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Media Release

Stepping up: Walking to School to become easier as NSW Government invests in safe walking

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Vision and photos are available here:

A Western Sydney primary school is the latest to benefit from the NSW Government's Get NSW Active grants, as families across the state are encouraged to leave the car at home more often this National Walk Safely to School Day.

Data shows less than 25 per cent of NSW school children currently walk or ride to and from school, down from 75 per cent 40 years ago.

Canterbury-Bankstown Council has received a \$600,000 grant to install upgraded paths and crossings at Canterbury South Public School that will link to existing walking and cycling networks in the local area.

The Get NSW Active program delivers better walking and cycling connections along routes to schools across the state.

Over the last two years, more than 93 grants valued at \$26 million have been provided to councils, including \$6.6 million in Greater Sydney and \$19.3 million in regional NSW. A further \$10 million was recently added to the program, with successful applicants to be announced next month.

National Walk Safely to School Day is an initiative led by the Pedestrian Council of Australia with support from Transport for NSW, providing schools with information and classroom resources on the importance of road safety.

Transport for NSW also provides over 1,400 trained school crossing supervisors at 970 schools across NSW, helping kids to cross the road safely. It's Safety Town website is a useful family resource for road safety tips and advice to help keep their children safe.

For more information on the Safety Town program visit:

<https://www.safetytown.com.au>.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Roads John Graham:

“Today is an important reminder that we all have a role to play in reducing road trauma. Teaching our children how to get to and from school safely is extremely important.

“Sadly, in the past 12 months, 20 children aged five to 16 years were injured in active school zones.

“I’d like to remind motorists to do their part in making sure children are safe by sticking to the speed limit in school zones and watching out for kids.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Transport Jo Haylen:

“We want to make it easier for kids across NSW to walk safely to school, every day. Even on rainy days like today, grab the brolly and slip on some gumboots if you can.

“That’s why we’re investing millions to make it safer and easier for kids to walk to school, so parents can leave the car at home.

“The benefits of walking to school for children are enormous, and today on National Walk to School day, it provides a great opportunity for parents to talk to their kids road safety, and healthy life-time travel habits.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Transport and Roads Jenny Aitchison:

“Today is great day to commit to walking to school with your kids, which can come with extra challenges in rural areas, like traveling longer distances or higher-speed traffic.

“For kids living in the bush, sometimes they have to travel long distances to get to a school. Even if you’re driving from a far distance, I encourage parents to park nearby, hold your kids’ hands and walk the rest of the way to school.

“We’ll continue to work with the federal government and local councils to roll out critical safety infrastructure, as part of the \$40 million School Zone Infrastructure Sub Program for Regional NSW.”

Quotes attributable to Member for Canterbury Sophie Cotsis:

“I am excited that in just a few months’ time, students at Canterbury South Primary School will have a new, safer crossing and wider footpaths in the surrounding streets. The new paths will fill an important gap between the school gate and the Cooks River walking and cycling paths.

“This is a great example of council and government working together to get the best outcome for the community, and I know students and parents are going to love it.”

Quotes attributable to Pedestrian Council of Australia CEO Harold Scruby:

“Physical activity has many social, emotional, physical and mental health benefits.

“Regular physical activity, especially walking, can improve self-esteem and confidence, help concentration and improve overall fitness. And children who are physically active before school, perform better academically.

“But the most important message remains: Until they’re ten, children must always hold an adult’s hand when crossing the road.

“Never just trust a green light. Always stop, look, listen, think, before crossing the road.”

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