Take a walk with a child and decide for yourselves.

Everyone benefits from walking. But walking needs to be safe and easy. Take a walk with your child and use this checklist to decide if your neighborhood is a friendly place to walk. Take heart if you find problems, there are ways you can make things better.

Getting started:

First, you'll need to pick a place to walk, like the route to school, a friend's house or just somewhere fun to go.

The second step involves the checklist. Read over the checklist before you go, and as you walk, note the locations of things you would like to change. At the end of your walk, give each question a rating. Then add up the numbers to see how you rated your walk overall.

After you've rated your walk and identified any problem areas, the next step is to figure out what you can do to improve your community's score. You'll find both immediate answers and long-term solutions under "Improving Your Community's Score..." on the third page.
Take a walk and use this checklist to rate your neighborhood’s walkability.

How walkable is your community?

Location of walk ______________________

Rating Scale: 1 2 3 4 5 6

awful  many problems  some problems  good  very good  excellent

1. Did you have room to walk?

☐ Yes  ☐ Some problems:
☐ Sidewalks or paths started and stopped
☐ Sidewalks were broken or cracked
☐ Sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc.
☐ No sidewalks, paths, or shoulders
☐ Too much traffic
☐ Something else __________________________
Locations of problems: ______________________
Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

2. Was it easy to cross streets?

☐ Yes  ☐ Some problems:
☐ Road was too wide
☐ Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross
☐ Needed striped crosswalks or traffic signals
☐ Parked cars blocked our view of traffic
☐ Trees or plants blocked our view of traffic
☐ Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair
☐ Something else __________________________
Locations of problems: ______________________
Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Did drivers behave well?

☐ Yes  ☐ Some problems: Drivers...
☐ Backed out of driveways without looking
☐ Did not yield to people crossing the street
☐ Turned into people crossing the street
☐ Drove too fast
☐ Sped up to make it through traffic lights or drove through traffic lights?
☐ Something else __________________________
Locations of problems: ______________________
Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

4. Was it easy to follow safety rules?

Could you and your child...

☐ Yes  ☐ No  Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen by drivers?
☐ Yes  ☐ No  Stop and look left, right and then left again before crossing streets?
☐ Yes  ☐ No  Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic where there were no sidewalks?
☐ Yes  ☐ No  Cross with the light?
☐ Yes  ☐ No
Locations of problems: ______________________
Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

5. Was your walk pleasant?

☐ Yes  ☐ Some unpleasant things:
☐ Needed more grass, flowers, or trees
☐ Scary dogs
☐ Scary people
☐ Not well lighted
☐ Dirty, lots of litter or trash
☐ Something else __________________________
Locations of problems: ______________________
Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

How does your neighborhood stack up?
Add up your ratings and decide.

1. _____  26-30  Celebrate! You have a great neighborhood for walking.
2. _____  21-25  Celebrate a little. Your neighborhood is pretty good.
3. _____  16-20  Okay, but it needs work.
4. _____  11-15  It needs lots of work. You deserve better than that.
5. _____  5-10  Call out the National Guard before you walk. It’s a disaster area.

Total _____

Now that you’ve identified the problems, go to the next page to find out how to fix them.
### Improving Your Community's Score...

Now that you know the problems, you can find the answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>What You and Your Child Can Do Immediately</th>
<th>What You and Your Community Can Do with More Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **1. Did you have room to walk?** | - pick another route for now  
- tell local traffic engineering or public works department about specific problems and provide a copy of the checklist | - speak up at board meetings  
- write or petition city for walkways and gather neighborhood signatures  
- make media aware of problem  
- work with a local transportation engineer to develop a plan for a safe walking route |
| Sidewalks or paths started and stopped  
Sidewalks broken or cracked  
Sidewalks blocked  
No sidewalks, paths or shoulders  
Too much traffic | | |
| **2. Was it easy to cross streets?** | - pick another route for now  
- share problems and checklist with local traffic engineering or public works department  
- trim your trees or bushes that block the street and ask your neighbors to do the same  
- leave nice notes on problem cars asking owners not to park there | - push for crosswalks/signals/parking changes/curb ramps at city meetings  
- report to traffic engineer where parked cars are safety hazards  
- report illegally parked cars to the police  
- request that the public works department trim trees or plants  
- make media aware of problem |
| Road too wide  
Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross  
Crosswalks/traffic signals needed  
View of traffic blocked by parked cars, trees, or plants  
Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair | | |
| **3. Did drivers behave well?** | - pick another route for now  
- set an example: slow down and be considerate of others  
- encourage your neighbors to do the same  
- report unsafe driving to the police | - petition for more enforcement  
- request protected turns  
- ask city planners and traffic engineers for traffic calming ideas  
- ask schools about getting crossing guards at key locations  
- organize a neighborhood speed watch program |
| Backed without looking  
Did not yield  
Turned into walkers  
Drove too fast  
Sped up to make traffic lights or drove through red lights | | |
| **4. Could you follow safety rules?** | - educate yourself and your child about safe walking  
- organize parents in your neighborhood to walk children to school | - encourage schools to teach walking safely  
- help schools start safe walking programs  
- encourage corporate support for flex schedules so parents can walk children to school |
| Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen  
Stop and look left, right, left before crossing  
Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic  
Cross with the light | | |
| **5. Was your walk pleasant?** | - point out areas to avoid to your child; agree on safe routes  
- ask neighbors to keep dogs leashed or fenced  
- report scary dogs to the animal control department  
- report scary people to the police  
- report lighting needs to the police or appropriate public works department  
- take a walk with a trash bag  
- plant trees, flowers in your yard | - request increased police enforcement  
- start a crime watch program in your neighborhood  
- organize a community clean-up day  
- sponsor a neighborhood beautification or tree-planting day  
- begin an adopt-a-street program |
| Needs grass, flowers, trees  
Scary dogs  
Scary people  
Not well lit  
Dirty, litter | | |

**A Quick Health Check**

- start with short walks and work up to 30 minutes of walking most days  
- invite a friend or child along  
- get media to do a story about the health benefits of walking  
- call parks and recreation department about community walks  
- encourage corporate support for employee walking programs
Great Resources

**Walking Information**
Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC)
UNC Highway Safety Research Center
730 Airport Road, Suite 300
Campus Box 3430
Chapel Hill, NC
27599-3430
Phone: (919) 962-2202
www.pedbikeinfo.org
www.walkinginfo.org

National Center for Bicycling and Walking
Campaign to Make America Walkable
1506 21st Street, NW
Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (800) 760-NBPC
www.bikefed.org

**Walking and Health**
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity
Phone: (888) 232-4674
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/readyset
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/index.htm

Prevention Magazine
33 East Minor Street
Emmaus, PA 18098
www.itsallaboutprevention.com

Shape Up America!
6707 Democracy Boulevard
Suite 306
Bethesda, MD 20817
www.shapeup.org

**Walking Coalitions**
America Walks
P.O. Box 29103
Portland, Oregon 97210
Phone: (503) 222-1077
www.americawalks.org

Partnership for a Walkable America
National Safety Council
1121 Spring Lake Drive
Itasca, IL 60143-3201
Phone: (603) 285-1121
www.nsc.org/walkable.htm

**Pedestrian Safety**
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Traffic Safety Programs
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590
Phone: (202) 662-0600
www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/ped}

National SAFE KIDS Campaign
1301 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20004
Phone: (202) 662-0600
Fax: (202) 393-2072
www.safekids.org

**Walking Day Web Sites**
USA event: www.walktoschool-usa.org
International: www.iwalktoschool.org

**Street Design and Traffic Calming**
Federal Highway Administration
Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Research Program
HSR – 20
6300 Georgetown Pike
McLean, VA 22101
www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/index.htm

Institute of Transportation Engineers
www.ite.org

Surface Transportation Policy Project
www.transact.org

Transportation for Livable Communities
www.tlcnetwork.org

**Accessible Sidewalks**
US Access Board
1331 F Street, NW
Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20004-1111
Phone: (800) 872-2253;
(800) 993-2822 (TTY)
www.access-board.gov