Safe Routes to School National Partnership

Robert Ping
State Network Director

- State Network Project - Policy Change in 20 States
- Portland SRTS Program Manager
- Oregon SRTS Technical Assistance
- Bicycle Safety Education Oregon Statewide
- 20 years: Policy, Bicycle Advocacy, Earn-a-Bike,
  Youth Mentoring, Youth Education, Environmental
  Advocacy
- Various national committees: School Siting,
  Diversity, Childhood Obesity, Physical Activity Plan, etc
Who We Are

The Partnership brings together over 500 diverse nonprofit organizations, government agencies, businesses and professionals to advance the Safe Routes to School national movement through policy change and technical assistance.
Fewer kids are biking and walking. More parents are driving.

2001: 16% walked
1969: 42% walked

(CDC, 2005)
Parents driving their children to school account for 20-25% of morning rush hour traffic. (NHTSA 2003; Dept. of Environment)
Prevalence of overweight among children and adolescents ages 6-19 years

Percent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in years</th>
<th>6-11</th>
<th>12-19</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1963-70</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-74</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-80</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988-94</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-02</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
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</tbody>
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SOURCE: CDC/NCHS, NHES and NHANES
Today’s children may be the first generation to have a shorter life expectancy than their parents.
How did we get here?

1. School siting choices
2. Parent barriers, fears and lifestyle
3. Travel issues
Traffic Flow Problems and Fear of Strangers
1. A strategic approach to student safety

Safety is a real concern for parents - they need reassurance that school is proactive:

- SRTS engages parents and schools in identifying safety concerns and developing safety plan
- Help schools address liability risks and concerns
- Studies of existing SRTS programs show 50% decrease in child cyclist and pedestrian collisions
2. A way to reduce traffic congestion

- Many schools already struggle with chaotic traffic congestion and idling cars during drop-off/pick-up:
- If parents switch from bus to car, congestion and crash rise while air quality drops
  - SRTS engages parents in alternatives, i.e. carpooling, remote drop-offs, walking school buses
  - SRTS programs can increase walking/bicycling by 20 to 200%, reducing traffic congestion
- Schools that are designed so children can walk have measurably better air quality
3. Strengthens community involvement

- SRTS stresses the need for communities to work together to solve student safety issues
- Parents that get involved in SRTS often end up more involved with the school overall
- Redirects parent anger about bus cuts into constructive planning and implementation
- Can build critical relationships between the school and local planning authorities, local businesses, health departments, and law enforcement
1. **Encouragement**  
*Inspire kids and parents to join in fun walking and biking activities and events*

2. **Education**  
*Teach kids and parents how and why they can safely walk and bike to school*

3. **Engineering**  
*Improve traffic conditions and remove physical barriers to walking and biking*

4. **Enforcement**  
*Remind everyone to follow traffic safety rules*

5. **Evaluation**  
*Make sure that the program actually increases walking and biking and reduces barriers*
Join Your Local SRTS School Team (or Form One!)

- Your Expertise Will Be Helpful
- Incorporate Busing Into SRTS Program
Comprehensive Student Travel Plan

- Bus, Bike, Walk and Auto
- Walking and Bicycling IS Transportation
Traffic Flow Improvements

• Arrival and Departure Doesn’t Have to Be Dangerous
• SRTS School Team Can Help
A Crazy Idea – The School Bus Driver Without the Bus

• Pay for a Driver, But Save Cost on the Bus
• Use Buses During Extreme Weather
Safe Routes to School Increases Safety
• Fix Safety Issues Within 1-2 Miles of School
• Decrease Parent Drivers
Federal SRTS Program

- Over $800 Million 2005-2012
- Each state receives at least $1 million/year through March 2012 (and beyond?)
- Infrastructure projects must be within 2 miles of a school
- Funding for elementary and middle school - K-8 grades

saferoutesinfo.org
Community leaders, parents and schools across the U.S. are using Safe Routes to School programs to encourage and enable more children to safely walk and bike to school. The National Center for Safe Routes to School aims to assist these communities in developing successful Safe Routes programs and strategies. The Center offers a centralized resource of information on how to start and sustain a Safe Routes to School program, case studies of successful programs as well as many other resources for training and technical assistance.

What is Safe Routes to School?
Watch a short video to learn more about encouraging kids to safely walk and bike to school.

Featured Resource
10 Tips for Getting Walk to School Event Media Coverage
This tip sheet outlines a few helpful tips for media outreach.

SRTS in the News
Kid bicyclists strap on helmets
Daytona Beach News-Journal
08/31/2006

Expert tests walking routes
Rome News-Tribune
08/31/2006

Signs near schools warn speeders to 'slow down'
The Honolulu Advertiser
08/30/2006

www.saferoutesinfo.org
Getting Students Active through Safe Routes to School

Policies and Action Steps for Education Policymakers and Professionals

http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/mediacenter/publications/educatorsguide
Thank you!

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Discussion

Please type questions in to the chat box in the lower right hand corner.
Contact NASBE

- Visit our website (www.nasbe.org) to explore the health policy database and learn more about our work with states to address nutrition and physical activity in schools.

- Elizabeth Walker at elizabethw@nasbe.org or at 703-684-4000.

- Whitney Meagher at whitneym@nasbe.org or at 703-684-4000
Thank You