

PARENTS, DID YOU KNOW...?

May 21, 2013, “Active Healthy Kids Canada released its annual report card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth...assigning a “D” grade in the category of **active transportation**. A “D minus” grade was given for overall physical activity levels.” (*Children driven around too much, Canadian report suggests, 2013*)

“**Active transportation** [walking, cycling, etc.] offers a simple, cost-effective, accessible way for parents to help ensure kids are getting the activity they need without having to pay for organized sport,” says Kelly Murumets, president & CEO of ParticipAction.

Just having students walk to school (or anywhere else they need to go that is under 1 km), parents can contribute greatly to the physical well-being of their children. Some parent groups have organized walking school buses or bicycle caravans where one adult walks or rides with a child and, all along the route to school, children join the line. This promotes physical activity along with the opportunity for social interaction. No one gets ‘left out’ and all students arrive safely under the supervision of an adult (who has now become an excellent role model!).

Another idea, especially if it really is too far for the students to walk, would be to drop them off a block or two from the school and let them walk the remainder of the way. (They don’t really need to be dropped at the front door.) This would contribute to their daily physical activity with the added bonus of reducing vehicle congestion around the school – making the area around the school safer for all of our kids!

Often we are doing more harm than good when we drive our children everywhere they want to go. Let’s keep this generation of kids moving!