



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
October 7, 2009**

**Safe Kids Charlotte Mecklenburg and the Safe Routes to Schools Coalitions
Complete a Successful International Walk to School Day at Olde Providence Elementary**

-Walking Event Results -

(Charlotte, NC) Olde Providence Elementary with additional participating schools Cotswold Elementary, Davidson Elementary, and Davidson IB Middle successfully completed *International Walk to School Day 2009*. **384 out of 675 Olde Providence Elementary students (over ½ the school) and approximately 84 siblings, parents and adult volunteers from 12 different organizations walked to Olde Providence from six locations, arriving at school healthier and safer! (Additional school participants not available at the time of this release). Attached Olde Providence Elementary photographs courtesy of Charlotte Fire Dept.**

Safe Kids Charlotte Mecklenburg conducted a pedestrian safety presentation to the entire school last Friday in preparation for the walk. Children learned to wear light colored clothing, retro reflective materials, and follow all traffic safety rules.

Walking with students were siblings, parents, CMS PTA, CMS Transportation, area residents, Charlotte Fire Department, Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department, Mecklenburg County Health Department volunteers and local media. Charlotte Fire Department Deputy Chief Rob Kinniburgh, CMPD Deputy Chief Harold Medlock, CFD Mascot Blaze and Local Fed Ex employees escorted the walking school bus.

Area motorists were encouraged to slow down in the vicinity and be more aware of pedestrian and bike travel, in the community and near the school, with signs placed on the route and with visible police presence during the walk itself. The event was organized by the Olde Providence community and PTA, the Safe Routes to School Coalition, and Safe Kids Charlotte Mecklenburg. This is the 10th annual International Walk to School Day coordinated by Safe Kids Charlotte Mecklenburg.

For additional local information, please contact:
Charlotte Fire Dept/Safe Kids Coordinator Amy Krise-704-336-3974
Meck Co Health Dept/Safe Routes to School Coordinator Dick Winters ó 704-432-4596



Background of groups and the national projects this effort highlights:

Safe Kids Charlotte Mecklenburg is a coalition of agencies and community members led by the Charlotte Fire Department. Safe Kids works to prevent accidental childhood injury, the leading killer of children 14 and under. Safe Kids Charlotte Mecklenburg is a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global network of 450 organizations dedicated to preventing accidental injury. www.safekidscharmec.org

Safe Kids Walk This Way, a grassroots pedestrian safety initiative in more than 250 schools nationwide, is made possible through support from program sponsor FedEx Express. Through this year-round program, children learn safe pedestrian behaviors; school communities identify the pedestrian hazards surrounding their schools; and school pedestrian safety committees and task forces lead efforts to educate pedestrians and drivers about safe behaviors, enforce traffic laws and improve environments for child pedestrians. www.fedex.com or www.usa.safekids.org/wtw

Safe Routes to School Charlotte Mecklenburg is a coalition of agency and community members lead by the Mecklenburg County Health department and Carolinas Medical Center designed to support the development of a Safe Routes to School program in the local community.

Safe Routes to School was started through the 2005 passage of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Congress designated a total of \$612 million toward developing the National Safe Routes to School Program. Walk to School events work to create safer routes for walking and bicycling and emphasize the importance of issues such as increasing physical activity among children, pedestrian safety, traffic congestion, concern for the environment and building connections between families, schools and the broader community.

International Walk to School Day is dedicated to walking to school with a purpose ô to promote physical activity, safety, health and concern for the environment. International Walk to School Day is promoted nationally by The Partnership for a Walkable America. www.walktoschool.org

###