TEAMING UP for a SAFER, HEALTHIER NEW ORLEANS

The KidsWalk Coalition is a local partnership of public health, community and transportation organizations and government agencies dedicated to improving the health of New Orleanians. Our mission is to make walking and bicycling safe for children and families to access schools, healthy eating choices and other neighborhood destinations.

Today, over 40% of all children in New Orleans exceed a healthy weight. Obesity is the second leading cause of preventable death in the U.S., and can cause other serious health conditions including heart disease, Type II diabetes and hypertension. Unsafe streets and lack of recreation facilities make it difficult for kids to be active in New Orleans. For instance, we found that 20% of city sidewalks around schools are missing or in poor condition.

That’s why KidsWalk Coalition partners with the City of New Orleans Department of Public Works to make streets safer around schools and parks, and helps schools and community groups encourage walking and bicycling in neighborhoods.

KidsWalk Coalition assessed the walking conditions around 63 elementary and middle school campuses in Orleans Parish, and found that just one scored “Good” and 38 were “Hazardous.”

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OUR WORK

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL
As a liaison between schools and the New Orleans Department of Public Works, we coordinate sign replacements and crosswalk maintenance and advise on traffic logistics and on-campus safety improvements.

Our staff helps K-8 schools apply for Safe Routes to School grants. These reimbursable grants provide up to $300,000 per school for infrastructure improvements and education, encouragement and enforcement programs.

In May 2011, KidsWalk Coalition published Stepping to School: An Assessment of Neighborhood Walkability and Solutions for a Safer, Healthier New Orleans. The report assesses pedestrian infrastructure, such as sidewalks and crosswalks, around all public elementary and middle schools in Orleans Parish.

POLICY ADVOCACY
KidsWalk Coalition successfully advocated for New Orleans City Council’s adoption of a “Complete Streets” policy in 2011, and is ensuring the new Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance includes land use regulations that encourage walking and bicycling.

OUTREACH and PARTNERSHIP
Coalition members convene quarterly to share news, information and resources, and to coordinate activities that make walking and bicycling safe and more convenient in New Orleans.

THE COALITION

AARP Louisiana
Bike Easy
Broad Community Connections
Center for Planning Excellence
City of New Orleans Health Department
City of New Orleans Department of Public Works
City Year Louisiana
Communities in Schools of Greater New Orleans
Friends of Lafitte Corridor
The Greater New Orleans Foundation
The Louisiana Public Health Institute

Louisiana Safe Routes to School Program
Neighborhoods Partnership Network
New Orleans Regional Planning Commission
Prevention Research Center at Tulane University
Rails to Trails Conservancy
The Recovery School District
Safe Streets / Strong Communities
Transport for NOLA
University of New Orleans Transportation Institute
The Urban Conservancy
Youth Run New Orleans

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