



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS GUIDEBOOK FOR SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

This volunteer guide is designed to provide you with the tools needed to implement and publicize our Walk and Roll Days campaign at your school.



www.sonomasaferoutes.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SAFE ROUTES VOLUNTEER PARENTS & TEACHERS
WALK AND ROLL DAYS4
THE ABC's OF ORGANIZING YOUR WELCOME TABLE5
CHECKLIST FOR SETTING-UP YOUR WELCOME TABLE6
INCENTIVES FOR KIDS TO WALK AND ROLL7
HOW TO GREET STUDENTS AT YOUR WELCOME TABLE8
HOW TO MARKET OUR CAMPAIGN AT YOUR SCHOOL9
EXTRA: GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND14
PUBLICITY CONTACT16
APPENDIX A: NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION TO RECRUIT PARENT VOLUNTEERS
APPENDIX B: VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP SHEET
APPENDIX C: TIPS FOR WALKING/BICYCLING SAFELY 22

There are four active and alternative travel modes:

• Walk

• Bike

CarpoolBus

SAFE ROUTES VOLUNTEER PARENTS & TEACHERS



Parent and teacher volunteers are our green travel ambassadors.

Thank you for volunteering to serve as the Safe Routes to Schools Champion and represent our program. Safe Routes to Schools is dedicated to changing the way this generation of children in Sonoma County travels to school. Our staff works closely with our volunteers to promote green travel as a lifelong habit. Our volunteers are instrumental in helping us to increase the numbers of walkers and bikers in Sonoma County.

Ideally, we suggest a co-leader position at every school, in which two Safe Routes volunteers "team up" to work creatively together and have fun promoting our program. This could be either two parents, or possibly you and a teacher at your school. You can also collaborate with your principal, student leadership, green team, or other student organization.

HOW TO GET STARTED

- ✓ Select a designated day of the week as your Walk & Roll to School Day (such as Wednesday)
- ✓ Get permission for Walk and Roll Days
- ✓ Set up a monthly Welcome Table
- ✓ Recruit a volunteer team
- ✓ Promote WEEKLY Walk and Roll Days

PUBLISH VOLUNTEER TABLING DATES ON YOUR SCHOOL'S MASTER CALENDAR

Important events be aware of:

OCTOBER:

- International Walk and Roll to School Day (1st Wednesday in October)
- Walk to School Month
- Fire Up Your Feet Challenge Month

APRIL:

- Earth Month
- Fire Up Your Feet Challenge Month begins

MAY:

- National Bike to School Day (1st Wednesday in May)
- Bike Month

WALK AND ROLL DAYS



Your primary role as the Safe Routes to Schools leader at your school is to organize and make popular our "Walk and Roll Days."

On the first Wednesday of every month, you will set up a Welcome Table to greet students who bike, walk, carpool, or take the bus (if available). **However, if Wednesday does not work for your school, then select another day.** Also, if monthly walk and roll days do not work for your school, you may establish another walk/roll schedule that works for your site, such as weekly walk/roll days in October and April. Our program aspiration is to embed a regular weekly green travel day at every school in Sonoma County, and to celebrate that day with a minimum of six walk/roll "Events" per year.

The goal of the Safe Routes to Schools program is to create a safe walking and biking culture which nurtures green travel.

Our mission is to make green travel a daily habit for this generation of children by encouraging them at a young age to use their feet to get places.



THE ABC's OF ORGANIZING YOUR WELCOME TABLE

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Ask your Principal for permission to host Walk and Roll Wednesdays (or alternative day of the week), and publish the dates on the school calendar. Send your Principal a brief e-mail before school starts, or set up a meeting with him/ her if you would like to discuss highlights of this guide. Let your Principal know that you will need them to send an e-mail to all parents and teachers publicizing the school launch date of Walk and Roll Wednesdays in Sonoma County. Another person to contact right away is the PTA President to get support for Walk and Roll Wednesdays and funding for healthy snacks

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Select a high visibility location to set up your monthly Welcome Table. How many entrances are there at your school? Might you need multiple tables if you are a large school? What is the most popular entrance for students as they arrive by foot or bike? You want the entire school to see you, so put some thought into the best location to greet walkers and bikers.

C

Recruit a few volunteers to help you once a month (including your kids if they are interested) to staff your Welcome Table. You can also recruit your student leadership to help out. Build a volunteer base by recruiting through your school newsletter and parent events at your school.

Word of mouth is the best way to build your volunteer team. The individual ask gets the best results. Contact your school's PTA or Parent Club to recruit volunteers and to spread the word throughout the parent community about your Safe Routes to Schools program (see page 12, PTA). You can also put out a notice in your newsletter and have a signup sheet at key meetings like back to school night or PTA meetings. You can find these tools in the Appendix at the end of this guide.





CHECKLIST FOR SETTING UP YOUR WELCOME TABLE

HERE THEY COME! You will need to arrive 45 minutes before school starts, once a month (or on designated event dates), to set up your Walk and Roll Welcome Table.

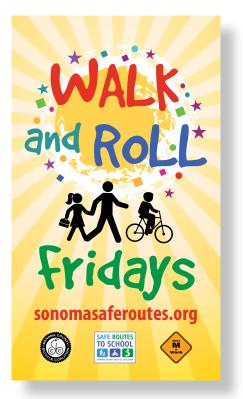
Be ready and have your table set up at least 30 minutes before the school bell rings for those children who arrive early. Your Welcome Table is also a place for early arrivers to socialize. Additionally, bring your children to assist you. Kids working at a Welcome Table are inspiring mini-ambassadors of the Safe Routes to Schools program.



Checklist of what you will need to set up your monthly Welcome Table:

- ✓ Your school Principal (optional) Principals are powerful role models for elementary school children. It would be beneficiall if you can prompt your Principal to be present to welcome students once a month.
- ✓ Safe Routes to Schools T-Shirts for you and other parent volunteers to wear (if available)
- ✓ A portable table and a few chairs, make arrangements in advance with the custodian
- ✓ Walk and Roll Days vinyl banner
- Clear duct tape to adhere the banner to the table (or hang in another visible location)
- ✓ Safety Walk/Bike pamphlets (if available)
- ✓ A trash container if you are giving out / serving snacks and drinks
- ✓ Give-aways
- ✓ Raffle supplies (if you obtain prize donations from your PTA): A raffle box, pens and pencils.





INCENTIVES FOR KIDS TO WALK AND ROLL



The Safe Routes to School program provides modest incentives that you may distribute at your school's welcome table at your school Walk and Roll Events. Incentive items will vary from year to year and may include pencils, stickers, magnets, and the like.

Whenever possible, we suggest serving snacks, such as fresh fruit, muffins, trail mix, granola bars, juice, hot chocolate, or other similar treats at your welcome table when possible. This will need to be funded by your PTA, parent club, or another source.









HOW TO GREET STUDENTS AT YOUR WELCOME TABLE

SMILE!

As our Safe Routes to Schools representative, we need you to acknowledge students for their efforts to travel green to school when they arrive at your Welcome Table. Here are some examples of what you can say to help build a walking and biking culture at your school:

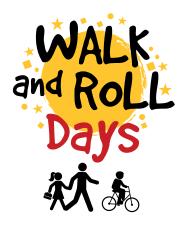
- Great job riding your bike to school!
- How did you get to school today? Is there a friend you might want to invite next time?
- Keep walking to school every day!
- We are trying to get the entire school to travel green every Wednesday... keep it up every week!

SOLICITING DONATIONS

If you have the time, solicit donations from local businesses, or assign this task to another parent volunteer. A monthly raffle with fun local prizes is a great way to boost the popularity of Walk and Roll Days. You might also ask your PTA for an annual Safe Routes to Schools' budget for prizes, like ice cream certificates, movie passes, or pizza gift certificates. You can download a sample donation letter from our website:

http://www.sonomasaferoutes.org/content/walkand-roll-days

Local bike shops have been supportive of our program. Contact them regarding raffle prize donations and give them some publicity in return. Bikes, locks, helmets and tune-ups are big incentives. Often your local bike shop is happy to support local schools, especially for high visibility events like National Bike to School Day.



SIMPLE MARKETING STEPS:

- W&R Posters in the Classroom
- Principal Eblast
- Newsletter Submissions
- Facebook
- Web Site
- Backpack mail
- PTA
- Announcements
- Assemblies
- Poster Art
- Travel Mode Tally Poster

HOW TO MARKET OUR CAMPAIGN AT YOUR SCHOOL

GREEN CAMPAIGNS GET FAMILIES THINKING ABOUT BIKING AND WALKING BY CONVEYING REASONS.

Promotion is critical in establising a successful biking and walking culture at your school. A strong sense of school pride is created by students and their families who participate in a regular Walk and Roll Day initiative. The school community effort feels inspirational to everyone and becomes a contagious cultural force. Ask your school Principal and/or teachers to join you to greet students at the Welcome Table.

Below is a list of publicity strategies to successfully promote Walk and Roll Days:

#1 A POSTER IN EVERY CLASSROOM

Please hang our Walk and Roll Wednesdays posters in every classroom at your school in **early September**. If you have designated a different day of the week as your walk/roll day, you may request a poster that specifies that day, or one that just says "Days." There are three possible ways to do this:

- Ask your Principal to distribute the posters at a staff meeting, or attend yourself and use the staff meeting as an opportunity to let teachers know about the campaign.
- Deliver a poster to each teacher's inbox with a note.
- Go to every classroom and deliver the poster at recess time. Make a brief presentation to students reminding them to travel green every Wednesday.

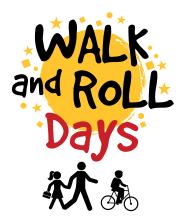


Make green travel a lifelong habit.



sonomasaferoutes.org

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL



Visit the Safe Routes website to download this logo and other Walk and Roll promotional materials: www.sonomasaferoutes.org



#2 PRINCIPAL E-MAIL OR ALL CALL TO ALL PARENTS

- Ask your Principal to blow the horn! Ask him/her to send an e-mail to parents encouraging families to to walk, bike or carpool to school once a week.
- Ask your Principal to include the file of our Walk & Roll Days or Walk & Roll Wednesdays logo.

HERE IS SUGGESTED TEXT TO SEND IN THE FIRST SUBMISSION:

Our school is embracing the Sonoma County initiative by Safe Routes to Schools to encourage all families to walk, bike or carpool to school once a week. Our launch date is INSERT DATE. Volunteers will be out front at a Welcome Table handing out INSERT INCENTIVE ITEM to all students. If you live too far, drive part way and then walk.

Choose a safe route for your child to walk or bike. Plan a route with the fewest street crossings, and practice it with your child. Wear helmets, obey stop signs and and teach your child to bike in the same direction as traffic. Biking and walking to school is fun. It's also healthy for our children, and our planet.

We'll have a Welcome Table set up the first Wednesday of every month for students that arrive a green way to school. Continue walking and biking every Days. Let's all fill up the bike racks and sidewalks every Walk and Roll Wednesday. Green travel decreases school traffic congestion and creates healthy lifestyle habits.

- Principal Green, Sunshine Elementary School



Visit the Safe Routes website to download this logo and other Walk and Roll promotional materials:

www.sonomasaferoutes.org

#3 SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

- WHO is your school newsletter editor?
- WHAT is their e-mail address?
- WHEN is the deadline?

In addition to the principal announcement, continually promote Walk and Roll Wednesday in your school newsletter. Your first newsletter announcement will introduce the program. Here are a two additional strategies for newsletter submissions that you can create to keep the green travel momentum rolling at your school throughout the year:

WRITE A SHORT STORY

- Is there a neighborhood that bikes together every Wednesday?
- Are there two buddies that walk together or a teacher that rides every day?
- Do you know of a parent that used to drive, but now walks with their child?

These are inspiring stories, which you can write about, to generate a biking and walking culture.

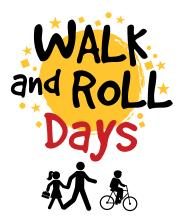
PHOTO WITH A CAPTION

A picture is worth a thousand words. Find out if your school newsletter accepts photos. Take photos on Walk & Roll Days, and obtain the student names in your best photo and submit it to the editor. Check with your principal to make sure that student has been cleared with a photo release. Photos of students walking, biking and carpooling are a great way to create a strong feeling at your school that everyone is traveling green every Wednesday! Lastly, write a creative photo caption with the photo.



Here is an example:

JOIN THE MOVEMENT! Biking and walking to school (even partway) is a a memory your child will never forget. Be part of the fun and help our school to fill up the bike racks! Biking is energizing and really fun once your child gets into the habit.



Visit the Safe Routes website to download this logo and other Walk and Roll promotional materials:

www.sonomasaferoutes.org



#4 FACEBOOK

Does your school have a FaceBook page?

If the answer is yes, then you can apply the same submssion for your school newsletter to FaceBook. Post on FaceBook to promote the increasing number of walkers and bikers at your school.

#5 SCHOOL WEBSITE

Websites are a great way to educate parents about safe biking tips and local routes. If your school does not have a Safe Routes to Schools section, then we encourage you to work with us to create one on your website. Publicize our Walk and Roll Wednesday dates on your school's website, and customize it.

#6 BACKPACK MAIL

- Does your school send home information to parents in their child's backpack?
- If yes, then include our Walk and Roll Days flyer! Many schools have gone all electronic for their communications. The tactic is the same

 make sure that the flyer or a link to the web page is included on a regular basis.

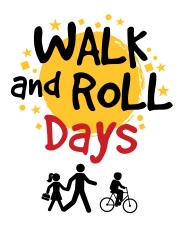
#7 PTA

- Is our Safe Routes to Schools volunteer position part of the PTA?
- The National PTA has endorsed our Safe
 Routes to Schools program. Work closely with
 your PTA President to publicize Walk and
 Roll Days in their e-mails and newsletters. Do
 you have a PTA budget for snacks for your
 Welcome table? Work together! Attend PTA
 meetings.

#8 LOUD SPEAKER ANNOUNCEMENTS

 On Monday or Tuesday, use your school's loud speaker as a way to remind students to walk, bike or carpool on Wednesday. You can also ask the teachers to announce a reminder every week in the classroom.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS: WALK & ROLL DAYS



#9 SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES

Use an upcoming assembly to do a presentation about the importance of walking and biking to school. This presentation can include safety tips and/or environmental and health benefits of walking and biking. A staff person from Safe Routes to Schools might be able to assist you. Please contact your designated site coordinator or email saferoutes@bikesonoma.org to make a request. Assemblies are a great way to reach all students.





#10 POSTER ART

- Does your school have a place to hang multiple posters?
- Organize a poster making session to engage students to paint colorful posters promoting biking, walking and carpooling. The posters can be used at your staging area for Walk and Roll Wednesdays, or hung around the school.
- The signs build awareness of the school's efforts to increase the number of walkers and bikers. The posters can also be used by walking neighborhood groups and special events, like International Walk and Roll to School Day.
- For more information about Poster Art, or for a list of fun poster slogan suggestions, email saferoutes@bikesonoma.org.



#11 TRAVEL MODE TALLY POSTER



On your first Walk/Roll Day of the year, get kids excited and raise visibility by creating a poster where kids can indicate how they traveled to school.

TO DO THIS:

- **1.** Get a large piece of butcher paper & a supply of stickers enough for every student.
- 2. Write How Did You Get to School Today or Walk & Roll to School Day across the top of the banner
- **3.** Have transportation types (walk, bike, carpool, bus, family vehicle, other) listed vertically on the left or in columns across the top. Use picture symbols if possible.

- **4.** Arrange for a parent or student volunteer to supervise the tally poster during your event.
- 5. When kids arrive at school, have them put a sticker next to the mode they traveled (color coordinate w/ different color dots or stickers, if you'd like). The parent / student volunteer should stand by the poster to direct kids on where to put their stickers.
- 6. Post the banner in the hallway after the event, and share it at your next school assembly as an education / encouragement tool.

TIMELINE FOR YOUR FIRST WALK & ROLL TO SCHOOL DAY EVENT:

6-8 weeks before	 Ask permission to implement the event & set up a welcome table in the morning Make sure your principal has the date of all Walk/Roll event day(s) on your school's master calendar & all places where school event dates are published Talk to your PTA about ways they can support the event(s), with volunteers or funding for healthy snacks and/ or prizes Contact area businesses about donating snacks and/or prizes Personalize and proof our flyer template for distribution Put a paragraph in the school newsletter, website or listserv to make parents aware of the event(s) & recruit volunteers
4 weeks before	 ✓ Begin volunteer recruitment (2-4 volunteers for day of event) ✓ Provide event information to teachers so they can begin announcing, placing info in their own newsletters, etc. ✓ Contact law enforcement agencies (police/fire) if you would like to request their support/presence ✓ Optional: Determine walking school bus routes/organize groups
3 weeks before	 Create or obtain banners or posters to hang up around the school or to take on the Walking School busses Begin publicizing through the channels mentioned on the prior pages
2 weeks before	 ✓ Hang banners and posters ✓ Make copies of the flyers and/or distribute information to students/parents via backpack mail and/or other channels
1 week before	 ✓ Make sure your welcome table/materials/incentives are ready/organized ✓ Send out parent reminders through e-mail, listserv or room parents ✓ Remind school staff, volunteers, and teachers and ask them to remind students
Day before (or earlier)	 ✓ Make loudspeaker announcements ✓ Check in with volunteers ✓ Pick up and prep food donations ✓ Notify teachers and ask them to remind students
Same day	 Arrive at least 45 minutes before school starts to set up and direct your volunteers to their posts Tally #'s of walkers and bikers and submit to the Countywide SRTS Program Conduct raffle (if applicable) Have fun!
Post Event	✓ Thank businesses and volunteers, announce raffle winner(s) (if applicable)

SIMPLE STEPS

- ✓ Establish
 neighborhood
 meet-up locations
- ✓ Recruit walk and bike leaders
- ✓ Publicize meet-up locations and times

EXTRA: Going Above and Beyond

ORGANIZING NEIGHBORHOODS

Creating meeting locations to walk and bike together

When families get to know who walks or bikes in their neighborhood, they will be able to form groups that can travel to school together on a regular basis. The first step in forming these relationships is establishing meet-up locations at strategic places that are walking and/or biking distance from the school. These locations not only serve those who live nearby but also allows those who live farther away an opportunity to park and walk the rest of the way to school. This reduces traffic within the immediate vicinity of the school, making it safer for everyone.



Choose locations on all sides of the school zones that easily serve the nearby neighborhoods. Make sure it has parking areas where parents can safely drop off their children. If there are private parking areas, be sure to ask permission from the owners to allow short term parking.

When publicizing your Walk and Roll days, promote these meet-up locations and urge parents to walk or bike with their children. This also ensures enough supervision and safety for the children. You can post a screenshot of a Google Map showing meet-up locations, and include it with your publicity and on your school website.

Find parents who are already walking or biking with their children and ask them if they would be willing to allow other children to join them. As you develop your team for tabling, ask them for information on parents they know who might be willing to lead walking and biking groups. Ask your PTA to help you find your walk and bike leaders. Stress the minimum time commitment if they are already walking or biking. For safety, recruit enough parents according to the Walking School Bus & Bike Train suggestions on page 17.



SAFETY TIPS

- Discuss and practice road safety and traffic rules.
- Make sure that parents do not leave their children alone while waiting for the group; the supervision of each child must be transferred to a responsible adult.
- Don't let children get too far ahead or behind.
- Encourage children to wear bright or fluorescent colors or reflector tape on their backpacks or jackets.
- Yellow vests or armbands help with visibility. You can get them for all participants or just for the adults.
- Bring along a wagon for books, musical instruments and projects.

WALKING SCHOOL BUSES & BIKE TRAINS

WALKING SCHOOL BUS

A Walking School Bus is a group of neighbors who walk to school picking up kids along the way or meeting at a set location. The rule of thumb is to have one adult for six children. Be sure a large group has an adult at the front and one at the rear as well.

BIKE TRAIN

A Bike Train is a group of kids who bike together to or from school. If the group members are under age 12, there should be one adult for each four children, one in front and one in back. Young children biking to school should always be accompanied by an adult.

BIKING TIPS

- Make sure that the bikes are in good working condition.
- Make sure that the bike fits the rider.
- Ideally have an adult at the front, one at the back and one in the middle.
- Every rider must wear a helmet, including the adults.
- One adult can pull a trailer with backpacks, instruments or projects.

BEST PRACTICES

Route Selection

Spend a weekend day walking or biking the route you will take to school. Time how long it takes. Note any safety concerns and be sure to establish how each will be handled. For instance, if there is no sidewalk on part of the routes, children will walk single file with adults in the front and the back. Report any safety concerns along your route to your Safe Routes to Schools committee.

Bike Trains

Bike trains are only recommended for children who are proficient at riding—usually aged 8 or up although some children learn earlier than others. It is the parents' responsibility to assess their child's ability. Those who are not proficient can ride a "trailer bike" (third-wheel bike attached to a parent's bike). Consider contacting SRTS for technical support for riding with youth. You can request this support from Safe Routes to Schools by contacting saferoutes@bikesonoma.org or calling 707-545-0153.

Rainy Days

You may decide to walk rain or shine. If not, then plan in advance: In the event of a rainy day, what will the backup plan be in order to carpool all students to school? This may require some networking the evening before so parents know who the drivers are and where to meet.

Your contacts to assist you in implementing our program

TINA PANZA Director, Safe Routes to School

tinap@bikesonoma.org

707-545-0153

SARAH HADLER Program Manager, Safe Routes to School sarah@bikesonoma.org

707-545-0153

Sarah or Tina are available to meet with parent volunteers anytime throughout the school year, as well as with your school's Principal and PTA President, if desired.

Visit the Safe Routes website to download Walk and Roll promotional materials: www.sonomasaferoutes.org



APPENDIX A:

Newsletter submission to recruit parent volunteers

Join Our Friendly Team of Parents Dedicated to Increasing Foot Travel to School



Volunteer meeting for Walk and Roll Days: ____(Insert date and time)_____ in the school conference room.

Time commitment: Only 30-45 minutes a month.

We need parents to lace up their sneakers and join our new Safe Routes to Schools' team to encourage more walking, biking and carpooling at our school.

Our goal is to create a safe biking and walking culture by encouraging green travel every week through promoting "Walk and Roll Days". Beginning on (*insert date*), our school declares every Wednesday to be WALK AND ROLL DAY and encourages maximum student participation. We hope to teach our children the lifelong lesson of using their feet to get places.

Please RSVP to ______ if you can attend our fun meeting.

APPENDIX B: Volunteer Sign-Up Sheet

Another way to get volunteer help is to set-up a table on Back-To-School Night to promote Safe Routes to Schools and have a volunteer sign-up sheet. The sign-up sheet could also be provided to your PTA president to seek their assistance in recruiting other parents. On the following page is the Safe Routes to Schools' volunteer sign-up sheet for you to use. You can also download this from http://www.sonomasaferoutes.org/sites/default/files/volunteer_signupsheet_srts.pdf

• · ·	n our fun parent volunteer f neration of Sonoma County	
YES! I would like to volu	, nteer 30-45 minutes a mor Roll Days on behalf of Safe	nth to assist with my
NAME	PHONE	EMAIL



DO YOU REMEMBER WALKING AND RIDING TO SCHOOL WHEN YOU WERE A KID?

Please sign up now to join our fun parent volunteer team and help change the way this generation of Sonoma County students travel.

YES! I would like to volunteer 30-45 minutes a month to assist with my school's Walk and Roll Days on behalf of Safe Routes to School!

NAME	PHONE	EMAIL

 APPENDIX C: Tips for Walking/ Bicycling Safely



WALKING SAFETY TIPS:

- STOP, LOOK, & LISTEN at every edge, or curb.
- Look LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT & only go when there are no cars.
- Cross at crosswalks or corners. Avoid crossing between parked cars and in the middle of blocks.
- Watch for cars pulling in & out of driveways.
- Make good decisions by taking walks with your parents outside of school & practice making decisions like when & where it is safe to cross.
- Remember: even with a light or a crossing guard you still need to make the decisions of when it is safe to cross.

BASIC BICYCLING SAFETY TIPS:

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

DRIVING IN SCHOOL ZONES TIPS:

- Drive slowly & carefully.
- Do not double park, wait to pull to the curb.
- Do not drop off in the red zone, its red for a reason.
- Drop 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 & hard to see.
- Consider the Park & Walk option, park a few blocks from the school & walk the rest of the way.
- Form a carpool! Figure out which families live in your neighborhood & contact them to form a carpools

Our thanks to Safe Routes to Schools Marin County, Laura Kelly and Jeremy Thornton for the original development of this guide.







Safe Routes to Schools is a program of the Sonoma County Transportation Authority