

ACTIVE & SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL – A PROVINCIAL SUCCESS STORY

Presentation to:

**SUSTAINABLE
TRANSFORUM**

Shaping transportation for future generations

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**Green
Communities**
CANADA



Green Communities Canada

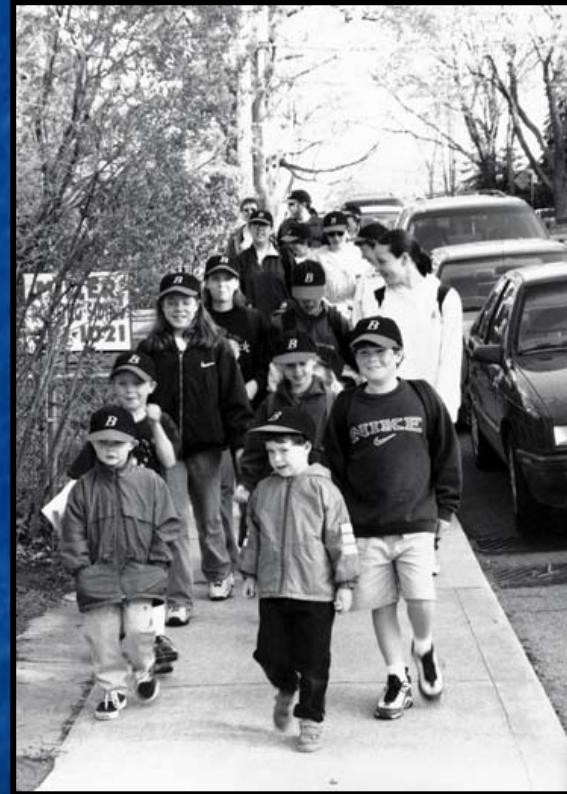
- A national association of non-profit organizations that deliver innovative, practical environmental solutions to Canadian households and communities
- 40 member organizations coast to coast
- Energy, greenspace, waste reduction, sustainable transportation ... leadership
- GCC: 12 employees; \$2.5 million revenues
- See: www.greencommunitiescanada.org



Active and Safe Routes to School

Active and Safe Routes to School is a comprehensive program that taps into the latent demand for safe, walkable neighbourhoods.

www.saferoutestoschool.ca



Safe Routes to School – A Provincial Success Story

Walking to School in the 21st Century

Children's experience of transportation, while walking to school, is that of *wonder, discovery, adventure, connection and happiness.*

- What has changed since the 1980s?
- Why is a Walk to School movement even necessary?
- Are we even considering the needs and aspirations of children?

"We walk to school because we can see a kitty or a pup and sing along with the birds"



Why Safe Routes to School?

■ *Concerns:*

- safety
- perceived convenience of driving
- reduced opportunities for daily physical activity
- increased greenhouse gas and air pollution emissions
- lack of sense of community
- loss of unstructured play time for children

■ *Benefits:*

- safer streets
- greater public awareness
- increased physical activity
- reduced emissions
- social capital, community cohesion



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Safe Routes to School in Canada

- A decade of experience:
 - Green Communities (Ontario) and *Way to Go!* (BC):
 - 3,600 elementary and intermediate schools
 - extending to high schools
 - high retention rate
- A growing national network of community-based initiatives:
 - Green Communities Canada, Ontario
 - *Way to Go!*, B.C.
 - Go for Green
 - Resource Conservation Manitoba
 - Ecology Action, Nova Scotia
 - Vélo-Québec
 - SHAPE, Alberta



Active and Safe Routes

- Innovative program elements engage school communities:
 - International Walk to School Month
 - Walking Challenges
 - Walking School Bus
 - IWALK Club
 - No Idling at School
- An international movement (38 countries)
 - see: www.iwalktoschool.org



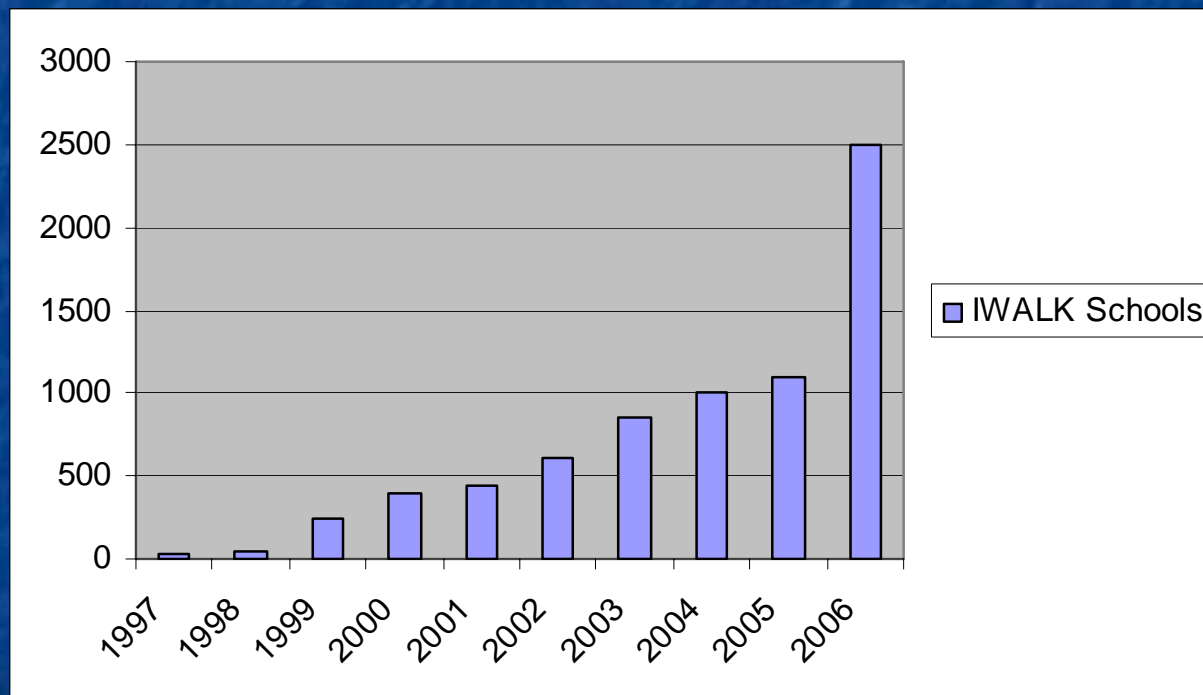
Impressive results (2005/06)

- 51% of Ontario schools participate (every school district)
 - 2,500 participated in IWALK celebrations in 2006
- average school participation: 72 per cent
- IWALK Club - 154,901 students; 10,873,288 km and still walking!
- 31 per cent of population exposed to programs; 4.5 million "media hits"
- communities raised \$345,000 cash, \$375,000 in-kind
- over 1,500 volunteers
- Over 500 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions avoided [Ontario 2005-06]
- www.saferoutestoschool.ca: 52,986 visits/1,422,514 hits (2006)



Growing participation

Ontario schools participating in Walk to School Week celebrations



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Community-based delivery

- School boards
- Municipal staff
- Police
- Public Health
- Parents
- Volunteers

Seed Funding:
Matched locally
Cash and in-kind



Green Communities:
Training, support,
materials and mentoring

Communities:
• Local ownership
• Program sustainability



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Thank You!

"Walking and talking with my dad was the best bit. We saw two slugs with no homes, but they still had their aerals, and someone had dropped their apple from their packed lunch. I wish my dad could walk with me all the time." Student, Sherborne County Primary in Sherborne, Dorset



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