

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Safe Routes to School initiative to kick off with presentation Sept. 29

(Lawrence, KS) – The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department is working in conjunction with Lawrence Public Schools, the City of Lawrence and the Lawrence-Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Organization to launch a Safe Routes to School initiative.

The goal is to develop a citywide plan that enables and encourages children to walk and bike to and from school. Community Health Director Chris Tilden said, “The research is pretty clear that kids who walk and bike to school are more active. They will be healthier and perform better in school.”

The project seeks to form teams at every public and private school in Lawrence that serves kindergarten through eighth grade. These teams will be comprised of school faculty, parents, students and neighbors, and they will be looking at ways to develop a safe culture around biking and walking. The Health Department also will be working with these teams to collect data in order to measure progress.

There are two opportunities for the public to learn more about the Safe Routes to School initiative in Lawrence:

- **“Why Safe Routes to School Matters,”** a National Center for Safe Routes to School presentation, 7-8 p.m., Sept. 29, in the Community Health Facility, 200 Maine. Melody Geraci, a Safe Routes to School master instructor, will be the presenter. She is deputy director of the Active Transportation Alliance in Chicago.
- **Safe Routes to School National Course**, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sept. 30, in the Community Health Facility, 200 Maine St. The course is offered free of charge with refreshments, snacks and lunch provided. Course topics include: Perspectives from local stakeholders, pick-up and drop-off strategies, enforcement strategies and action steps. Participants also will do a field exercise at nearby Pinckney School. Seating is limited. To make a reservation, visit saferoutescourse.eventbrite.com or contact Community Health Planner Charlie Bryan at 785-856-7357 or cbryan@ldchealth.org.