



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Maywood Students Join International Walk to School Day *Event encourages more walking, biking to school*

Maywood, Neb. (Oct. 6, 2010) — Schoolchildren in Maywood took the first steps toward a healthier lifestyle Wednesday morning. Students from Maywood Elementary School took part in International Walk to School Day. Now in its 13th year, this worldwide event celebrates the benefits children get from walking to school.

About 100 students gathered at 7:40 a.m. in the village park for the event, designed to demonstrate safe walking, biking and the health benefits of physical activity. Maywood Principal Jeff Koehler and a new school mascot, Champ, led students, parents and teachers on the Safe Walk to School.

When they arrived, the celebration continued with a Welcome to School event including healthy breakfast foods for the students. Children could finish the day by learning bicycle safety and the rules of the road at an after-school bike rodeo.

The Walk to School Day event was a partnership with Safe Routes Nebraska and the Nebraska Department of Roads. "Walking to school is a great way for children to be more active," said Kelly Morgan, program coordinator for Safe Routes Nebraska. "Safe Routes Nebraska provides resources to help schools and communities get children out of the car and on their feet."

"The students were excited to come out for our Walk to School Day event," Koehler said. "Walking and biking to school is a great way for kids to get more activity in their day, and that will help them mature into more fit, healthy adults. Increasing activity such as walking and biking is a crucial factor in turning the tables on the childhood obesity epidemic in our country."

More than 1,000 Nebraska schoolchildren participated in International Walk to School Day events across the state. Safe Routes Nebraska offers information for schools and communities that want to plan their own Walk to School Day events. Local leaders can also apply for federally funded grants through Safe Routes. Funds are available for infrastructure improvements to make school routes safer as well as projects to encourage children to walk or bike to school. Information on those programs can be found at www.saferoutesne.com.

Photos of Maywood's International Walk to School Day event are available in the "Press Room" section at www.saferoutesne.com.

For more information about the Maywood-area International Walk to School Day event activities, contact Koehler at (308) 362-4223.

For more information about Safe Routes Nebraska, contact Morgan at (402) 476-7331 or kmorgan@sinclairhille.com. You can also contact Brad Penner at (402) 489-2121 or bpenner@snitilycarr.com.

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