



## GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Erica Fatima  
(404) 631.1836



### GET READY TO "WALK-N-ROLL!"

#### Georgia Department of Transportation Safe Routes to School Program Celebrates The International Walk to School Day October 8, 2008.

**ATLANTA**—Celebration for the International Walk to School Day will get moving on Wednesday, October 8, 2008. In the U.S., International Walk to School Day is expected to include 5,000 schools from all 50 states. Over 38 Georgia schools will join with other U.S. children and adults, including participants from 40 countries around the world. The month-long event will allow communities flexibility in organizing their Walk to School events.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is an international movement that began in the 1970's in Denmark and quickly spread to the United States in the 1990's and is now a worldwide phenomenon. The purpose of SRTS programs is to encourage kids to walk and bike to school, and to improve safety in the vicinity of schools.

Various schools in Georgia have "*fun-tastic*" activities planned for participants. Listed below are several Georgia schools sponsoring walk-n-roll events:

**DEKALB COUNTY, GA**—Knollwood Elementary School in South DeKalb anticipates more than 200 students will walk to school on Wednesday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, along with parents, teachers and community leaders. County Commissioner Larry Johnson, State Representative Stephanie Stuckey Benfield and an officer from the DeKalb County Police Department will be the featured speakers.

**AUGUSTA, GA**—Fort Gordon Base Housing's Freedom Park School expects more than 700 students and families to participate in its walk to school event. Members of the 447<sup>th</sup> Battalion will be singing cadence and marching children to Freedom Park School.

**COLUMBUS, GA**—Club View Elementary School will get moving October 8, 2008, starting at 7:30 A.M. Event planners expect 250+ participants to attend. The event will end with a pep rally.

Fewer than 15 percent of all school trips are made by walking or bicycling, one-quarter are made on a school bus, and over half of all children arrive at school in private automobiles. This decline in walking and bicycling has had an adverse effect on traffic congestion and air quality around schools, as well as pedestrian and bicycle safety. Research has shown that 25% of morning traffic is parents driving their students to school.

Walk to school events work to create safer routes for walking and bicycling and emphasize the importance of issues such as increasing physical activity among children, pedestrian safety, traffic congestion, concern for the environment, and building connections between families, schools and the broader community.

**For additional information, please visit these Web sites:**

Georgia Department of Transportation

[www.dot.ga.gov/localgovernment/fundingprograms/srts](http://www.dot.ga.gov/localgovernment/fundingprograms/srts)

International Walk to School in the USA

[www.walktoschool.org](http://www.walktoschool.org)

National Center for Safe Routes to School

[www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org)

International Walk to School

[www.iwalktoschool.org](http://www.iwalktoschool.org)

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