



HEALTH QUEST

CENTER FOR HEALTH & LEARNING

June, 2010

Dear Teacher,

We are inviting you to be part of a pilot for the Center for Health and Learning's online curriculum unit: *Walking and Biking to School*. *Walking and Biking to School* is an interdisciplinary and interactive curriculum unit that engages grades 5-8 students in action research. It is designed to teach students about the health, environmental, and safety issues involved in walking and biking to school. It uses a problem based action research design which engages students in the use of interdisciplinary skills to arrive at an action plan for your school. It addresses Vermont Standards in Health, Math, Reading, and Writing. The module will be ready for viewing online by July 15, 2010.

Time Frame

The unit includes three Learning Tasks and a Final Activity which can be implemented on a flexible time line established by the teacher. The unit requires approximately six hours of implementation time. We would anticipate it would be implemented over the course of a month in a typical classroom setting.

Unit Overview

The unit will enable middle school students to assess and explain the health and safety advantages and disadvantages of walking and bicycling to school in the U.S., Vermont, and their community, and to develop an action plan regarding walking and biking to school to present to their school or town Select Boards or other group.

Students work in small groups on each of three Learning Tasks to research questions on: "Health and Environmental Benefits", "Safety", and "My Community." At a class "Colloquium" students present the key findings from their research to each other. Students record notes about the key findings and then use these notes to develop a brief summary of what they learned overall. At a separate class meeting following the Colloquium, the class uses this research to develop an Action Plan in which recommendations for promoting walking and biking to school are identified. The class then presents the *Action Plan* to the local school board, Select Board or other group.

Teacher Expectations - All tools for this project are provided

- In the Fall of 2010 implement with a minimum of 15 students.
- Administer pre and post tests to students, return to CHL.
- Administer three learning tasks that engage students in research on these topics: "Health and Environmental Benefits", "Safety", and "My Community."
- Assist students in accessing web links to critical information and resources.
- Assist students in summarizing the research.
- Facilitate the development of an *Action Plan* by the class.
- Identify a group setting in which the students present it.
- Submit a copy of the *Action Plan* to CHL.

CHL's commitment:

- Provide technical support during the project.
- Send a compensation of \$150 after returning the pre and post-tests, Feedback Form, and a copy of the *Action Plan*.
- We will revise the content and design of the module based on this vital feedback,

If you are interested in participating in the pilot and would like to view the Health Quest site, and /or need further information please email or call me at joellen@healthandlearning.org. 802-251-0488. This project is funded by the Vermont Safe Routes to School program. We look forward to having you participate.

Sincerely,

JoEllen Tarallo-Falk, Ed.D., CHES, Project Director