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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statewide Events Encourage Healthy, Active Lifestyles During Nebraska's Spring Walk to School Day, April 22

Safe Routes Nebraska Sponsors Day to Promote Fun and Safe Walking and Biking

Nebraska schoolchildren and their parents are encouraged to join thousands of children across the state by participating in Safe Routes Nebraska's second annual Spring Walk to School Day on Wednesday, April 22.

Safe Routes Nebraska is sponsoring the event to promote a more active lifestyle for children through safer routes to walk and bike. 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 and promote improved air quality for the community.

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 22.

The Safe Routes Nebraska Web site — www.saferoutesne.com — has a variety of tips and ideas for those wishing to hold a Walk to School Day event. Event organizers can also register events on the site, and once an event has been registered, organizers will be sent a link to the Spring Walk to School Day toolkit. The marketing toolkit includes posters, printable brochures for parents and ideas about how to promote the event in the community. In addition, the toolkit has a certificate of participation that organizers can use to recognize children who take part in the event.

Walk to school events are organized nationally 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 are also encouraged to actively participate in Spring Walk to School Day by walking with their child on April 22. In addition to kick-starting a healthier lifestyle, it's also a great way to start the day!

The statewide Spring Walk to School Day is conducted through Safe Routes Nebraska, a state affiliate 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 a 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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