

Students show the way

Three local primary schools are working together to develop a series of maps identifying safe walking routes to school as part of Walk to School 2016.

The VicHealth Walk to School maps and signs will be available for students from the beginning of Term 4 this year. Supported by Council's Walk to School team with funding from VicHealth, students from St Lawrence's Primary School, Leongatha Primary School and South Gippsland Specialist School are working to identify the safe routes to school to allow a shared map to be developed for fellow students.

The schools are three of 13 already registered for the Walk to School program in South Gippsland.

The new maps will show:

- Crossing points for students including the monitored school crossings and the new traffic lights at the intersection of Long Street and South Gippsland Highway
- A number of safe routes for each school from around town
- Coloured signs along each route to guide the way

"We hope that with the beginning of Term 4 families will choose walking instead of driving their children to school," Council's Walk to School Project Support Officer, Irene Desiatov explained. "Find a safe route and use it."

Families from outside Leongatha can drop their child at a point along one of the safe routes to walk some of the way to school.

Council's Social Planning Officer, Vicki Bradley, said Walk to School month was about developing healthy physical and mental habits for life.

"Students of all ages gain confidence in walking to school by using the safe routes to schools maps or following the coloured signs," she explained. "Walking to school can reduce barriers to physical activity and improve safety awareness and reduce traffic around schools. We hope the maps, signs and warmer weather means students will walk to school on a regular basis, even after Walk to School month has ended."

For more information contact Council on 5662 9200 or go to the Walk to School website at www.walktoschool.vic.gov.au.

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