

## **Kick Up Your Heels and Kick the Commuting Habit: Try Walking or Biking Instead**

How far is it from your home to work, church, the grocery store, or your best friend's house? Do you always drive to get there? Have you thought about leaving your car behind and walking or riding your bike instead? **[Modify this newsletter article to fit the type of newsletter it will go in. For example, if it is for employees at a certain workplace, focus more on getting to work. If it is in a church newsletter, focus more on getting to church or church-related activities.]**

Many of us enjoy walking or biking for exercise or recreation, but when it comes time to get somewhere, we jump in the car without giving it a second thought. At one time, though, walking and biking were means of transportation...not something people did simply for exercise or for fun.

In this day of rising gas prices, congestion on our roads, poor air quality, and increasing rates of obesity, maybe it's time to reconsider walking and biking for transportation.

Many will argue that walking and biking for transportation aren't practical...the destination is too far away, the bike helmet will mess up their hair, the weather is too hot or too cold, or there simply isn't a safe place to walk or bike.

Many of these arguments are valid. Some, such as weather or messy hair, are out of our control. Other issues, however, such as creating safe routes for walking and biking, can be tackled by our community. **[Add information or change wording, as appropriate, to discuss any work you or others are doing to create safer walking/biking routes in your community.]**

However, the benefits of walking and biking are valid as well:

- You'll save money on gas and wear and tear on your car.
- You'll cut down on air pollution.
- You'll get exercise and cut down on your own stress.
- You'll reduce the number of cars on the road.

Instead of concentrating on where or why you can't walk or bike, think about where you could, even just occasionally. Maybe your job is too far away, or you are too dressed up when you go to church, but could you ride your bike with your kids to the park on weekends instead of driving? Could you walk to meet your friend for coffee or to pick up a DVD rental instead of taking your car?

Next time you're about to jump in your car, consider your alternatives. Could you walk or bike? The benefits provide many good reasons to kick the commuting habit and kick up your heels instead.