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It's good for kids to walk the walk

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A recently published study indicates that walking to school will provide a sense of independence in children and promote good health. (FILE PHOTO)

I remember it like it was yesterday: the long, cold walk to school that was wrought with dangers like stray German Shepherds and school bullies. At such a young age, this perilous trek to elementary school seemed much longer and harder than it actually was.

Although I wasn't the biggest fan of walking to school as a child, apparently my forward-thinking parents understood something I didn't: walking to school is good for kids. It helps develop independence, social skills and most importantly, walking to school is now good for your child's heart.

According to research published in the journal of Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise children who walked to school had better reactions to stress and did not exhibit the same increases in blood pressure and heart rate that are common markers for cardiovascular disease later on in life.

"The cardiovascular disease process begins in childhood, so if we can find some way of stopping or slowing that process, that would provide an important health benefit," says James Roemmich, UB associate professor of pediatrics and exercise and nutrition science and senior investigator on the study.

This seems to coincide with similar studies which showed that sedentary children experienced more health problems later on in life compared to active children.

If you live close and it is safe to do so, letting your kids walk to school appears to be good for their health. They may put up a fuss at first, like I did, but just tell them: "You'll understand when you're older."

Dr. Christian Chatzoglou, D.C. operates Chiropractic Life Centre at 1431 Corydon Ave. For more information on this and other children's health topics, visit www.chiropracticlifecentre.com.

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