**Tips for recruiting Walking School Bus volunteers**

**Best places for recruitment**

* Winter or summer festivals/carnivals/block parties in your neighbourhood
* Regular or special activities of community or municipal organizations that work in the fields of:
  + child and family services
  + sports and leisure
  + the environment (organizations, citizens’ groups)
  + health and social services
  + seniors and social clubs
  + etc.
* In the school
* Parent meetings
* Report card distribution
* At the end of the day at the child care services
* PPO communications
* School events, parent-teacher nights
* Secondary schools, colleges or universities (if there are any in your area – don’t forget to check with schools and/or school boards if volunteers who are minors are accepted)
* At lunch time or other recesses
* Churches/parishes
* Local volunteer centres
* Neighbourhood businesses
* Door-to-door in the neighboring area
* Neighbourhood associations
* 55+ Centres
* Community Centres
* Walking clubs

**Recruitment methods**

* Fixed stand
* Mobile stand (the person travels to meet people)
* Brief speech before or after an activity (mention to participants that you will be available for further discussions and note the number of people interested)
* Place promotional materials in strategic locations
* Social media

It is important to identify places and events where your target-audience (families-sports-seniors) can be found at.

**How to approach your prospective volunteers**

***People in the community***

Here are a few sentences to help you approach people:

* + - * Have you heard of the Walking School Bus?
      * Do you enjoy going for walks?
      * Do you walk regularly?
      * Are you interested in volunteering to help families in your neighbourhood?
      * I have a volunteering opportunity for you…

You can also briefly describe what the Walking School Bus is and provide an overview of a Walk Leader’s role:

The Walking School Bus is like a regular school bus, but on foot:

* Planned routes and scheduled stops.
* The X school is looking for volunteers to walk one to five mornings per week.
* Children who will accompany you are generally aged between 5 and 8 years.

Here are few examples to motivate them to become volunteers for the Walking School Bus service.

This volunteering opportunity would help them:

* Support children to walk to school and become more active
* Become more physically active
* Socialize with other members of the community.
* Be of service to young families and contribute to a healthy community
* Model good pedestrian behaviour and teach road safety skills to children.

***Parents***

Here are a few related benefits to motivate parents to register their children and get involved as volunteers.

This volunteering opportunity will allow you to:

* Spend quality time with your child and his friends.
* Meet other parents and people in the community.
* Maintain an active lifestyle.
* Be assured that your children are walking safely to school, under adult supervision.
* Give a helping hand to families that are struggling with time constraints.

Participating in the Walking School Bus could help your child:

* Maintain an active lifestyle by walking to school.
* Make new friends.
* Benefit from safe supervision.
* Develop independence (by learning road safety rules).
* Be alert and have greater concentration in the classroom.

**Recruiting**

When a person shows interest in getting involved as a volunteer, it is better to ask for their contact details rather than just hand them a brochure. This will allow you to follow up with the person.

When a person is unsure, you can ask for their contact information by telling them that you will call them to discuss it further.

Call volunteers back quickly to confirm their interest and plan subsequent steps.

**Fostering volunteer loyalty**

* Make courtesy calls during the season.
* Sending a thank you note at the end of the season.
* Organizing an event to recognize their contribution.

Asking for their comments and suggestions to improve their experience.