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LOOK AT THE OPTIONS WHEN GOING TO SCHOOL

August 12, 2010 - With the start of the school year just around the corner, the Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District is asking parents to use other options than a car to get their children to school on time. “We want to encourage them to consider having their child walk or ride their bicycle, or coordinate a carpool if a school bus isn’t an option,” stated Mat Ehrhardt, executive director for the YSAQMD.

Reducing the number of cars at the schools could be beneficial for children in two ways, there would be less emissions created from idling vehicles and the children could be getting exercise if riding their bikes or walking to school.

The District has been working with Solano Transportation Authority (STA) on the Safe Routes to School program and provided them with a \$30,000 Clean Funds Grant. The grant will provide support for STA to coordinate walking and bike routes to schools within Solano County.

“If enough people opt for different modes of transportation, the air will be more healthful for children, including those who regularly walk to school,” according to Ehrhardt. “If parents must drive their children to school, we recommend that they keep idling at a minimum when dropping their children off.”

Cool and breezy weather has helped slow the formation of ozone this summer with only two Spare the Air Days but if temperatures peak, ozone levels can also go up which means unhealthy air. Since ozone can trigger asthma attacks and other lung problems, keeping air quality levels in the good or moderate range by reducing emissions from vehicles is essential for the health of the children.

For parents who would like to keep tabs on air quality, the District offers a free electronic notification system Enviroflash for daily forecasts. Go to <http://ysaqmd.enviroflash.org> to sign up.

The Yolo-Solano AQMD is dedicated to protecting human health and property from the harmful effects of air pollution. For more information go to: www.ysaqmd.org