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Friday 15 May 2026

Hello and welcome to the National Walk Safely to School Day teaching toolkit for 2026

This resource has been designed for teachers and parents to provide some educational activities that get Australian children talking about walking!

In the kit, you'll find some general resources for schools including A National Walk Safely to School Day newsletter insert, some basic activity suggestions appropriate for school implementation and a healthy breakfast menu, designed by leading nutritionist, Dr Rosemary Stanton.

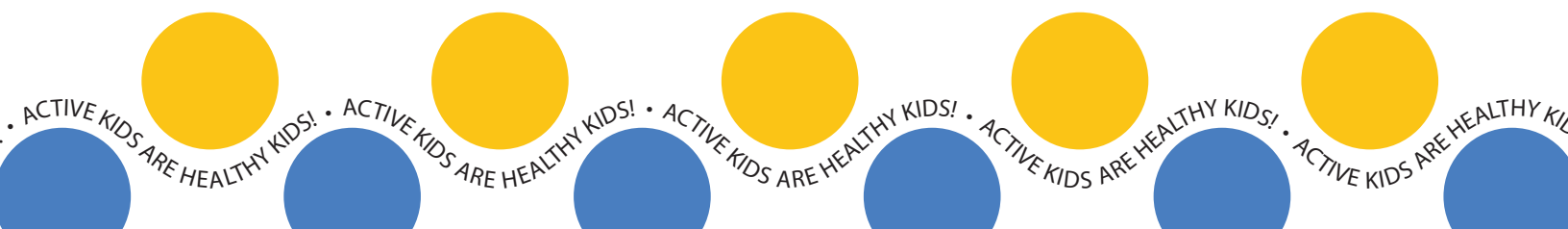
More specifically for the classroom, you'll find three levels of student activities, each designed by an Australian Primary School Teacher. The Junior activities have been developed for kindergarten – grade 2 children. The Intermediate section is for grades 3 and 4 and the Senior section has been designed for students in grade 5 and 6.

We know that when children participate in regular moderate intensity physical activity (like walking!) and enjoy a balanced and nutritious diet, they are less likely to be overweight or obese and less likely to suffer heart disease, diabetes and mental and behavioural problems.

That's why National Walk Safely to School Day is such an important initiative. By simply walking all or part of the way to school with a parent or carer, children can easily achieve the minimum 60 minutes of moderate exercise they need each day. For most children, walking all or part of the way to school is an easy, free and sustainable, habit to get into.

Healthy and active children live better and learn better, and grow up to be more healthy and active adults.

We hope you find this toolkit a useful and fun teaching aid!





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Friday 1st May 2026

WHOLE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

There are many ways to participate, not just on 15 May 2026 but also in the lead-up to Walk Safely to School Day and afterwards. The aim is to teach children the benefits of walking regularly and to get them (and their parents/carers) to be more active. The following ideas may help get you started.

Ideas for what you could do in the lead up to or on WSTSD include:

Plan on hosting a healthy breakfast! Get the P&C, canteen, local council and local grocery stores involved and celebrate Walk Safely to School Day with a healthy breakfast! See the menu (endorsed by leading nutritionist, Dr Rosemary Stanton) included in this kit for some great food ideas!

Be a local celebrity! Register your school as a participant at www.walk.com.au to indicate your school is available for publicity and our PR agents will call you to arrange a local photo shoot and article with your local paper;

Display your Walk Safely to School Day posters around the school;

Include Walk Safely to School Day information in school newsletters using the template included in this kit;

Hold a "professional" panel discussion between students and local health promotion and environmental officers, police youth liaison officer, parents' representative and/or other experts; map local routes to schools, playgrounds etc;

Hold a supervised walk along one of the main access routes to the school;

Organise a "no cars" day around the school in collaboration with local transport and police officials;

Use school assemblies to promote health and environment messages about Walk Safely to School Day;

Organise competitions using pedometers to count the total steps children in each class take and work out how far around Australia those steps would take them;

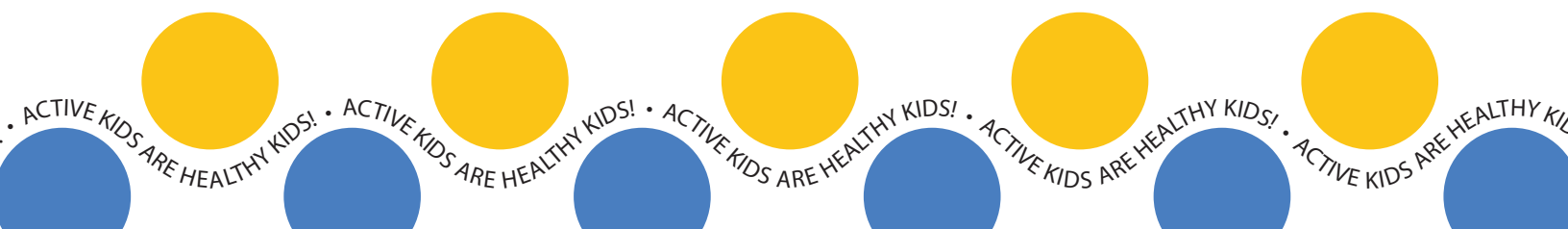
Encourage local stores to support your school in WSTSD and to provide prizes for competitions etc.

On Walk Safely to School Day ideas for the day include:

Host your own Walk Safely to School Day Healthy Breakfast on the morning of Friday 15 May. As previously mentioned, a menu, endorsed by leading nutritionist, Dr Rosemary Stanton, is included in this kit;

Hold a special walking event on the day with local sporting identities, the mayor or other local celebrities and officials;

Hold a special school assembly.





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After Walk Safely to School Day some ideas of things to do include:

Publicise the achievements of the event utilising any photos or other materials available from the event including in school newsletters;

Identify physical activity programs and publicise their availability; talk with local government about how the safety and accessibility of routes to school might be improved, particularly any concerns that parents might have about walking routes to the school;

Explore the option of creating a school walking mascot;

Complete the post event questionnaire that has been sent to each school (you can also download the form from the www.walk.com.au website).

Other ideas for special events to promote walking and other physical activity throughout the year include:

Leave the car at home days;

Create your own Walking Wednesday by holding a whole-school walk

Special walking events encompassing places of interest and recreation that are safe and readily accessible;

A bike to school day;

Clean up days or green weeks;

Be part of a TravelSmart* initiative;

Combine a walk with a fund raising initiative;

Hold a walking theme day (e.g. Walk with Mum Day) mystery walks; and

Undertake a traffic pollution survey around the school.

Complementary events that build on the walking message include:

Heart Week;

Diabetes Week;

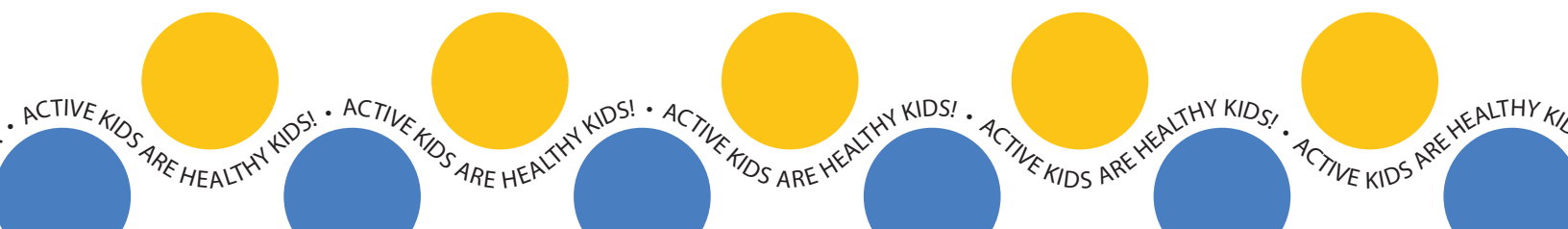
Daffodil Day; Pink Ribbon Day (Cancer Council)

Clean Up Australia Day;

Million Paws Walk (RSPCA)

World Carfree Day;

World Move for Health Day.





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NEWSLETTER INSERT

Please feel welcome to cut and paste this insert into your school's newsletter.



WE'RE TAKING IT IN OUR STRIDE ON FRIDAY, 15 May 2026

Well it's that time of year again when our school seriously starts talking about walking!

Not only is walking a wonderful way to get you where you want to be, but it also gets your health – and your child's health on the right track too. So that's why this year our school is participating in National Walk Safely to School Day 15 May 2026.

Walk Safely to School Day asks that we all consider our transport habits and try to incorporate more walking as part of a healthy, active way to get around. And although walking all the way to school isn't realistic for many of us, it's quite easy to figure out how you can build a walk into your family's daily routine.

You can teach your child the healthy habit of walking more by:

- Walking with them the whole way to school
- If they get the bus or train, walk past your usual stop and get on at the next stop
- If you have to drive, park the car a few blocks away from the school and walk the rest of the way.

Regular exercise like walking with your child not only helps them (and you!) beat chronic problems like obesity, heart disease, behavioural and mental health issues and diabetes. It also gives you a great opportunity to teach your child safe ways to behave around roads and traffic.

Remember, Active Kids are Healthy Kids so get planning your own Walk Safely to School Day journey for Friday 15 May 2026!

For more information, visit www.walk.com.au





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TEACHERS TOOLSET FOR JUNIORS

PREPARED FOR CHILDREN KINDERGARTEN – GRADE 2

Suggestion 1: Graph and gossip

Ask children to indicate how they came to school that morning by a show of hands or by assembling in designated groups (e.g. walk, car, bus, bike, train).

Make a class bar graph with the data to visually demonstrate the results.

Discuss why most people come to school by road transport. Is it easier? Quicker? Healthier? More expensive?

Brainstorm these reasons. Have children suggest the advantages of walking to school.

Suggestion 2: Wear it while you walk

Using the walk to school logo figure and enclosed badge template, children can make badges.

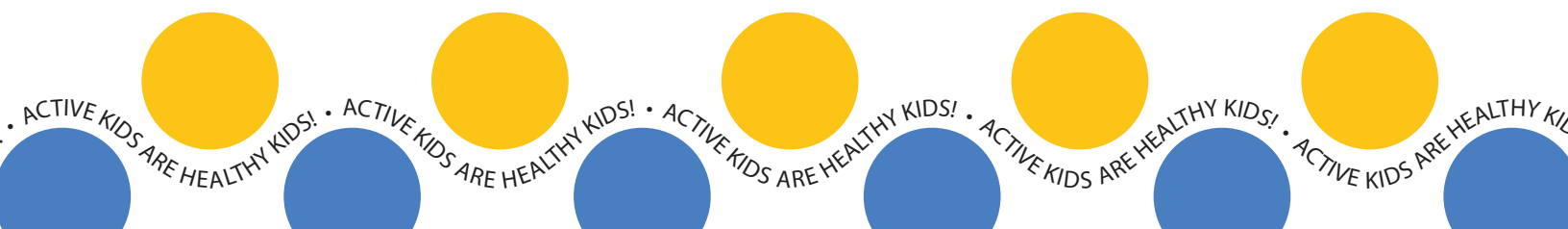
Paperchip, colour or paint with watercolours. If possible laminate to wear on Walk Safely to School Day and back each with a safety pin.

Suggestion 3: Model Mania

Ask children to make the town /suburb using plasticine, Lego or building blocks in small groups. Talk about local landmarks near the school (e.g. church, shops, community centre, library, swimming pool and parks). Children that live close to school might want to make models of their houses and then these can be labeled. Remember to discuss pedestrian safety issues. For instance, include traffic signals and signs - traffic lights can be made from paddle pop sticks and black and white cardboard pieces can indicate zebra crossings.

Suggestion 4: Walking the wonders around us

Take the children out to observe a crossing. Children can draw the crossing, including the road signs. Discuss the details- when is it safe to cross the road? What do pedestrians need to look out for? How do we keep safe as pedestrians? What happens if we don't observe the signs and traffic lights?





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Suggestion 5: The stop, look, listen and think mantra for the classroom

Introduce 'Stop, Look, Listen and Think' as a general attention exercise. Make large pedestrian signs (e.g. STOP) that can be painted in the classroom and hung up for display to make children more aware of what they mean.

Suggestion 6: Creative imagination – where would you walk?

Ask children to imagine what they might see and hear if they walked to school in a different country or place. Encourage them to imagine the birds, the weather, and the places they walk past and who they walk with. Children can illustrate these by making a collage or write these down and illustrate them.

Complementary literature suggestions

- 'I went walking' by Sue Machin and Julie Vivas
- 'Sausage went for a walk' by E. Majid
- 'Rosie's Walk' by Pat Hutchens.





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COLOUR IN



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TEACHERS TOOLSET FOR INTERMEDIATES

PREPARED FOR CHILDREN GRADE 2 AND 3

Suggestion 1: On route to a healthier life

Provide a map of the local area (www.whereis.com.au has a great selection). Have the children mark where they live and use highlighters to route the safest route to school (with the least traffic and fewest roads to cross). Discuss and mark where major crossings are. If the map provides a scale children can work out the distances involved.

Suggestion 2: Steps back in time

Research (using the internet or library) how it was in the past- did people walk more or less? Why? Print out / draw / copy pictures of older forms of transport. Are there any disadvantages of newer cars? (Consider the effect on our climate, traffic congestion and increased danger for pedestrians).

Suggestion 3: Pin up the positives

Brainstorm the benefits of walking to school (good for fitness, fresh air, kinder on the environment, can meet friends along the way, increased understanding of road rules, sense of community, increased confidence as an ambassador for the school etc). Make a poster showing these.

Suggestion 4: Read the signs

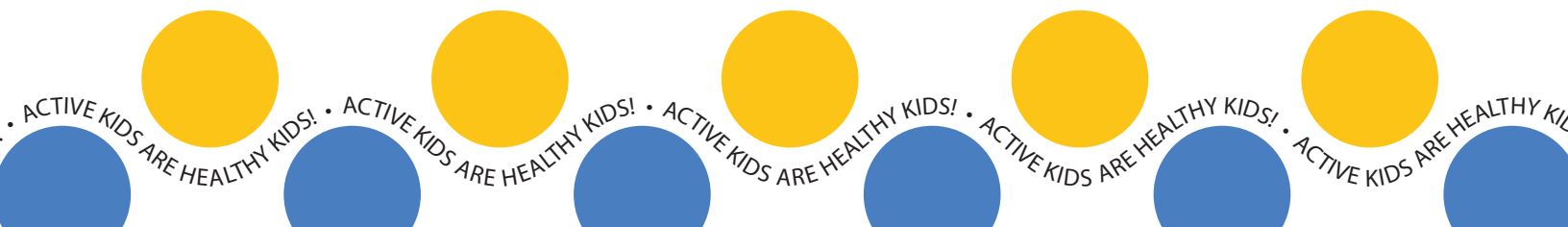
Have children act out / play charades on what to do when walking to school (stopping at crossings, waiting for traffic lights, looking both ways, crossing quickly without running, not talking to strangers).

Suggestion 5: Wordfind about walking

Ask children in pairs to make a list of words to use to make a Walk to School wordfind (or use the one provided).

Complementary literature suggestion

'A Wee Walk' by Margaret Clark





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TEACHERS TOOLSET FOR SENIORS

PREPARED FOR CHILDREN GRADE 4-6

Suggestion 1: Weighing up on walking

After brainstorming, ask children to make a Venn diagram (see attached proforma) to show the positive and negative aspects of walking to school. Are there any aspects which could be both good and bad?

Suggestion 2: Debate it

Prepare a debate- either pro-walking or pro-driving (see attached worksheet as a basis for group discussion). In teams children can discuss why so many children are driven to school.

Suggestion 3: Carbon Creations

Research the effects of car fumes /traffic pollution on the environment (burning petrol from cars etc emits Co2). Make dioramas to show a healthy walking environment and an unhealthy one using craft materials.

Suggestion 4: The stats say it all

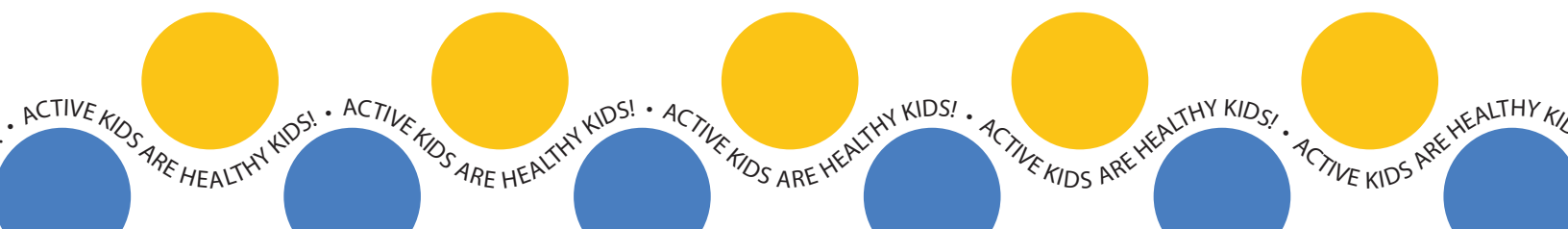
Examine the safety statistics on pedestrians and consider the factors that cause them. Make a poster illustrating what pedestrians should do when out walking. Display them around the school.

Suggestion 5: Rhyme and reasons

Write a 'rap' or poem about walking to school to perform at the next school assembly. This could be an acrostic poem.

Suggestion 6: Number crunching

Ask students: If you are driven to school, work out the total distance travelled each week to and from school. How much petrol is needed and what is the cost? Could you save money by walking to school two days a week? What other ways could you reduce the use of the car and walk more? Present your information in any way you choose (make a model, draw a graph or poster, do a talk).

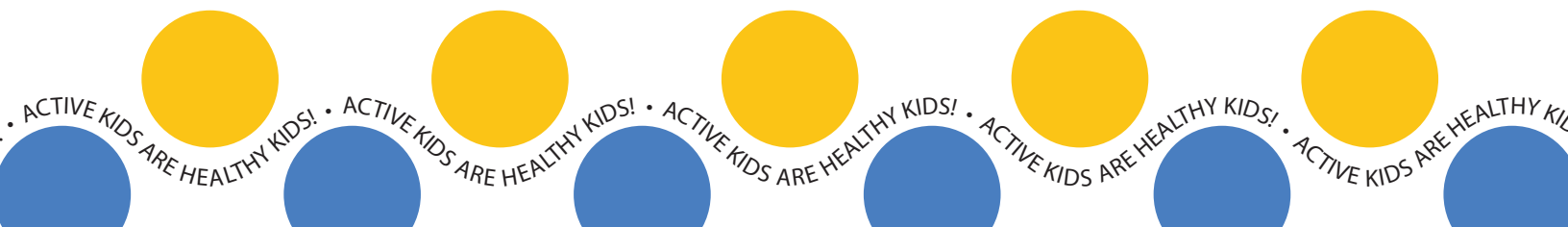
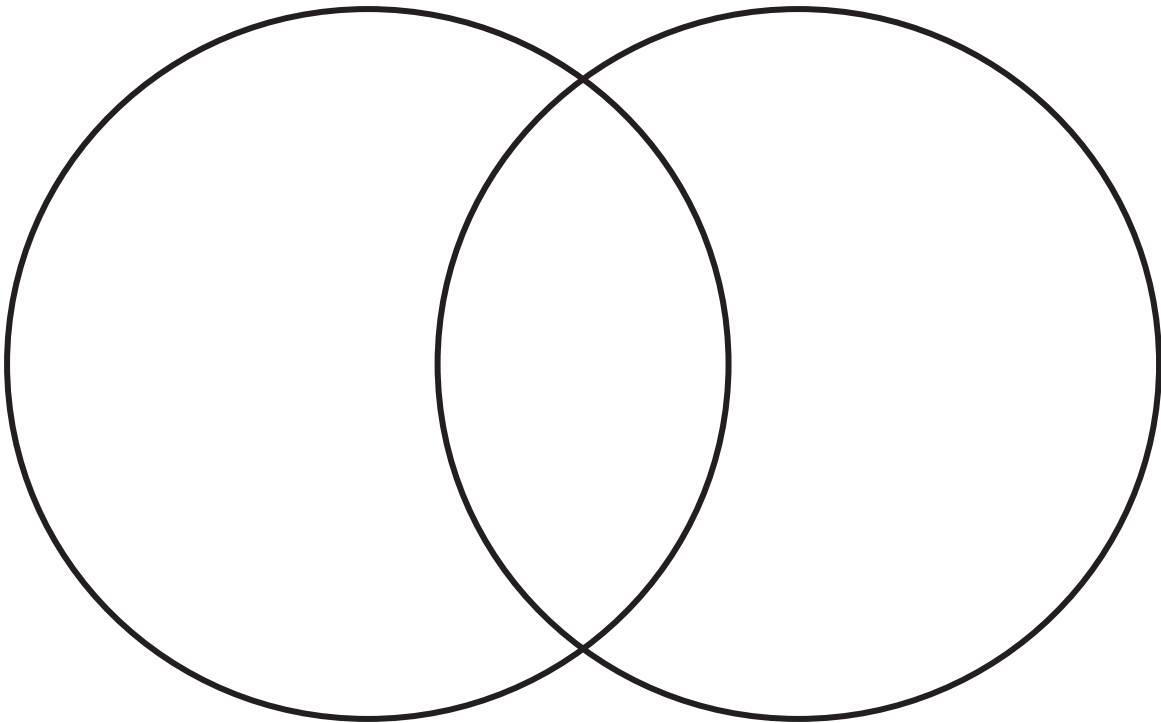




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VENN DIAGRAM



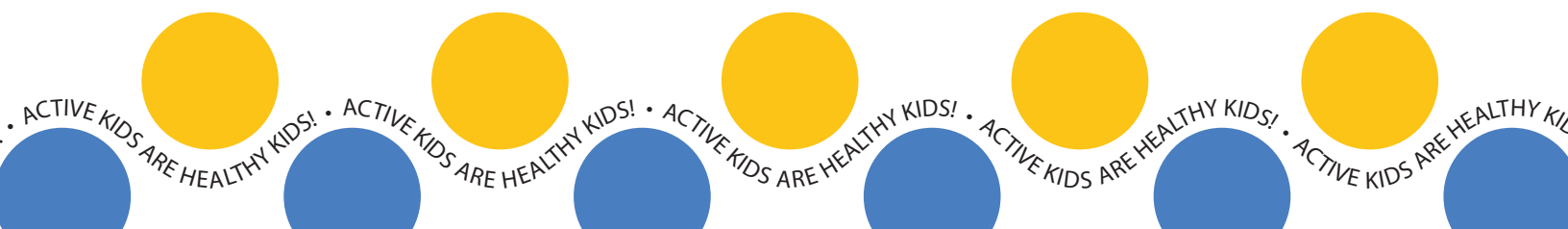


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DEBATE

Pro walking	Pro driving
<p>Why is it good to walk to school?</p> <p>List the benefits or advantages and explore them in detail to develop an argument that proves walking to school is better than driving.</p> <p>e.g. walking to school gets your metabolism started for the day</p>	<p>Why is it good to be driven to school?</p> <p>List the benefits or advantages and explore them in detail to develop an argument that proves being driven to school is better than walking.</p> <p>e.g. being driven is usually quicker</p>





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Rosemary Stanton's Guide to a Healthy Breakfast and How to Host One

Friday 15 May 2026 is National Walk Safely to School Day. Schools are encouraged to 'Host a Healthy Breakfast' for their local primary schools to promote a healthy diet in conjunction with regular physical activity.

Good nutrition is essential for good health and a good breakfast is vitally important to start the day well. Breakfast gets the metabolism going and helps prevent a slump in concentration during the late morning hours. Studies also show that those who eat a healthy breakfast eat less junk food later in the day and have a lower intake of saturated fat and a higher intake of essential nutrients and dietary fibre for the whole day.

For a healthy school breakfast, the following foods need no preparation:

Apples, pears, bananas, mandarins, grapes or any fresh fruit in season, cheese cubes or cheese sticks, fresh bread rolls (excellent if served with a banana), long life milk (preferably fat reduced), a soy or fruit based smoothie, small containers of unsweetened peaches or other fruit, dried fruit, water.

If there is someone who can help, good choices include:

Rockmelon, watermelon, kiwi fruit (in season), sliced French stick with peanut butter or yeast extract, yoghurt, whole-wheat breakfast biscuits, split and spread with peanut butter, milk, preferably fat reduced.

For breakfast at home, good choices include:

Some fresh fruit plus quality whole-wheat breakfast biscuits or natural muesli with milk, toast with an egg, toast with cheese or peanut butter, a smoothie (blend fat-reduced milk, yoghurt, fresh fruit and a little honey).

Poor breakfast choices include:

Breakfast bars (too much sugar), sugary cereals, crisps or chips, soft drinks, juice drinks.

ABOUT ROSEMARY

Dr Rosemary Stanton OAM is one of Australia's best known nutritionists. She was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for her services to community health through education in nutrition and dietetics. Dr Stanton is currently a Visiting Fellow in the School of Medical Sciences at the University of NSW. She is a Patron of the NSW School Canteens Association and a member of many advisory committees and professional associations in Australia and overseas.

