



**ACTIVE KIDS
ARE HEALTHY KIDS**

Walk Safely to School Day

A partnership between Sunraysia Community Health Services, members of the Northern Mallee PCP Physical Activity workgroup and local schools saw hundreds of Sunraysia children take part in Walk Safely to School Day on Friday 20th May 2011.

Eleven local primary schools registered to participate in local activities including colouring in competitions, Active Travel surveys and a launch of the Hands Up! Promotion.



Many of the participating schools offered 'Walking School Buses' from at least one location on the day with school staff volunteering their time to supervise children walking safely to school. Schools adapted the walking bus idea to suit their individual communities with numerous locations, before and after school buses and even children designing decorated cardboard buses to carry to school. No matter the format, all children agreed that the buses were a fun way to get to school with many children asking "when are we going to do it again?".

Colouring in competitions were conducted at each registering school with active prizes for children in prep, grade 1/2, grade 3/4 and grade 5/6 donated by the Northern Mallee PCP. The colouring in pages were completed either in class or at home, with those that were sent home being a great way to engage parents with the local activities.



To gain an insight into how children are travelling to school and the barriers for active travel eight schools distributed active travel surveys to parents. Results of these surveys are currently being collated but will provide valuable information to guide future active travel initiatives within the Sunraysia region.

Building on the excitement of the day schools have been encouraged to join in the Hands Up! Active travel program. Hands Up! Is an initiative of Bicycle Victoria which asks schools to gather active travel data about their students once a month. Gathering this data encourages schools to promote active transport within their school communities and the data can be used to advocate for improved facilities around the school to support walkers and riders. A local challenge is currently underway with schools entering their active travel data at least once a term entering a draw for a \$100 incentive prize to be used for healthy eating or physical activity initiatives.

Many thanks go to the schools who participated on the day:

Mildura West Primary
Mildura South Primary
Red Cliffs Primary
Merbein P-10 (West campus)
Cardross Primary
St Mary's School Robinvale

Irymple Primary
Henderson College
Sacred Heart Primary
Sunnycliffs Primary
The Lake Primary

20/05/2011