

# Walking School Buses and Bike Trains

- A **Walking School Bus** is a group of neighbors who walk to school picking up kids along the way or by meeting at a set location. The rule of thumb is to have one adult for six children. Be sure an adult is at the front and the rear of a large group.
- A **Bike Train** is a group of kids who bike together to or from school. If the group is under age 12, there should be one adult for each four children, one in front and one in back. Young children biking to school should always be accompanied by an adult.



## BEST PRACTICES

### Routes Selection:

Spend a weekend day walking or biking the route you will take to school. Time how long it takes. Note any safety concerns and be sure to establish how this will be handled. For instance, if there is no sidewalk on part of the routes, children will walk single file with an adult in the front and the back. Report any safety concerns to your Safe routes to Schools committee.

### Bike Trains

Bike trains are only recommended for children who are proficient at riding – usually aged 8 or up although some children learn faster than others. It is the parents' responsibility to assess their child's ability. Those who are not proficient can ride an attached bicycle trailer with their parents. Consider organizing a Riding with Youth Class for your bike trains. You can request this class from Safe Routes to Schools by contacting [peggy@marinbike.org](mailto:peggy@marinbike.org). 415-456-3469 ext 8#.

### Rainy Days

You may decide to walk rain or shine. If not, then in the event of a rainy day, what will the backup plan be in order to carpool all students to school? This may require some networking the evening before so parents know who the drivers are and where to meet.

## SAFETY TIPS:

- Discuss and practice basic road safety and traffic rules
- Make sure that parents do not leave their children alone while waiting for the bus and that the supervision of their child is transferred to a responsible adult.
- Don't let children get too far ahead or behind.
- Encourage children to wear bright or fluorescent colors or reflector tape on their backpacks or jackets
- Yellow vests or armbands help with visibility. You can get them for all participants or just for the adults.
- Bring along a wagon for books, musical instruments and projects

## BIKING TIPS:

- Make sure that the bikes are in good working condition
- Make sure that the bike fits the rider
- Ideally have an adult at the front, back and someone in the middle.
- Every rider is wearing a helmet, including the adults. One adult can pull a trailer with backpacks, instruments or projects.