



## Winter Walking Safety Tips

Walking in winter can be just as enjoyable and doable as in fair weather months. Don't let the cold and snow keep the kids from trekking to school, in the community or on the trails. Just keep a few safety and comfort tips in mind and they'll be walking in a winter wonderland.

### Clothing Tips

- Keep hands, head and ear lobes covered. Be sure hats and scarves don't block hearing or vision.
- Wear mittens as they keep hands warmer than wearing gloves.
- Wear warm, waterproof boots with good treads for better traction on snow/ice.
- Carry umbrellas for those rainy days.
- Wear woollen or insulating synthetic clothing to help retain body heat.
- Layer clothing and wear a coat that is waterproof/water resistant and deflects the wind.
- In extreme cold keep as much skin covered as possible.
- Beware if the temperature falls below  $-25^{\circ}\text{C}$  or if the wind chill is  $-28^{\circ}\text{C}$  or colder. This is when exposed skin freezes in only a few minutes.
- Change wet clothes as soon as possible - tuck extra socks and mitts into those backpacks.
- Be sure to wear sunscreen - yes, you can still get a sunburn in winter.

### Walking Tips

- On dark winter mornings make sure kids are visible to oncoming traffic with reflective tape or tags on jackets, backpacks, boots, umbrellas, etc.
- Always walk on the sidewalk. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing oncoming cars and stay on the shoulder or very close to the curb.
- When crossing at crosswalks, wait until cars come to a complete stop before crossing. They may not be able to stop suddenly on icy roads.
- Take care near large snow banks that obscure visibility for walkers and cars at street crossings.
- Stay away from snowploughs or snow blowers. Blowing snow from these machines can reduce visibility and may include flying pieces of ice and gravel.
- Ask the school, school board and municipality to ensure sidewalks are cleared on at least one side of the route to school and on school property.

Winter Walk Day is a partnership of the **Ecology Action Centre, Recreation NS** and the **NS Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage**.