

# Introduction







## About the Sonoma County Safe Routes to Schools Program

Safe Routes to Schools is an international movement dedicated to increasing the safety and number of children walking and bicycling to school. The Sonoma County Partnership is a countywide collaboration to promote safe walking and biking to school and reduce traffic congestion in the areas surrounding schools throughout Sonoma County. Our primary partners include Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition (lead agency), the Sonoma County Public Health Department, and the Sonoma County Transportation Authority. Other agencies and organizations with whom we currently collaborate include the Sonoma County Office of Education, Sonoma County Sheriff, California Highway Patrol, Santa Rosa Police Department, Sebastopol Police Department, Santa Rosa City School District, Sebastopol Union School District, Roseland School District, Bellevue Union School District, Cities of Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Rohnert Park, Petaluma, Sonoma, Windsor, Healdsburg, and Cloverdale.

The program provides training sessions, resources and customized support; while working together with schools, parents, and the local community to give kids an active, healthy start to the school day, reduce traffic congestion, and improve environmental health. Our program is available to any school in Sonoma County that can provide parent and staff enthusiasm, support and volunteer power to champion the Safe Routes to Schools Program in the school. Our program is based on the comprehensive 5 E's model: **Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Engineering, and Evaluation**. We encourage schools to address all 5 E's through the tools, and assistance we provide. However, it is also possible to start out with only one or two programs in place.

**Read on to find out more about the programs we offer to schools:**

### School Champion Resources: For Parents and Others

#### **Sonoma County Safe Routes to School Website & Toolkit – [www.sonomasaferoutes.org](http://www.sonomasaferoutes.org)**

This online toolkit equips Safe Routes to School (SR2S) champions (teachers, parents and other school community members) with the information and techniques necessary to organize and engage the community in walking and biking to school encouragement, events and contests in schools. SRTS presentations and trainings are available, by request, to parent-teacher organizations such as a PTA or SSC.

### School-wide Assemblies and Programs

#### **Safe Routes to School Assembly Program**

Often in partnership with local law enforcement, we provide a full 30-minute school assembly script that emphasizes pedestrian and/or bicycle safety.



### **Walk or Bike Encouragement Programs**

We provide resources, such as the frequent walk/Bike Card program, to encourage students to walk and bike to school through raffle prizes and give-a-ways. Students keep track of when they walk and bike to school in order to enter into a raffle if they have walked or biked a certain number of times throughout the contest.

## **Bicycle Programs and Community Training Sessions**

### **Bicycle Skills/Safety Rodeo**

A bicycle skills/safety rodeo is an outdoor bicycle clinic for elementary school children. Children are provided with direct instruction on four skills courses, and learn the basics of safe cycling. They also have the opportunity to have their helmets checked, bicycles inspected/adjusted, and view bicycle safety educational demonstrations.

### **Family Cycling Clinic**

Learn how to ride with your children in this 2-hour workshop that will give both you and your child the skills you need to safely ride together.

## **Parent and Teacher Workshops**

### **Walking School Bus Training Session**

The Walking School Bus is a proven and tested method using the simple strategy of encouraging children to walk to school in groups supervised by parents or other adults. This training informs parents about everything they need to launch a Walking School Bus Program.

**Personal Safety Workshop:** This 20-minute workshop empowers parents to teach their children to act safely around strangers on the streets while walking and bicycling. Walking with confidence, what to do during an emergency and signs of danger are issues that will get addressed during this important workshop.

## **Engineering**

### **Walk Audit: Community Workshop**

This activity engages parents, school staff, Public Works representatives, traffic safety officers and other community leaders in identifying needed infrastructure improvements for safer walking and biking routes to school with a walk audit of the immediate neighborhood surrounding the school.

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# Safety, Community, Health, Environment: Teaching Safe Routes' Themes

This curriculum guide provides teachers with the opportunity to connect learning standards to an experience that all students share: the journey to school. The guide applies carefully-selected California curriculum standards to themes that the Safe Routes to Schools program teaches themes of **pedestrian** and **bicycle safety, community, health,** and the **environment**.

Through these lessons, students will gain a number of significant understandings about their social and physical environments:

- That walking and bicycling to school can provide opportunities for improved levels of fitness and a better social and physical environment;
- That reducing the number of car trips can have a huge benefit on both the local and global environments;
- That a greater number of pedestrians and bicyclists in neighborhoods can lead to a more cooperative neighborhood community;
- That environmental issues are local, regional, national and global;
- That individuals are responsible to their community and can be empowered to make change;
- That small changes can have an impact on improving the social and physical environments of our local communities; and
- That EVERYONE has a personal responsibility to help improve the environment.

## **Did you know that ...**

- In one generation, the number of kids walking and bicycling to school has dropped from 71% to 18% (*1995 National Personal Transportation Survey, 2001 National Household Travel Survey*).
- There are more than three times as many overweight kids today as there were 25 years ago (*Center for Disease Control and Prevention*).
- A child who lives about one mile to school could burn 5 lbs. of body fat a year by walking to and from school everyday (*Dr. Richard Jackson, UC Berkeley*).
- Walking and biking combine for less than 10% of children's trips (*Can't Get there from Here, TALC*).

*"Our family rides bikes to school because it's good for our health, it's good for our neighborhood and our environment, it reduces the traffic congestion at our school, and because it's a really fun way to get to school. It's been a really great way to get to know and bond with kids (and their families) in the neighborhood who go to the same school. It's like a 20-minute play date before school every single day!"*

Alexa Wilkie, parent of Thousand Oak Elementary School student

# When to teach Safe Routes Lessons

Are you excited to try out the lessons from this Teachers Guide but not sure when you'll be able to teach them? How about integrating the lessons into yearly holidays and events that you will be teaching anyway? Here are a few suggestions:

**1<sup>ST</sup> WEEK IN OCTOBER:** It's International Walk to School Day! Use this celebration to encourage students to start healthy habits at the beginning of the year and walk or roll to school. Teach the lesson **"Walk or Bike to School Day Art"** (3<sup>rd</sup> grade lesson) to help publicize Walk to School Day. Be sure and get in touch with your school's Safe Routes to Schools parent liaison to find out the exact date for Walk to School Day and how your students can participate in it.

**HALLOWEEN:** This is the one time of year when students will almost certainly be walking around in their neighborhood. Take this opportunity to teach lessons about pedestrian safety. **"Walk Around the Block"** and **"Step to Safety with ASIMO"** are great lessons to start with (2<sup>nd</sup> grade lessons).

**EARLY NOVEMBER:** Daylight savings time means it's getting darker earlier. Be sure and discuss the need for students to wear bright clothing at night, as taught in **"Step to Safety with ASIMO"** (2<sup>nd</sup> grade).

**JANUARY:** Do your students make New Years resolutions? Ask them to make resolutions about walking and bicycling to school, or to pledge to make environmentally- friendly actions. **"Pollution Prevention Hero"** (3<sup>rd</sup> grade lesson) will show you how!

**FEBRUARY:** Did you know that Abe Lincoln was so poor he walked to school in his bare feet (a four mile walk for a period of time!)? Take the opportunity to discuss students' own journeys to school as you teach about this great president. **"This is the Way We Go to School"** (first grade) is one lesson that could complement your discussions about Abraham Lincoln.

**APRIL:** It's Earth Month! Take this time to discuss environmental problems and solutions with your students, and the role that walking, bicycling and taking the bus have in keeping our environment clean. Each grade level has its own lesson with an environmental theme, including **"Good for You, Good for the Earth"** (Kindergarten), **"Calculating School Trip Emissions"** (Fourth Grade) and **"Is Climate Change Good for Us?"** (Fifth Grade).

**MAY:** Bike to Work and School Day falls during the second week in May. This is an excellent time to review bicycle safety rules with the students. **"Jeopardy Time"** (fourth grade) includes information about bicycling and the handout **"Bicycle Safety Basics"** (fifth grade) reviews rules as well.

# Cross References of Lesson Plans

## Lessons by Theme:

### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety:**

- Use Your Head Before Your Feet (Kindergarten) Page 17
- Safety Games (Kindergarten) Page 19
- Pedestrian Safety Basics (First Grade) Page 29
- Step to Safety with ASIMO (Second Grade) Page 45
- Walk Around the Block (Second Grade) Page 51
- Jeopardy Game (Fourth Grade) Page 81
- My Safe Route to School (Fifth Grade) Page 103

### **Environment:**

- Good for You, Good for the Earth (Kindergarten) Page 13
- Pollution Prevention Hero (Third Grade) Page 59
- Calculating School Trip Emissions (Fourth Grade) Page 71
- Greenhouse in a Bottle (Fifth Grade) Page 97
- Is Climate Change Good for Us? (Fifth Grade) Page 107

### **Community:**

- Neighborhood Sensory Walk (First Grade) Page 37
- This is the Way We Go to School (First Grade) Page 33
- Picture Stories (Second Grade) Page 47
- Graphing School Choices (Third Grade) Page 55
- Walk or Bike to School Day Art (Third Grade) Page 65
- Life Before and After Four Wheels (Fourth Grade) Page 75
- Walk Audit (Fifth Grade) Page 111

## Lessons by Subjects:

### **Language Arts:**

- Good For You, Good for the Earth (Kindergarten) Page 13
- Use Your Head Before Your Feet (Kindergarten) Page 17
- Safety Games (Kindergarten) Page 19
- This is the Way We Go to School (First Grade) Page 33
- Neighborhood Sensory Walk (First Grade) Page 37



- Picture Stories (Second Grade) Page 47
- Graphing School Choices (Third Grade) Page 55
- Walk or Bike to School Day Art (Third Grade) Page 65
- Life Before and After Four Wheels (Fourth Grade) Page 75
- Travel Diary (Fourth Grade) Page 87

### **Science:**

- Neighborhood Sensory Walk (First Grade) Page 37
- Pollution Prevention Hero (Third Grade) Page 59
- Is Climate Change Good for Us? (Fifth Grade) Page 107

### **Math:**

- Good For You, Good For the Earth (Kindergarten) Page 13
- This is the Way We Go to School (First Grade) Page 33
- Graphing School Choices (Third Grade) Page 55
- Calculating School Trip Emissions (Fourth Grade) Page 71

### **Health:**

- Pedestrian Safety Basics (First Grade) Page 29
- Step to Safety with ASIMO (Second Grade) Page 45
- Jeopardy Time! (Fourth Grade) Page 81
- Travel Diary (Fourth Grade) Page 87

### **P.E.:**

- Step to Safety with ASIMO (Second Grade) Page 45
- Walk Around the Block (Second Grade) Page 51

### **History/Social Studies:**

- This is the Way We Go to School (First Grade) Page 33
- Pollution Prevention Hero (Third Grade) Page 59
- Life Before and After Four Wheels (Fourth Grade) Page 75
- My Safe Route to School (Fifth Grade) Page 103

### **Art:**

- Walk or Bike to School Day Art (Third Grade) Page 65



# LESSON PLANS





# KINDERGARTEN

## At a Glance

### LESSONS:

“**Good for You, Good for the Earth**”: Students learn how their peers get to school, through a bar graph, and draw pictures to show how walking, bicycling and taking the bus can promote good personal and environmental health.

“**Use Your Head Before Your Feet**”: Students learn basic safety rules for walking through a fun rhyme.

“**Safety Games**”: Students learn basic traffic safety signals, reinforced through flash cards and the “Red Light, Green Light” game.

“**Safety Flashcard Assignment**.” Students will learn about various road and safety devices.

### STUDENT WORKSHEETS

- The Safety Song (teacher handout)
- What’s Safe?
- Safety Shapes

### STANDARDS COVERED:

#### History and Social Studies:

K4: Students compare and contrast the locations of people, places and environments and describe their characteristics.

4-1.: Identify traffic symbols and map symbols.

#### Math:

K1: Students collect information about objects and events in their environment.

1.1: Pose information questions; collect data; and record the results using objects, pictures and picture graphs.

#### Language Arts:

1.0: Students write words and brief sentences that are legible.

1.10: Identify and produce rhyming words in response to a prompt.

1.15: Read simple syllable and high-frequency words.

#### Science:

4a: Students observe common objects using the five senses.

4e: Communicate observations orally and through drawings.

### RELEVANT HOUGHTON MIFFLIN UNITS:

- Look at Us – Five senses

### RELEVANT OPEN COURT UNITS:

- School
- Teamwork

