

Covid-19 Recommendations for the Waterloo Region Walking School Bus

On behalf of the Canadian Cancer Society, we thank you for your commitment to the Waterloo Region Walking School Bus (WRWSB) project.

The well-being and safety of program participants, volunteers and employees are priorities for us. As such, we have developed guidelines for continuing WRWSB activities in participating schools in the context of Covid-19. These guidelines are based on recommendations of the Ontario government and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). These guidelines are addressed to all WRWSB participants (organizing committee members, volunteers, children enrolled in the WRWSB and their parents) of schools operating a Walking School Bus during the 2020-21 school year.

Note: These recommendations may change throughout the school year to align with the most current recommendations of regional, provincial and national health authorities.

Here are our recommendations:

- We recommend limiting the number of children per group of walkers to 8 with a ration of 2 volunteers for every 8 children.
 - For Example, for a group of 12 children, the group would be divided into 2 sub-groups of 6 walkers. A volunteer will lead the 1st sub-group. A second volunteer will be between the 2 groups of children. A third volunteer will close the 2nd sub-group.
- Children should walk in a single-file line respecting a distance of 2 meters between individuals. To assist children in keeping distance you could use a light rope or heavy string with a knot or ribbon showing where they should hold onto.
- Children/volunteers from the same family can walk within 2 meters of each other.
- It is preferred for children in the same class to stay in the same walking groups.
- It is preferred that children stay in the same walking groups each day with the same volunteers.
- Physical contact between walkers should be avoided.
- Wearing of a face covering is recommended for all students and volunteers
- Students and volunteers should wash their hands before and after participating in the Walking School Bus. In addition, it is recommended that each participant carry antiseptic hand sanitizing gel in his/her bag when entering and leaving the WRWSB.
- At intersections, cross children in small groups of no more than 8 children at a time.
- In the case of a main artery crossing, Volunteer 2 will be positioned in the middle of the roadway. Volunteer 1 will cross with sub-group 1 leading from the front. Volunteer 3 will cross with sub-group 2. Once the last group has crossed Volunteer 2 will follow at the back. As groups have crossed, they will advance along the sidewalk to maintain distance between groups.

- Plan for the arrival of The WRWSB walkers at the school to prevent gatherings of people from taking place when the WRWSB arrives at the school
- Parents who are at home or teleworking should be approached to fill in the need for additional volunteers.
- Please take note of your volunteers' comments and report them to the School Lead so that we can make the necessary adjustments to these recommendations.

Please stay at home and contact your local public health department in case of symptoms associated with COVID-19 (fever or cough or difficulty breathing or sudden loss of smell or taste, headache or sore throat, [other symptoms](#))

Please also stay at home if you have been instructed to isolate yourself by the regional public health directorate in your area (return from travel and period of unfinished isolation, diagnosis of infection with COVID-19, contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19, etc.).

For more information on COVID-19, please visit [ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca).