHealth, thousands of students will walk to raise awareness of the physical, environmental and social benefits of walking to school.

“Walking is one of the easiest and best ways to maintain good health and prevent diseases like type 2 diabetes – and it makes you feel terrific” says Greg Johnson, CEO of Diabetes Australia – Vic. “Every bit of walking and incidental activity is good for kids. Walking and catching the bus rather than being driven to school, playing games at lunchtime and walking the dog are all ways to keep healthy and active.”

Last year more than 70,000 kids participated in Walk-to-School day, which is around 60 per cent of Victorian primary school children.

CEO of VicHealth, Todd Harper, said: “Walk-to-School Day isn’t just about one day, or even one month – it’s about schools and communities working together to set children up with healthy habits that will endure through their teenage and adult years.

“Ninety per cent of city kids and 65 per cent of country kids live within three kilometres of school, yet only one in three children regularly walk or cycle to school. Given physical inactivity is a huge risk factor for obesity and type 2 diabetes later in life, now is the time to ask ourselves whether it’s really necessary to take the car every day.”

In Victoria there are 235,000 people registered with diabetes and 450 new cases developing every week. Diabetes has serious complications of heart attack, stroke, kidney damage, blindness and amputation. Type 2 diabetes can be prevented by sustained lifestyle change including weight reduction, healthy eating and physical activity.

This year, Kinect Australia is promoting Walktober Walk-to-School Day through all Victorian schools. All participants will receive certificates and be in the draw to win major prizes, including sports equipment vouchers and Tabloid Sports Carnivals for their school.

For more information: www.walktober.com.au

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