



## Students participate in International Walk or Bike to School Day



*Posted: Oct 08, 2014 3:51 PM CDT*

*Updated: Oct 15, 2014 11:24 AM*

By Darcy Jackson, Reporter

LAWTON, Okla. - Several students in Lawton joined together Wednesday morning to hit the pavement while raising awareness about safety for walkers everywhere.

It's all part of International Walk or Bike to School Day. Lawton Public Schools teamed up with Fit Kids of Southwest Oklahoma to get students involved in learning the importance of safety while staying active, all at the same time.

These kids are just a few of the hundreds across southwest Oklahoma who are raising awareness to safely stay active in the community.

"It's not really hot when it's morning. It's the first time I've actually been cool when I've walked to school," said Sydney Wells, a fifth-grade student at Whittier Elementary.

She can already feel the effects of taking a morning stroll around the block.

"It actually stretches my legs out so I don't have to worry about getting cramps in my legs I think," she said.

Her first-grade counterparts feel the same way.

"It actually felt pretty good because it stretched my legs out pretty good and it made my muscles get stronger on my legs," said Emily Castallini, first-grade student at Whittier Elementary.

These footsteps aren't just good for the body, they're also sending a message to drivers and other pedestrians along the way.

"It's just good for everyone in our community as well. I mean, this neighborhood knows to watch out for everyone else and it's just something we've done every year," explained Elizabeth Warner, a parent who walked with the children.

"When we leave in the morning, and also in the afternoon, we have our safe routes to school. Our walking school bus, so our kids are able to stay on the sidewalk all the way down to the park," said Melanie Nungesser, Whittier Elementary principal.

Lawton Public Schools and Fit Kids of Southwest Oklahoma want sidewalks, just like this one, to be as safe as possible for anyone who's inspired to stretch their legs.

"It's one of those things to try to get our whole community involved. It's not our students that we want fit and healthy, we want our parents fit and healthy and get everyone involved in being active," said Nungesser.

International Walk and Bike to School Day is part of the "Shape your Future" initiative, thanks to the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust and the Oklahoma State Department of Health.