

# Walk Around the Block

**Subject: P.E.**



## OBJECTIVES:

- Students will practice pedestrian safety rules for various situations, including hidden driveways, crosswalks and four-way crosswalks.



## MATERIALS:

- 1-3 volunteer adults plus teacher

**NOTE:** Safe Routes staff is happy to help with this activity; call 707-545-0153 to request assistance.

- A good route around the neighborhood
- Walking Field Trip permission slip



## ESTIMATED TIME:

40 minutes, plus 10 minutes for debriefing



## VOCABULARY:

intersection, edge, crosswalk, driveway, pedestrian



## ACTIVITY SOURCE:

- *Safe Routes to Schools Pedestrian Safety Teachers Toolkit*
- *Safe Routes to Schools Vermont curriculum guide*



**OVERVIEW:** This lesson provides hands-on practice in walking across the streets around the school in a variety of situations. It provides students a chance to practice the safe crossing procedure of stopping at the edge, looking left, then right, then left again and listening for cars before crossing the street.

**NOTE:** It's most useful to first teach the lesson "Step by Step with Asimo."

**BACKGROUND:** It is crucial to teach children of all ages pedestrian safety skills and reinforce them whenever possible. The following important concepts will be taught in this lesson:

**EDGES:** When talking about crossing a road, the word edge often means the curb, or the side of the road, and it is the line between being safe and being in danger. An edge is a safe place to look for cars because you can see that they are coming, but you are still facing far enough away from them to be safe.

**USING SIDEWALKS:** If there are no sidewalks it is safest to walk along the edge of the road facing traffic, so that you can be seen by a driver and you can see the driver.

**LOOKING LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT:** Before crossing the street, look left, right and left again. We look left in order to see the traffic, the direction that cars are coming from. We look right to see cars coming in the opposite direction. We look left again because a car might be coming from that direction again. You are looking to find the moment when the road is clear. Then you cross.

**IDENTIFYING VISUAL BARRIERS:** Sometimes things get in the way of seeing danger. Visual barriers include trees, parked cars, garbage dumpsters, trucks, buses, etc. If you can't see cars coming, move to a place with a clear view or walk forward until you can see.

## STATE STANDARDS

### Physical Education

- 4.3: Identify ways to increase time for physical activity outside of school.
- 5.1: Participate in a variety of group settings (i.e.: partners, small groups, large groups) without interfering with others.
- 5.2: Accept responsibility for one's own behavior in a group activity.

# Walk Around the Block

## LESSON SET-UP:

1. Teach the lesson “Step to Safety with Asimo.”
2. Scout a route in a neighborhood that includes the situations listed below. As much as possible, the walking route needs to be on sidewalks. The route should have:
  - One basic intersection where students will have to look behind them.
  - At least one crosswalk
  - A blocked driveway (a driveway that is difficult to see because of a fence or a bush)
  - One opportunity to cross around parked cars
  - Intersection with traffic signal (optional)
3. Call the Safe Routes office to ask for assistance with this activity (707-545-0153).

## **ACTIVITY:**

Lead the students outside (with the volunteers) to the route that you have scouted out. Go through each situation one at a time. As you approach each situation, explain and model what the students should do.

### **HINTS FOR ACTIVITY:**

- The best way to work with youth is through coaching; this strategy encourages youth to make their own decisions at an intersection. Rather than telling a student when it is clear or safe to go across an intersection, a teacher can ask, “Do you think it is clear and safe to go across the street?”
- Safe Routes recommends that this activity be done in pairs (except the last one) so as to reduce group mentality while supporting the individual student.

**The following are teaching points for each type of intersection: The intersections are listed in the suggested order.**

### **Crosswalk:**

1. Discuss with students that this is the safest place to cross the street. Remind them that cars don’t always stop at crosswalks, so they should always look left, right and left again. Discuss making eye contact with the drivers whenever possible, and putting up a hand that signals “stop” whenever appropriate.

2. Have students cross two at a time at the crosswalk, with an adult at either side.
3. A good protocol is to wave at cars that stop for pedestrians, to signal thanks.

### **Hidden Driveways:**

1. When you get to a driveway, emphasize to students that they need to slow down when getting to a driveway where something is blocking the driver from seeing them. Ask them how they will know if a car is in the driveway, even if they can not see it. (listening for the engine or door slamming).
2. Coach students, two by two, to walk past a hidden driveway. They should look left-right-left when crossing.

### **Four Way Intersections:**

1. Ask the students to use hands to point to all the places they need to look. When crossing, make sure each group models looking behind them. Ask the students why they have looked left two times (left, right, left).
2. Point out that cars always drive on the right side of the road so cars coming from the left are the ones that can hit you first.
3. Coach students to go through the four-way intersection

### **OPTIONAL: Traffic Signals:**

1. Discuss with students when to cross intersections with traffic lights:
  - If the light has just turned green, proceed across the street.
  - If the light has turned yellow or you see that the countdown pedestrian signal is at a lower number, wait at the corner until the next green light.

## **EXTENSION IDEAS**

1. Give students extra credit for walks that they take after school or on the weekends, that are more than 1/2 hour long. Encourage them to practice what they learned with their parents.
2. Have students write out pedestrian safety rules and send them home, to go over them with their parents.
3. Make a map of the neighborhood that you just walked in. Identify street names, major landmarks and interesting locations to the students.