

4.8 IDLE FREE ZONES

Children are particularly vulnerable to air pollution because they breathe faster than adults and inhale more air per pound of body weight. Smog levels tend to be worse in the late afternoon, precisely when driving parents accumulate around the school. A glut of idling engines lowers air quality directly around school access points, enveloping the excited and active children leaving the building.

Creating an Idle Free Zone around your school can help reduce the number of idling vehicles. By putting up Idle Free Zone signs around the school, and educating students and parents, you can improve air quality in the school zone.

Active and Safe Routes to School in Manitoba has partnered with Climate Change Connection to deliver the Idle Free Zone program to schools. Sample activities include Idle Free Zone Days where students hand out flyers and talk to drivers about the importance of turning off their engines.

Schools can also conduct Idle Free surveys, with students collecting data. This is a great way to engage students and gather data that can be used for classroom learning.

To book a free classroom presentation or request an Idle Free Zone kit, including sample surveys and Idle Free signs for your school grounds, contact asrts@greenactioncentre.ca or (204) 925-3773.

Here's what Manitoba students and teachers had to say about the Idle Free Zone presentations:

"Many thanks for coming to our school and giving us such a great presentation on the value of being 'Idle Free.' I know my students learned many things from your visit." —Linda Breakey, William S. Patterson School

"Thank you Susie and Jackie for coming to our school and talking to us about idling and the fun game we had." —Carter

"Thank you for coming I had a fun time. I learned that you can idle but it's bad. THANK YOU for coming." —Braydon

"Thank you Susie and Jackie I think it is great that people should not idle. I think I don't want to idle when I'm older thanks." —Sam

"Thank you Susie and Jackie for teaching us why it's bad to idle. I had a lot of fun in the game we played. Thank you." —Matt



—Bairdmore School (Winnipeg)