



# Walkability Checklist

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. If you find problems, there are ways you can make things better.

**Getting started:** Pick a place to walk, like the route to school, a friend's house, or just somewhere fun to go. 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, circle an overall rating for each question. Then add up the numbers to see how you rated your walk.

**Rating scale**

1 =awful

4 = good

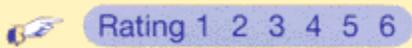
2 = many problems

5 = very good

3 = some problems

6 = excellent

## 1. Did you have enough room to walk safely?



Yes  Some problems:

- Sidewalks or paths started and stopped
- Sidewalks were broken or cracked
- Sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, dumpsters, etc.
- No sidewalks, paths, or shoulders
- Too much traffic
- Something else? \_\_\_\_\_

Locations of problems: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Was it easy to cross streets?



Rating 1 2 3 4 5 6

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: \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Did drivers behave well?



Rating 1 2 3 4 5 6

Yes  Some problems:

Drivers ...

- Backed out of driveways without looking
- Did not yield to people crossing street
- Turned into people crossing streets
- Drove too fast
- Sped up to make it through traffic lights or drove through red lights
- Something else? \_\_\_\_\_

Locations of problems: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. Was it easy to follow safety rules?



Rating 1 2 3 4 5 6

Could you and your child ...

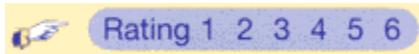
Yes No

Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen by drivers?

- o o Stop and look left, right, and left again before crossing streets?
- o o Walk on sidewalks, or shoulders (if no sidewalks), facing traffic?
- o o Cross with the light?

Locations of problems: \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. Was your walk pleasant?



o Yes o Some unpleasant things:

- \_\_\_ Needs more grass, flowers, or trees
- \_\_\_ Scary dogs
- \_\_\_ Suspicious activity
- \_\_\_ Not well lit
- \_\_\_ Dirty, lots of litter or trash
- \_\_\_ Something else? \_\_\_\_\_

Locations of problems: \_\_\_\_\_



How does your neighborhood stack up? **Add up your ratings**

**and decide.**

 1 \_\_\_

 2 \_\_\_

 3 \_\_\_

 4 \_\_\_

 5 \_\_\_

(     ) = total

**How did your neighborhood rate?**

**26 - 30** Celebrate! You have a great neighborhood for walking.



**21 - 25** Celebrate a little. Your neighborhood is pretty good.

**16 - 20** Okay, but it needs work.



**11 - 15** It needs lots of work. You deserve better than that.

**5 - 10** Call out the National Guard before you walk. It's a disaster area.



## Did You Find Something That Needs to be Changed?



The next page has suggestions for making neighborhoods better places for walking that match up with the problems you identified.

During your walk **how did you feel physically?** Could you go as far or as fast as you wanted? Were you short of breath, tired, or did you have sore feet or muscles? The next page also has suggestions about walking for exercise.



## MAKING YOUR COMMUNITY MORE WALKABLE



You have collected valuable information about walking in your neighborhood. Listed below are some suggestions for making it easier to walk in your community. Your local traffic engineer may be the key person to contact about many of the things you want to change.

But before you do, learn about ideas other communities are trying. A new concept called traffic calming is transforming neighborhood streets from roads that encourage speeding to places that invite people to walk.

**What you and your child can do IMMEDIATELY**

**What you and your community can do with more time**

**1. Did you have room to walk safely?**



Sidewalks or paths started and stopped  
Sidewalks broken/cracked  
Sidewalks blocked

No sidewalks, paths or shoulder  
Too much traffic

- Pick another route for now
- Tell local transportation engineers or public works department about specific problems, and provide a copy of checklist

- Speak up at board/development meetings
- Write or petition the city for walkways
- Gather neighborhood signatures
- Make media aware of problem

**2. Was it easy to cross streets?**



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; ramp needed repair

- Pick another route for now
- Share problems and checklist with local transportation engineers or public works department
- Trim your trees and bushes that block the street, and ask neighbors to do the same
- Leave nice notes on problem cars, asking owners not to park there

- Push for crosswalks, signals, or parking changes at city meetings
- Give report identifying parked cars that are safety hazards to transportation engineer
- Report illegally parked cars to the police
- Request that public works department trims trees and plants
- Make media aware of problem

**3. Did drivers behave well?**



Backed without looking  
Did not yield

Turned into walkers  
Drove too fast  
Sped up to make traffic

- Pick another route for now
- Set an example: slow down and be considerate of walkers
- Encourage your neighbors to do the same
- Report unsafe driving to

- Organize neighborhood speed watch program
- Petition for more enforcement
- Ask city planners and traffic engineers for traffic calming ideas

lights or drove through red lights

police

- Request protected turn signals
- ask schools about getting crossing guards at key locations where children cross

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#### 4. Could you follow safety rules?



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 (if no sidewalks)

Cross with the light

- Educate yourself about safe walking and teach your child
- Organize parents in your neighborhood to walk children to school
- Encourage schools to teach pedestrian safety
- Help schools start Safe Routes to School programs
- Encourage corporate support for flex schedules so parents can walk children to school

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#### 5. Was your walk pleasant?



Needs grass, flowers, trees

Scary dogs

Suspicious activity

Not well lit

Dirty, littered

- Pick another route for now
- Ask neighbors to keep dogs leashed or fenced
- Report scary dogs to animal control department
- Report suspicious activity to police
- Report lighting needs to the city
- Take a walk with a trash bag
- Plant trees, flowers, and bushes in your yard
- Request increased police enforcement
- Start a crime-watch program in your neighborhood.
- Organize a community cleanup day
- Sponsor a tree planting day
- Sponsor a neighborhood beautification day

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#### Quick health check



Could not go as far or as fast as you wanted

Were tired, short of breath, or had sore feet or muscles

- Start with short walks and work up to 30 minutes of walking most days
- Invite a friend or child along
- Replace some driving trips with walking trips
- 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



# Contact List

## Street Design and Traffic Calming

### **Federal Highway Administration**

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Research Program  
HSR-20  
6300 Georgetown Pike  
McLean, VA 22101  
Web site: <http://www.tfhrc.gov/>

### **National Bicycle and Pedestrian Clearinghouse**

Campaign to Make America Walkable  
1506 21 st Street, NW  
Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20036  
Phone: (800) 760-NBPC  
Web site: <http://www.bikefed.org/>

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## Websites related to traffic calming and street design

**Institute of Transportation Engineers**  
<http://www.ite.org/>

**Surface Transportation Policy Project**  
<http://www.transact.org/>

**Transportation for Livable Communities**

<http://www.tlcnetwork.org/>

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## Accessible Sidewalks

**US Access Board**

1331 F Street, NW

Suite 1000

Washington, DC 20004-1111

Phone: (800) 872-2253; (800) 993-2822

Web site: <http://www.access-board.gov/>

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## Safer, More Attractive Neighborhoods

**National Crime Prevention Council**

1700 K Street, NW

Second Floor

Washington, DC 20006-3817

Phone: (202) 466-6272

Web site: <http://www.ncpc.org/>

**National Arbor Day Foundation**

100 Arbor Avenue

Nebraska City, NE 68410

Phone: (402) 474-5655

Web site: <http://www.arborday.org/>

**Partnership for a Walkable America**

National Safety Council

1121 Spring Lake Drive

Itasca, IL 60143-3201

Phone: (630) 285-1121

Web site: <http://www.nsc.org/>

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# Pedestrian Safety

## **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**

Traffic Safety Programs  
400 Seventh Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20590  
Phone: (202) 366-091 0  
Web site: <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/>

## **National SAFE KIDS Campaign**

1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Suite 1 000  
Washington, DC 20004-1707  
Phone: (202) 662-0600  
Web site: <http://www.safekids.org/>

## **Safest Route to School Program**

Contact local AAA Club  
(ask for publications: #3201, #3212, #3213, and #3320)

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# Walking and Health

## **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity  
Phone: (888) 232-4674  
Web site: [www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/readysset](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/readysset)

## **Prevention Magazine's Walking Club**

33 East Minor Street  
Emmaus, PA 18098

## **Shape Up America!**

6707 Democracy Boulevard  
Suite 306  
Bethesda, MD 20817  
Web site: <http://www.shapeup.org/>

**Walk a Child to School Program**

Walking Magazine

9-11 Harcourt Street

Boston, MA 02116

Phone: (800) 266-3312