

Join schools, worksites and communities around Maryland to celebrate

Walk Maryland Day – October 5, 2016

Walk Maryland Day Event

Walk Maryland Day is a motivating event that promotes physical activity in the form of walking. Inaugurated as part of the U.S. Surgeon General's Call to Action to promote walking as a daily physical activity.

Why Walk?

Walking as a physical activity provides many health benefits including helping maintain a healthy weight, reducing risks for heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, depression, and some cancers as well as improving quality of life.

Walk Maryland Day Event goals:

- Promote physical activity opportunities where Marylanders learn, work and live
- Engage the community in walking for daily physical activity
- Support safe walking in Maryland through enhanced state agency coordination (e.g., DHMH, MSDE, MDOT, UMD extension, etc.)
- Promote school participation in Walk Maryland Day (International Walk To School Day) by registering at walkbiketoschool.org
- Promote individual participation in Walk Maryland Day
- Promote worksite participation in Walk Maryland Day by directing Healthiest Maryland Businesses (HMB) and other Maryland worksites to walking resources



Want to Participate? Here's how:

Envision an activity/event

Think about what motivates you individually or as a group/community and build a theme for the Walk Maryland Day around those interests.

Register

Register at the Walk Maryland Day Website as an individual or as a group and access free downloadable event fliers, banners, resources toolkit, etc.

Spread the word!

Approach other people and families in the community who share the same passion for walking. Involve local media and community leaders to promote physical activity and increase participation.

Celebrate

Enjoy the wonders and success of what a day can do!



Getting Started

After you have registered for the Walk Maryland Day, here are a few steps you can take as part of your action plan. Remember, these steps are just a guideline but you can certainly modify according to your interest and setting.

Step 1: Mark your Calendar

Walk Maryland Day is October 5, 2016 but the emphasis here is to kick-off a month-long focus on being more physically active! Try to get this date on people's calendars right away and use our general flyer or our partner flyer with your own personal message for advertising.

Step 2: Plan your event

This is a place where you can get really creative with your own ideas for how to host an event. Keep in mind to take into consideration what motivates your group/people and community and build a theme for your event around those interests and/or points. To get you started, here are some basic event ideas:

1. Rally or a kick-off
2. 30 minute walk
3. Incorporate healthy snacks into the activity
4. Small prizes/giveaways
5. Organize wellness fairs, health vendors, presentations, etc.
6. Have a "walk with your pet" event

Step 3: Build Excitement

Build excitement about the event through distribution of flyers and four week-activity challenge tracker, displaying banner, emails, social media posts (Facebook, twitter, Instagram) and by talking to people about the event. Here are some tips on just how to do this:

Workplaces:

Have a kick-off challenge among employees a week before the event; this is a good way to motivate people and get them excited about walking. Reward with small prizes such as lunch, jeans day or maybe time-off.

Make the Four-week Activity Challenge a competition among individuals, teams and departments and reward the winner.

Ask employees to write down a goal or pledge to start a healthy lifestyle and post it at their workstations.

Individuals and families:

Use social media, email, and family/friend/community gatherings to increase awareness.

Set a goal or make a pledge to start a healthy lifestyle and display in the common places of your house as a reminder.

Challenge your community, friends and family to join you and do the same.

Make the Four-week challenge a friendly family competition and offer rewards.

Step 4: Celebrate the Day!

Now take a breath and start walking! Walk Maryland Day is an opportunity for many Americans of all ages to take the first steps toward a longer, healthier and happier life. It is also a fun way to connect with your communities and build healthier relationships. Remember to enjoy the day and your success!