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## Campaign to get kids walking, biking to school to fight global warming

Mark Prado  
 Posted: 01/10/2010 09:45:12 PM PST

Advocates of a Marin campaign to get more kids walking and biking to school are expanding their initiative, fueled by a \$175,000 grant to combat global warming.

The new Greenways to School campaign is set to launch later this month, piggy-backing off the successful Safe Routes to Schools program.

"We want to find those green ways for students to get to school," said Wendi Kallins, head of the Safe Routes program, who is putting together the Greenways campaign. "That could be by bikes, walking, carpool or bus."

One of the key features of the program will be an online SchoolPool to build a communications network that would help deliver children to school. A Web site will launch later this month.

That effort is modeled after employee rideshare programs; SchoolPool will provide parents with match-lists of schoolmates who live along their routes to Marin schools. They can then form a carpool, walk or bike together, or find bus buddies for their children.

"It will make it easier to find people," Kallins said. "It's very exciting."

The greenways campaign, financed with a \$175,000 grant from the Marin Community Foundation, also will employ a classroom competition within schools and challenges between schools, with cash awards ranging from \$100 for individual classes to \$2,000 for the top performing school.

All Marin County public and private schools may participate, with special programs for middle and high school students.

"Overall it's important to have local




actions taken toward the global effort to help combat negative changes in the climate," said Thomas Peters, head of the community foundation, which has targeted global warming as one of its key initiatives.


"To us, this was the ultimate of a multiwin scenario. Kids get healthy, families and friends are brought back together and the environment benefits. It's a little back to the future. We are very supportive and expect great things."


While Marin County has a reputation for environmental stewardship, its carbon footprint actually exceeds the national average, Kallins noted, and 62 percent of carbon emissions are caused by transportation.


With international efforts underway to curb greenhouse gas emissions, Marin can act locally by reducing the number of automobile trips to school, Kallins said.

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has increased the number of children walking and biking by 29 percent and grown from nine schools to more than 50 schools.

Safe Routes to Schools has also assisted public agencies in winning more than \$10 million in grants to upgrade sidewalks, bike lanes and paths, increase police enforcement near schools and pay for more than 60 crossing guards.

"It's a very active program here," said Jason Kerber, principal at Manor School in Fairfax. "It's popular and has been a well-received program."

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