



Walk to School

October 2014

Official Community Partner



MEDIA RELEASE

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VICTORIAN KIDS WALK TO THE MOON AND BACK

Primary school children who took part in VicHealth's [Walk to School](#) campaign during October have racked up a record of more than 1.2 million walks throughout the month.

The Walk to School campaign inspired Victorian primary school students to walk, scoot, ride or roll to and from school every school day in October. A total of 78,628 students from 499 schools took part across the state – more than double the number of students who took part in 2013.

VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter said the students of Victoria had gone above and beyond to walk an estimated 896,000 kilometres – more than twice the distance from Earth to the Moon.

She said the Walk to School campaign was a great way to make physical activity a part of children's daily lives.

"Victorian children are living a more inactive lifestyle, and as a consequence, increasing their risk of serious health problems, such as obesity, type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Only one in five Australian children get the recommended one hour of physical activity every day and only one in four children in Victoria walk or ride to school.

"Students who took part in Walk to School increased their daily physical activity, but also reaped the added mental health and social benefits of walking. We hope that kids and their families will keep up the good work and make walking a healthy habit all year around.

"VicHealth is committed to tackling the tough issues – in particular the rising obesity levels in Victoria. Walk to School is a great initiative for children, and we also have a free TeamUp app that connects adults and groups to a wide range of physical activities within their local community," Ms Rechter added.

Now in its ninth year, VicHealth's Walk to School campaign successfully raises awareness of the need for children to make walking part of their daily routine to improve fitness, friendships, the environment and their confidence.

"The 52 grant recipient councils played a key role in making this year's campaign such a success. These councils have committed to deliver initiatives beyond October such as promoting regular walking opportunities within schools, encouraging the use of Stop and Drop zones up to a kilometre away from the school entrance, and developing walking tools for parents, carers and children," Ms Rechter added.

One winner and runner-up was selected in each of the four Victorian education regions based on the school's overall participation rate. Each winning school will receive a full-day clinic run by Walk to School's official community partner **Melbourne City FC** game development officers, plus a class set of 30 soccer balls and 30 soccer bibs. The runner-up in each region will receive a class set of 30 soccer balls and 30 soccer bibs.



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an initiative of
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The Walk to School winner and runner-up for each region in 2014 are:

North Western

Winner – Leitchville Primary School

Runner-up – St Mary's School (Sea Lake)

North Eastern

Winner – St Anne's School (Kew East)

Runner-up – Knox Central Primary School

South Western

Winner – Forrest Primary School

Runner-up – Balliang East Primary School

South Eastern

Winner – Immaculate Heart of Mary School

Runner-up – Maffra Primary School

Regional summaries

North-Western Victoria Region

- Number of primary schools that participated in Walk to School 2014: 112
- Number of students that participated in Walk to School 2014: more than 18,000
- Total number of walks recorded by participating students: more than 312,000
- Estimated total distance walked: more than 224,000 kilometres

North-Eastern Victoria Region

- Number of primary schools that participated in Walk to School 2014: 111
- Number of students that participated in Walk to School 2014: nearly 17,000
- Total number of walks recorded by participating students: more than 250,000
- Estimated total distance walked: more than 180,000 kilometres

South-Western Victoria Region

- Number of primary schools that participated in Walk to School 2014: 156
- Number of students that participated in Walk to School 2014: more than 25,000
- Total number of walks recorded by participating students: more than 395,000
- Estimated total distance walked: more than 284,000 kilometres

South-Eastern Victoria Region

- Number of primary schools that participated in Walk to School 2014: 120
- Number of students that participated in Walk to School 2014: more than 18,000
- Total number of walks recorded by participating students: almost 290,000
- Estimated total distance walked: more than 208,000 kilometres

For further information, contact VicHealth Senior Media Advisor Helen Walsh on 0435 761 732