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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Spring to Better Health During Nebraska's Spring Walk to School Day

Safe Routes Nebraska Sponsors Day to Promote Joys of Walking, Biking

LINCOLN, Neb. – Nebraska schoolchildren and their parents are encouraged to join thousands of children across the state by participating in Safe Routes Nebraska's first-ever Spring Walk to School Day on April 23.

Safe Routes Nebraska is sponsoring the event to promote a more active lifestyle for children. Obesity is an epidemic that brings with it conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and asthma. Walking or biking to school is a great way to encourage a healthy way of life, as well as to be part of a statewide event to identify safer routes for walking and biking and to improve air quality.

Parents, educators and community leaders are encouraged to celebrate Nebraska's Spring Walk to School Day by organizing an event in their community where schoolchildren can meet to walk together along safe routes April 23.

For ideas about how to hold an event that fits your school or community, visit www.SafeRoutesNE.com and register your Spring Walk to School Day event. Once organizers have registered an event, they'll be sent a link to the Spring Walk to School Day toolkit. The marketing toolkit includes posters, invitations to parents and ideas about how to promote the program in your community. In addition, the toolkit has a certificate of participation that organizers can use to recognize children who take part in the walk to school event.

Walk to school events are organized nationally in order to emphasize the importance of increasing physical activity among children; creating safer routes for children who walk and bike; and improving pedestrian safety. In addition, traffic congestion and environmental concerns are addressed while building connections between families, schools and the greater community.

Parents can also take individual steps to encourage a healthier lifestyle by walking with their child to school during Nebraska's Spring Walk to School Day. In addition to kick-starting a healthier lifestyle for your child, it's also a great way to start your day!

The statewide Spring Walk to School Day is conducted as part of Safe Routes Nebraska, which is a part of the National Safe Routes to School Program. Through the 2005 passage of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy of Users, Congress designated \$612 million toward developing the National Safe Routes to School Program. Money is distributed to the Nebraska Department of Roads to fund education, planning and implementation of Safe Routes to School plans and programs.

For more information about how to organize or promote your Spring Walk to School Day event, contact Kelly Morgan, Safe Routes Nebraska program coordinator, at (402) 476-7331 or kmorgan@sinclairhille.com.

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