



# GREEN SNEAKER CHALLENGE GUIDEBOOK



## How to host our Green Sneaker Challenge at your elementary school!

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# 1. What is the Green Sneaker Challenge?



**The Green Sneaker Challenge is a highly engaging way for schools to increase the number of children who bike and walk to campus.**

Students receive a colorful Green Sneaker Challenge (GSC) card to attach to their backpack at the start of the contest. The GSC cards are stamped once a week at a morning welcome table on Wednesdays\*. Children look forward to receiving a green ink “sneaker” stamp for four weeks. On the last day of the GSC, students place their cards into a box and become eligible to win a raffle prize or prizes.\*

Elementary school children **love** our challenge! The GSC backpack cards serve as a badge of honor and boost green travel school pride. Additionally, the backpack cards are an “on and off-campus” colorful marketing tool to promote green transportation.

**The primary benefits of hosting the GSC at your school include:**

- Plant “seeds” at a young age for kids to use their feet to get places
- Improve academic performance ...children arrive brighter and more alert for their first morning class
- Reduce school traffic and pollution
- Inspire students to make green travel a lifelong habit

\*Schools may choose an alternative setting for stamping cards, such as stamping in classrooms. Each school will be provided with two stamps and one ink pad. If stamping in alternative settings, please supplement with any special stamp(s) of your own. If assistance is needed to obtain a raffle prize, please contact your SRTS site coordinator.

## 2. How to get started



1. Seek Principal approval to host the GSC at your school. Safe Routes to Schools suggests all participating schools host our contest for a four-week period of your choice in the Spring (typically between late March-May) or Fall (typically in October). We suggest inviting your Principal to be present at the welcome table on the first day of the contest.
2. Recruit volunteer parents to stamp backpack cards at your welcome table\*. Additional volunteers may be needed for schools with larger student populations and multiple school entrances. Ask your student leadership or green team to assist on the first morning of the GSC. Younger children need more assistance attaching cards to their backpacks. If you are short volunteers, then “pre-stamping” cards on the first week is recommended. Another option is to distribute all backpack tags in advance of the start date by delivering the cards to classrooms with a flyer.

\*If stamping cards in individual classrooms, recruit a parent volunteer or responsible student.

# ATTENTION ALL BACKPACKS!

The Green Sneaker Challenge starts on **INSERT OWN START DATE**



Make Walking & Biking  
to School a Fun Habit!



## MORNING STAMP DAYS INSERT 4 DATES OF YOUR CHOICE

Obtain your backpack card at our welcome table on the morning of

Receive an ink "sneaker" stamp every Wednesday for four consecutive weeks.

To receive a stamp, you must travel to school by foot or bike once a week (any day of the week).

Live far away? Drive and park near our school and then walk partway!

On the last day of our contest children can enter their Green Sneaker card into a raffle box to become eligible to win

## 3. Publicity steps



### FLYER

- Publish the “Attention All Backpacks!” flyer in your school newsletter **TWICE** before the contest starts. We recommend doing this in the two weeks before your challenge begins if possible.
- Post the “Attention All Backpacks!” color flyer around campus.
- Insert the flyer in every child’s backpack if your school has “backpack mail.”
- Ask your Principal to forward the flyer to all parents via e-mail or digital media communications.

### MASTER CALENDAR

Publish the dates of the Green Sneaker Challenge on your school’s master calendar, marquee and website.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

If your school engages in social media, then post on FaceBook to get families excited about the GSC.

## 4. Welcome table “stamp” days



*Cards are stamped once a week for four weeks.*

Here they come! The first day of the contest is when GSC cards and plastic holders are distributed to students at a welcome table. Please arrive 30 minutes early and have **extra pens** on the table for students to fill out their name and classroom number on their GSC cards. It is suggested that you recruit parents and leadership students to help attach cards to backpacks of younger students.

The weekly GSC welcome table is also an opportunity for volunteers to *engage* in friendly conversation with children by asking:

**“How did you arrive to school today?”**

If a child responds that they arrived by foot, bike, carpool or bus, then you can stamp their card. Or, if they did not travel green, you can still stamp their card if they promise to travel green another day of the week. Volunteers are “easy graders” when it comes to stamping and encouraging children to make green travel a habit.

## 5. Raffle prizes

On the last day of the GSC, each student should place his/her backpack card and plastic holder into a raffle box. Seek out donations or request funding from your PTA for a raffle prize. Safe Routes to School may be able to assist in obtaining a raffle prize for your site. If you need assistance, please inquire with your SRTS Site Coordinator. You can list several prizes in your school newsletter announcements to create excitement about the GSC. When requesting donations from local shops, you may provide them with our tax i.d. letter. **(Please see sample letter on following page.)**

Here are a few suggestions how to deliver prizes to raffle winners:

1. Deliver the prize to the raffle winner's classroom and congratulate them in person.
2. Attend a school-wide assembly and ask the Principal to announce the winners. Use the assembly as an opportunity to promote green travel.
3. Announce the winner using your school's public service announcement system and have the student come to the front office to pick-up his/her prize.





Dear (INSERT NAME OF BUSINESS):

Safe Routes to Schools is hosting a contest called the Green Sneaker Challenge in efforts to increase the numbers of students walking and biking to school. Our program helps to reduce traffic and make our streets safer while promoting eco-friendly transportation alternatives in Sonoma County. At the end of the Green Sneaker Challenge, students will turn in their stamped backpack cards to become eligible to win a raffle prize.

***Would you consider donating a raffle prize?***

Donations from contributors like you help students realize that our local community support their actions to make a difference. Safe Routes to Schools is currently working with 60 schools and over 20,000 students throughout Sonoma County with a goal of reducing Sonoma County's carbon footprint and improving health through everyday physical activity.

**All donations are fully tax-deductible.** Safe Routes to Schools is a program of the Sonoma County Transportation Authority and implemented by the Sonoma County Bike Coalition, a 501(c)(3), id#68-0467330. Additionally, we will recognize your business in the local school newsletter and in Safe Routes to Schools' digital newsletter that reaches thousands in Sonoma County.

Thank you for your consideration and generosity.

Sincerely,

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Safe Routes to Schools, Sonoma County

**Enter your name and phone number**



# Return plastic sleeves to Safe Routes to Schools!

We need to get back all of the plastic card holders at the end of the contest so that we can re-use them. Please send an e-mail to your Safe Routes to School Site Coordinator or email [saferoutes@bikesonoma.org](mailto:saferoutes@bikesonoma.org) when you are ready to return your sleeves. Thank you!



*The Sonoma County Safe Routes to School Program would like to acknowledge and thank Laura Kelly, Gwen Froh, and the Marin County Safe Routes to School Program for development of the Green Sneaker Challenge Contest and associated designs.*