

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



October's time to walk to work in Launceston

Launceston's Mayor and members of the Active Launceston project are urging residents to leave their car at home and walk to work on national Walk to Work Day this Friday 3 October.

Active Launceston, a community project to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Launceston through increased participation in physical activity, will coordinate a walk to work from the Inveresk Park and Walk car park.

Launceston Mayor Albert Van Zetten said walkers would leave the Inveresk car park at 7.30am to arrive in the Quadrant Mall for a *free* healthy breakfast before 8am.

"If you live in walking distance from your workplace, we want you to leave your car at home, save fuel, help the environment and your health," he said.

"If not, park your car at Inveresk and join the Active Launceston Team. Or catch a Metro bus and get off two stops earlier than you have to and walk the rest of the way."

Pro Vice Chancellor Teaching and Learning at the University of Tasmania Gail Hart said she supported the Walk to Work day concept as it provided a forum to promote sustainable behavioural change.

"Walking is a healthy activity that promotes better physical, mental and social health," she said.

"Taking part in Walk to Work day is an easy way for anyone to take a personal step towards improved health and well being.

"It takes just 30 minutes of physical activity a day to improve your health."

Launceston Chamber of Commerce Executive Officer Lou Clark said obesity was a key driver of chronic ill health.

"Access Economics estimated that the total financial cost of obesity in Australia in 2005 was about \$3.8 billion," she said.

“I would encourage all employers and government bodies to encourage their employees to walk to work on 3 October.

“If people are healthier there will obviously be fewer sick days and absenteeism, and business will benefit from increased productivity and creativity.”

The Active Launceston project is led by the University of Tasmania with support from the Launceston City Council, the Education Department, The Examiner newspaper and the Trim and Fit International Association for All.

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