

SafeRoutes To School



Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition

Walk and Roll to School Handbook



Want Safe Routes to Your School?

Sonoma County Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) provides trainings, resources, and customized support at no cost; while working together with schools, parents, and the local community to give kids an active, healthy start to the school day!

For more information on what we can offer to your school
and your community, contact us at:

Sonoma County Safe Routes to Schools

P.O. Box 3088

Santa Rosa, CA 95402

(707) 545-0153 or saferoutes@bikesonoma.org

Walk and Roll to School Day Goals

- To Increase the safety and number of children walking and biking regularly.
- To share the joys of walking and biking.
- To reduce traffic congestion and speed near schools.
- To reclaim neighborhood streets and strengthen the community.
- To teach children safe walking and bicycling behavior.
- To instill in children self confidence and independence.
- To reduce air and water pollution.

Welcome to the Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Sonoma County Walk and Roll to School Handbook!

This Handbook has all the tools you need to organize Walk and Roll to School Days! Inside you will find great ideas for teachers, parents and kids as well as tip sheets and safety brochures you can use to educate your community about this great event.

Walk and Roll to School Days celebrate healthy neighborhoods by rewarding students who walk and bike to school. Colorful banners and kids walking make children more visible to cars and neighbors. This special day can happen once a year, once a month or every week!

**International Walk to School Day
is October 6th 2010.**

**Thanks for joining with
people all around the world!**

Greeting Tables are Where it's at!

Greeting tables make your Walk and Roll to School Day visible. These should be colorful tables at one or more entrances with prizes and information to welcome families after their journey to school.



People Power

At least two people per table is great to have! Tables can get crowded, so having multiple volunteers helps the snack line at the table move quickly.



More Help and Tools

Keep going for more on giveaways:

1. How to make and giveaway stickers
2. Food Donation Request Form

Tool #1: Walk and Roll to School Day Greeting Table

How to Make it Happen:

- **Choose a location for your greeting table:** Depending on the size of the school, you may want to place multiple tables at different entrances of the school. Tables should be placed in the most used entrances while making sure not to block the entrance.
- **Set up a Table and make it visible:** You can usually borrow one from your school. Ask permission from your school custodian or bring one with you. Each table should have two chairs for volunteers. Place banners supplied by Safe Routes or posters made by kids. You can put out prizes and safety brochures for parents.
- **Make your table festive!** If you know of any musicians live music is a great way to liven up the event. Some schools have included a bicycle blender activity (with kids making smoothies on a bike with an attached blender), while others have invited the local bike shop to make bike repairs to students' bikes.
- **Show up early to set up! You will need to arrive at least 45 minutes before school starts.** Your table with all the snacks and giveaways should be ready at least 25 minutes before the bell rings. Families show up early and want to be included in the festivities.
- **Give out food.** Kids love free food! Providing healthy snacks at greeting tables on Walk and Roll to School day is also a great way to highlight the link between physical activity and healthy eating. Safe Routes to Schools will be providing snacks during Walk to School Day. We have also attached a letter for you to seek donations for more healthy snacks from your local stores.

Here are some suggestions for healthy snacks: fresh fruit, low fat fruit muffins, whole grain crackers, trail and cereal mix, granola, energy bars and water!

Stickers: An easy way to boost participation and excitement

We find that stickers are great for:

- Sending the message home one day before Walk and Roll to School Day
- Celebrating each kid's participation in using low or no-pollution ways to get to school.



People Power

- **1 Sticker Counter:** Keep track of how many stickers of each type (walk, bus...) you start off with and have in the end. This person also counts off the number of reminder stickers that each classroom will need the day before.
- **1 Sticker Printer** (if you need extras) This is a great task for someone with a home office or a neighborhood organizer



More Help and Tools

- If you need more stickers, you can download them from our website : <http://sonomasaferroutes.org/encouragement/encouragement-downloadable-resources>

Tool #1: Walk and Roll to School Day Greeting Table: Sticker Giveaways

How to Make it Happen:

There are two types of stickers we suggest you use: 1. reminder stickers for the day before and 2. participation stickers for the day of the event. You will find participation stickers in your Walk to School Organizing Box. If you are interested you can print reminder stickers from our website.

The Day Before: Sending kids home with a reminder sticker on their shirt is a very effective way to make sure families remember the big event.

- Get a list of the number of students in each class from the secretary.
- Place that amount of stickers into the mailboxes of the teachers two days before Walk and Bike to School Day. You can leave a note politely asking teachers to give the stickers to their students. Teachers in grades k-3 are usually a little more responsive to this request.

The Day of the Event: Use these stickers at the greeting tables. It is useful to have one or two volunteers standing in front of the table giving out stickers. Ask students how they got to school and give them the sticker color that goes with it.

You can use these stickers as a way of keeping count of participation and modes that students are using by keeping track of how many stickers of each kind (bike, walk, carpool, bus) you start off with and saving the empty sheets of stickers that have been given away and counting them.



Bringing Home the Bacon

Getting food donations from local businesses is a great way to add to the celebration while letting the broader community know what you're up to. Popular causes such as this are a favorite for businesses who like to contribute.



People Power

1 donations-dedicated person is great for making donations happen. Donation requests, follow-up calls to the business, and pick up can be time consuming, so try to find someone besides the main organizer.



More Help and Tools

A downloadable version of this letter is available in our website at:

<http://sonomasaferroutes.org/encouragement/encouragement-downloadable-resources>

Tool #1: Walk and Roll to School Day Greeting Table: Getting Food Donated for your Event

Manager's Name

Name of Business

Street address

Town, CA zip

Date

Dear _____ (*Manager's name*):

_____ (*name of school*) will be hosting a Walk and Roll to School Day on _____ (*list every day of your school's event*).

We are seeking donations of healthy drinks, snacks, and small prizes for our hungry walking students. A contribution from _____ (*business name*) would make a great difference in ensuring that our (*monthly, weekly, annual*) celebration of health, physical activity, and community is a success. We are seeking _____ (*insert number and description of healthy snack or prize option you think they can provide*). However, we appreciate any donation you make!

Our school is working with the Safe Routes to Schools Sonoma County Partnership, which supports neighborhoods in building and using safer routes to school by integrating health, fitness, traffic relief, environmental awareness and safety under one program. The Safe Routes to Schools program witnessed outstanding results in its first pilot year in Sebastopol and Santa Rosa and has expanded to support over 30 schools throughout the county. As one of those 30 schools, we appreciate your support in improving the health and safety of families in our community!

Thank you in advance for contributing to our event. I will call you next week to answer any questions you have about this request. You may also contact me at _____ (*your phone number*) or _____ (*your email address*).

Sincerely,

_____ (*Your name*)

Heads Up!

Walk and Roll to School Day is a community event. Make sure that everyone who can contribute or will have to change their routine on that day knows about Walk and Roll to School Day.



Some Useful Numbers:

Sonoma County
Safe Routes to Schools
(707) 545-0153
or SafeRoutes@BikeSonoma.org

Tool #2: Walk and Roll to School Day, Who Needs to Know?

Contact the following people/groups for a successful event:

- **Principal-** Set up a short meeting with your principal to inform them of Safe Routes to Schools. Sonoma County Safe Routes to Schools staff can be present at this meeting to discuss the comprehensive program offerings. **While you're at it, you should ask the principal or school secretary to put Walk to School day on the official school calendar and bulletin calendar (if there is one).** Principals and school secretaries are also your link to teachers and custodians.
- **Traffic Safety Officers from the Police Department-** These guys should know that there will be more kids on the street and could provide extra traffic protection. Sometimes they can provide special attractions like fire trucks and officers on bikes that the younger kids find exciting. Safe Routes to Schools can help you contact their departments for these requests.
- **Parent Group-** Notify your PTA SSC (if you have an active parents group). These groups are able to communicate the event to parents and make great volunteer pools.
- **Neighborhood groups-** Contact your local neighborhood groups and places where people gather (churches, recreational program centers and school parent centers) They can also assist with volunteers and put up signs on their lawns to increase visibility of your event.

Say What?

There are many ways to inform parents, school staff and students about this event. Find out how your school communicates with parents, staff and students and make sure Walk to School Day gets some air time.

Ways to Get the Word Out:

- Send flyers home
- Put up posters
- Banners and signs on the street
- Make signs with students to carry on Walk to School Day
- Get something in the newsletter
- Phone parents or use phone tree
- Loudspeaker announcements
- Notify teachers
- Use school e-mail listserv (if it exists)
- Put out a press release



More Help and Tools

- Use the sample announcements, posters and flyers in your handbook to help get the word out to your community.
- Use some of the fact sheets we provide to beef up your announcements!

Tool #3: Getting the Word Out on Walk and Roll to School Day

How To Make it Happen:

- **Backpack Mail** – Once you get permission to include something in backpack mail, you will need to count out sheets according to the amount of kids in each class. Photocopy the flyers and place them into teacher's mailboxes. SR2S has included a flyer/coloring page in your materials.
- **Principal or Teacher Emails/Newsletter**- Does your principal or teachers have one way to let parents know what is going on? Ask your principal or teachers to include Walk and Roll to School Day in their announcement.
- **School Newsletter** – Use this sample announcement for your newsletter. Make sure to double check the deadlines for getting something in the newsletter. This is also a good way to recruit volunteers.
"This _____ (enter day) is Walk and Roll to School Day! On this day, we will celebrate healthy and low-pollution ways to get to school. Students will be rewarded with _____ when they arrive at school and check in at the welcome table. Families should plan to allow enough time to walk or bike with their children to school. This is also a great time for a conversation and to reinforce safety skills along the way. For more information about a safe route to your school or to volunteer, please call _____ (provide organizer's name and phone number)"
- **Parent Phone Trees and E-Trees**- If your school has one, ask them to notify parents about Walk to School Day.
- **Loudspeaker Announcements** – If your school does these, they are a great way to inform kids and get them excited about Walk and Roll to School Day. For example: *Don't forget! Tomorrow is Walk and Roll to School Day. Stop by the tables located at _____ to pick up food and prizes tomorrow morning. Walk with a friend, its always more fun and safer to walk with a buddy!*

Art + Kids = Fun

Hand made banners and posters give Walk to School Day a unique feel. When you involve kids in the organizing, they are more likely to participate in the event. This is a great art project that can be done through an after school program or an enthusiastic art or classroom teacher.

Great Banner Phrases:

- “Kids Walking to School: Slow Down”
- “Walk and Roll to School Day: Wednesday, October 6th”
- “We go the healthy way: Walk and Roll to School!”
- “Slow Down: This is a street for walking”
- “Join the parade: It’s fun to Walk to School!”

Tool #3: Getting the Word Out With Banners

How to Make it Happen

Contact a teacher- Talk to after school directors or art teachers. Some schools may be excited to organize banner making as a multi class activity, especially if your school has a “buddy” system. This system pairs younger grades with older grades in elementary schools for specific activities.



Create banner (provided in our training)

If you don't receive a banner from us you can use butcher paper from your school to bubble out letters very big with thick markers.

Prepare Paints Pour paints into old yogurt containers with at least one paintbrush in each color. Many afterschool programs have paints available.

Give Clear Instructions such as:

- Stay within the lines of the bubble letters*
- Put the paint brush back in the cup with the same color you used. If you want to switch colors, find a paint brush in the color that you want.*
- Watch where you step, this paint can be knocked over very easily!!*
- If you are finished coloring your word or banner, you can add fun things to the poster like polka dots and outlining the letter in whacky colors..*



In order for a banner to last all year, we suggest that you duct tape the edges of the paper and punch holes through the tape. This allows you to use rope or string to hang these banners upon a fence.

Off the Charts!

These provide the school with a wall-size graph to mark how students get to school by each placing a dot (different colors represent different ways to get to school). If you post this the day before, it attracts a lot of attention and reminds students and parents to participate in Walk to School Day.



People Power

- 1 Artistic Whiz to make this poster and hang it up at school.
- 1 or 2 sticker people at the greeting table to hand out the right colors for types of transportation.
- 1 poster coordinator- this volunteer helps kids place stickers in the right place on the poster.

Tool #3: Getting the Word Out with a Polling Poster

How to Make It Happen:

Collect Materials: Most of these are available through your school supply closet. Ask principal for permission to use these items

You Will Need:

- 7 by 5 foot piece of butcher paper (think wall size)
- Five different color stickers (dots work great!) for bus, walk, bike, carpool, drive alone and another fun one such as pogo stick or unicycle.
- Markers and/or paint to make display



Make Poster Design – This a graph that has the transportation types going down and the kids' stickers lining up beside them. Colorful pictures make this bulletin board kid friendly! Below is the general set up of this wall-size chart.

Give out Stickers to Kids – 1-2 volunteers will be responsible for giving out color coordinated stickers to kids according to how they get to school. This volunteer will direct the kids to the centrally located posters.

Put Stickers on the Poster- One volunteer should stand by the poster and help direct students on where to place their stickers.

Walk Drawing	stickers go here
Bike or Roll Drawing	stickers go here
Carpool Drawing	stickers go here
Bus Drawing	stickers go here
Drive Drawing	stickers go here
Other Drawing	stickers go here

It's a Car, it's a Plane, no it's the Walking School Bus!

A Walking School Bus is a group of children led by adult volunteers who walk to school together. Often they wear reflective vests or other bright items. Sometimes, an adult pulls a wagon carrying the students' backpacks and projects. Parents are glad that there are other responsible adults with the children and that there is a big group. What's more, after establishing trust and schedules, adults can take turns leading the group, meaning less morning stress for parents and guardians.



More Help and Tools

Our program can help you make blown-up maps of your school area and route. We also can provide safety training and materials like vests and balloons to help make your "active school buses" more visible and safe! Please contact saferroutes@bikesonoma.org if you're interested.

Tool #4: Walking and Biking School Buses

How to Make it Happen:

- **Find neighborhood leaders** - You will need 1-2 parents per group. This parent must know a safe route to school and be willing to show up at an assigned time on walk to school day to lead parents and kids on a route to school.
- **Pick a Staging Area** - Set up a staging area where children can meet and walk together to school. The route between the school and the staging area should be along a safe area with sidewalks.
- **Advertise Route** - Publicize staging area and time of departure in all your Walk and Roll to School Day areas and promotional materials. Ask Safe Routes to advertise the routes on your school's Safe Routes webpage.
- **Make signs** - Kids can make signs and hold them during the route. Use the ideas from the Making Banners page for signs

Helpful Hints for Walking and Biking School Buses



- Staging areas are gathering points where students can be dropped off or near a bus stop where students can get off.
- Church parking lots or shopping centers that are approximately ¼ mile from the school make great staging areas.
 - There should be at least two adults, one at the front of the group and one at the rear. With a large number of children, more adults are needed for supervision.

Tips: Walking Safety

- STOP, LOOK, AND LISTEN at every edge.
- Look LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT and only go when there are no cars.
- Try to cross at crosswalks: avoid crossing between parked cars.
- Watch for cars pulling in and out of driveways.
- Practice with your child! Take your child for walks outside of school and let them practice making decisions like when and where it is safe to cross.

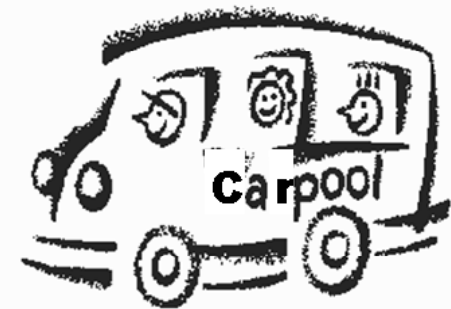


Tips: Basic Biking Safety

- Always wear a helmet.
- Check your bike before you ride: ABC check = air, brakes and chain.
- Check for correct fit on your child's bike: a child's leg should nearly extend with a slight bend.
- Ride in a straight line and keep control of your bike.
- Avoid the "door zone" if riding on the street.
- Learn and use appropriate hand signals or communicate directions with your voice.
- Practice skills like stopping suddenly, scanning behind you on a blacktop or parking lot before riding on the road.
- Bikes are traffic, so ride like traffic! Ride on the right, pay attention to traffic signals and stay off sidewalks as much as possible.

Tips: Driving in the Drop Off Zone

- Drive Slowly and carefully.
- Do not double park, wait to pull to the curb.
- Droop off on the school-side of the street so your child doesn't have to cross the street.
- Avoid backing up. Young kids are small and hard to see.
- Consider the Park and Walk option, park a few blocks from the school and walk the rest of the way.
- Form a carpool! Figure out which families live in your neighborhood and contact them to form a carpool.



Did You Know?

Facts and Statistics about Walking & Biking to School

These are some great facts and talking points to add to a parent presentation or newsletter article

In one generation, the number of kids walking and bicycling to school has dropped from 71% to 18%.

- A child who lives about one mile to school could burn 5 lbs. of body fat a year just by walking to and from school every day.
- Among Children 6-11, the rate of overweight has increased from 4% to 16% since 1963.
- 75% of California students are not able to pass basic fitness standards.
- Travel to school accounts for approximately 25% of morning traffic (national average).
- Cars are responsible for 50% the Bay Area's Greenhouse gas emissions.

Safe Routes to Schools Safety Tips for Parents

How do you get your children ready to move safely through the world, ready to deal with the people they may meet? Here are 10 tips from Paula Statman, M.S.S.W., Director of KidWISE Institute, author of *Raising Careful Kids in a Crazy World* and designer of the *Best Feet Forward* workshops.

- **Protect and teach your children.** Protect your children and teach them the skills they need to be safe and strong. Start by teaching your children that they have the right to be safe. Also, learn about the tough issues children face today, which may not be the same as those you faced when growing up.
- **Prepare — don't scare — your children.** Teach yourself to share your fears with other adults rather than your kids. Teach what your children need to *learn* rather than what you think they should be afraid of. Do not use graphic words that put scary pictures in your children's heads. Instead, help them see themselves acting safely and not getting hurt.
- **Use "teachable moments" to explain safety.** When you are out with your children, help your children learn how to deal with the problems and people they may meet. Here is a lesson that is easy to teach: Suppose you pass a postman, who says, "Hello." Ask your children to say, "Hello," so that they gain practice talking with a person in uniform in case they ever need help. Afterwards talk about why it is OK to talk to certain people and not to others. This is a better approach to teaching safety than saying, "Don't talk to strangers!"
- **Help your children say, "No!"** We need to teach our children – who are taught to respect adults – that they have the right to say, "No!" to anyone who is acting odd, even if that person is an authority figure. This means we must teach them how to say, "No!" to a strange offer, stand up to a bully, and yes — say, "No!" even to us. Safe and strong kids know how and when to protect themselves.
- **Teach your children to recognize, trust, and act on their instincts.** Help your children respond quickly if they have a gut feeling that something is not right. Tell them to trust their inner alarm more than what they see or hear. Their built-in warning system is never wrong and should guide their next steps.

Safe Routes to Schools Safety Tips for Parents (cont.)

- **To teach children in kindergarten through second grade, suggest ideas for acting safely** when they play outdoors, walk to school, are in the park, or go to the store. They will need to hear and practice new safety skills many times to learn them. Other ways to help children learn safety rules are turning them into rhymes, making up songs, and drawing pictures about them.
- **To teach children in third grade and up, ask them to suggest safe actions.** They are learning to solve problems, so ask them why something might be unsafe and then help them come up with the best – and safest – way to deal with it. This is a good age to begin using “What would you do if..?” questions to open your talks about safety.
- **Track the safety skills your children are learning.** This will help you make smarter choices about how much supervision your children need, when to grant more freedom, when to say, “No,” and when to give them more practice while you are with them. It is best to teach a little bit at a time and repeat the lessons and practice sessions. This process makes it simpler for your children to learn, recall, and use new, safety skills.
- **Fight the urge to ground your children for life** when they do not practice safety when they should. Instead, discuss the gaps in their thinking — or your teaching. Then, supply the missing pieces. Ask them to tell you what they would change next time and practice with them so they have the chance to show what they have learned.
- **Praise your children’s progress** when they learn, recall, and choose safe behavior. When you see even a little bit of the desired actions, let your children know that they are on their way to becoming safe and strong kids! Our goal is to help our children show good behavior and judgment over and over, so that they can safely handle more freedom.

Thank You Alameda County Safe Routes to School for making this information available