



**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **National Walk Safely To School Day**

### **Friday 23 May 2014**

**5 May 2014:** Primary school aged children across Australia will make those important steps towards a healthier future by participating in National Walk Safely to School Day on Friday 23 May 2014.

National Walk Safely to School Day is a community initiative that aims to raise awareness of the health, road safety, transport and environmental benefits that regular walking (especially to and from school) can provide for the long term health of our children.

The annual event, now in its 15<sup>th</sup> year, encourages primary school aged children to walk to and from school, not just on Friday 23 May, but every day.

Harold Scruby, Chairman and CEO of the Pedestrian Council of Australia said that unless teachers, parents, carers and the community generally get behind this event and its objectives, the outlook for Australia's children is not good.

"The childhood obesity epidemic has reached such critical levels in Australia, that 1 in 4 children are now overweight or obese. Unless there are significant changes to physical activity and diet, this is expected to reach 1 in 3 by 2020.

"Children require at least 60 minutes per day of physical activity – and regular walking is the best exercise for all of us," he said.

Children are encouraged to lead a more active lifestyle by including a walk at the beginning, during and end of each day. The event also promotes improved diets, positive environmental action, better use of public transport with reduced car-dependency and important road safety messages such as "children aged 10 years or under must always hold the hand of an adult's hand when crossing the road," said Mr Scruby.

To support the day and encourage ongoing healthy behaviour, a fun and free interactive App is available to help keep the motivation up within families and schools. It measures the distances children walk, their average speeds, maps and even allows schools to view scoreboards of their students' walking achievements.

**Ends.**



## **FAST FACTS**

**WHAT:** National Walk Safely to School Day

**WHEN:** Friday, 23 May 2014

**WHERE:** In all primary schools across Australia

**WHY:** Now in it's 15<sup>th</sup> year, this initiative aims to encourage children to lead a healthier, more active lifestyle by simply including a walk at the beginning, at lunch-time and at end of each day. The event also promotes reduced car-dependency, greater use of public transport, cleaner air, improved diets and road safety to primary school children throughout Australia

**APP:** It's FREE and available now for Apple and Android phones.  
Search WTSTSD

**MORE INFO:** [www.walk.com.au](http://www.walk.com.au)

### **CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:**

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/nationalwalksafelytoschoolday>

Instagram: @NatWalkToSchool

Twitter: @NatWalkToSchool

Hashtag: #WSTSD

**MEDIA CONTACT:** For more information, including images and interviews call Gabrielle Leonello from littlelion communications on:  
0425 554-454 | 08 8121-7717 | [gabrielle@littlelion.com.au](mailto:gabrielle@littlelion.com.au)