



Idle-Free Encouragement Cards: Implementation Guide

What Are the Idle-Free Cards?

The *Idle-Free Encouragement Cards* are small, friendly reminders that encourage drivers during school drop-off and pick-up to turn off their car engines while waiting near the school, or to keep their cars away from the school. Each card shares three simple actions that help reduce air pollution:

1. Turn the car off.
2. Park 5 minutes away and walk the rest.
3. Walk or roll all the way.

Students can hand these cards to drivers who are idling their vehicles around the school. The goal is to spread awareness about the harms of idling and promote a healthier, safer, and cleaner space for the school community.

The Harms of Idling

Car exhaust from idling:

- Releases harmful pollutants that can trigger asthma and breathing problems.
- Wastes fuel and money which contributes to climate change.
- Makes the air around the school less healthy for students and teachers.

How Students Can Use the Cards

1. Bring a few cards outside each day, 10 minutes before the final bell rings, with an adult/supervisor.
2. Work in pairs or small groups.
3. Look for cars that are idling near the school (with their engines running).
4. Approach only when it's safe: on the sidewalk or designated area.
5. Smile and politely hand the card to the driver or gently place it under a windshield wiper.
6. Thank the driver or wave to show appreciation.

Safety First

- ✓ Stay on the sidewalk or in a clearly marked safe area.
- ✓ Work in pairs or small groups and with an adult/supervisor nearby.
- ✓ Only approach cars that are fully stopped on the curb closest to the school.
- ✓ Keep a friendly and positive attitude.
- ✓ Step back immediately if a car starts to move or if asked to do so.

What NOT to do

- ✗ Do NOT step onto the road or between cars.
- ✗ Do NOT argue with drivers.
- ✗ Do NOT cross the road.
- ✗ Do NOT touch a car without permission.
- ✗ Do NOT hand cards to moving vehicles.
- ✗ Do NOT block traffic or stand too close to the curb.

Sample Dialogue with Drivers

If driver is idling:

Hi, my name is _____ and [school name] is now idle-free. Would you like to hear about the benefits of reducing vehicle idling?

If NO – Say thank you, and move to another vehicle.

If YES – Did you know that by idling your vehicle you are emitting toxic gases into the air that contribute to climate change? Children are more vulnerable to air pollution because they breathe faster than adults and inhale more air per kilogram of body weight. Would you be willing to commit to being an Idle-Free driver especially in our school parking lot? Would you like to take this fact card on vehicle idling?

Thank you very much and have a great day!

If driver is NOT idling:

Hi, my name is _____ and [school name] is now Idle-Free. We appreciate you turning off your engine while you wait for your children. Would you like to take this fact card on vehicle idling?

Thanks again for not idling and have a great day.

For more information, visit <http://activesaferoutes.ca/>

