

Chapter 10 - Encouragement Activities

Safe Routes to School encouragement activities motivate children and adults to incorporate walking and bicycling into their school journeys and into their daily lives. These activities seek to make walking and bicycling a fun and “cool” thing to do. When successful, walking and bicycling ultimately become a normalized part of the school and community culture.

Encouragement efforts are often designed to reach a wide range of school community members. They can invite those who have not considered walking or bicycling as a viable option to give it a try. They can motivate those who walk or bicycle occasionally to do it more frequently. Encouragement activities can also recognize and support those who routinely use non-motorized transportation, even if it is not a choice - those, for example, that walk to school rain, snow or shine simply because they have no other option. The common element in all of these activities is celebration, bringing positive associations to the non-motorized school journey.

Encouragement activities can take many forms, and most SRTS programs use a combination of strategies. Activities can be on-the-street events, such as Walk and Roll to School Days, bringing people out in numbers for a grand event, or Bike Trains that provide support and supervision for a bicycle journey to school. Encouragement can also take place in school and at home in the form of on-going contests or games that keep children excited about walking and biking. Encouragement efforts can include activities that deepen interests in walking or bicycling beyond the journey to school or make walking and biking connections with other facets of life in the broader community. Encouragement activities can also be just



Colorful signs are part of the fun for children on Walk and Roll to School Days at Mason Elementary in Duluth.

simple messages that keep walking, bicycling, and Safe Routes to School in the eye of the school community.

Encouragement efforts are often the showy, creative and colorful part of Safe Routes to School that draws community attention to an SRTS program. It is important to capitalize on that, thereby building broad support of school community members, local officials, and possibly even funders. However, it is easy to get carried away! Remember that Encouragement activities both rely on and support Education, Enforcement, and Engineering efforts to make a full Safe Routes to School program.

The following are Encouragement “tools” that have been successfully used in Safe Routes to School programs.

Walking School Buses

Description

Walking School Buses are groups of children that walk to school together, supervised by adults. Some Walking School Buses function very much like a motorized school bus: there is a designated adult “driver” and, often, another adult “bus monitor,” who walk along a specific route, picking up children at indicated stops on a set schedule. Other Walking Buses are less formal; neighborhood groups of parents and students simply meet in a designated place and walk to school together.

Purpose and Benefits

Parents often cite “stranger danger” as a reason they won’t allow their children to walk alone to school; they are concerned about their child’s personal safety. Walking School Buses can directly address this concern by providing adult supervision and additional student companionship. Walking School Buses also address parents’ concerns about traffic safety; Walking School Bus drivers and monitors directly supervise students as they negotiate the streets. They serve as guides, role models, and “eyes on the street” all at the same time.



Children, parents, and sometimes dogs, walk together daily as part of the informally organized Winnona Park Walking School Bus in Decatur.



A Walking School Bus, organized for a Walk and Roll to School Day, makes its way to Glennwood School in Decatur, GA.

Walking School Buses are also “on the street” opportunities for children to practice their pedestrian safety skills (see Chapter 9, Education) and incorporate them into their daily lives. Walking Buses are also great social opportunities for children; they give children a sense of belonging to something positive, and they make it fun and exciting to walk to school.

How To's

- Identify a group of interested neighbors and a walking route to school. It is often recommended that programs start with one Walking School Bus and build from there.
- Identify adults willing to take leadership. Determine which adults will become Walking School Bus “drivers.” If the program is a formal one, conduct a Walking School Bus Driver training. See Resources Section below.
- Determine route schedules with starting points, pick-up stops, and ending points; be as specific as you can about where children will be met (which side of the street, which door at the school, etc.). Be sure that each location has a safe place for children to stand and wait for the Walking Bus.

- Develop “driver” and “monitor” schedules; determine contingency plans for when the designated adults are unable to be there.
- Develop policies and procedures regarding: frequency of the Walking Bus and whether it will run both morning and afternoon; who it will serve; behavior expectations for children; and contingency plans for weather, emergencies, and sickness.
- Determine how liability will be handled. (See Resources for Addressing Liability Issues, page 10-4.)
- Obtain equipment (safety vests, walkie-talkies, etc.), if needed.
- Do a “trial run” with a small group of children, and make any route or schedule changes as needed.

The Winnona Park Walking School Bus

One day in August, just before the beginning of a new school year, two fathers in the Winnona Park neighborhood of Decatur chatted about how their kids could walk to school. They considered the challenges of the route - fast-moving traffic along a major thoroughfare, a difficult crossing at the intersection of two major roads, narrow sidewalks. They also considered the benefits of an invigorating mile walk to school each morning. So, with an email to neighbors facing the same situation, the Winnona Park Walking School Bus was born, and the group of students and parents has been walking to school ever since.

The Walking Bus idea caught on quickly; on any given school morning at 7:30 am, you're likely to see 25 to 30 students and a dozen parents making their way toward Glennwood School. Even a few dogs are Walking Bus regulars! The group meets at the neighborhood corner and picks up students along the way. Most of the families live in the immediate area, but a few come from farther ends of the neighborhood; their parents drive the children to the meeting point and they walk with the group from there. And now there's even an “early Walking Bus” to accommodate the students who have to be to school early for activities or safety patrol.

The group's structure is informal. Parents

communicate amongst themselves to ensure that there is always an adult walking, and families who live at the meeting point corner keep an eye on the kids as they wait for the group to form every morning. Each parent understands that it is ultimately their responsibility to get their children to school, but the group has formed a neighborly community, and they all look out for each other's kids.

The benefits of the walking group are many. If you ask the kids they will tell you that walking gives them time with their friends - they often want to walk even in the rain! The parents say they like the idea of reduced number of cars and the reinforcement of a healthy habit for their children. And it's more exercise for the adults as well; one father walks his bike with the group to the school and then bikes to work from there, while another dad often walks on to the train station instead of driving to work.

Says the group's co-ordinator, “The walking group is successful because the parents and kids all enjoy it. Since it was a grassroots activity, it took very little effort to start and sustain it.” The group has become a healthful, energetic fixture each morning on Decatur's streets and there is strong neighborhood commitment to continue it into the future.

- Advertise the Walking School Bus to the intended audience. Let them know how they can participate, who to contact, etc.
- Run the Walking School Bus, and periodically evaluate how it is going.

Details to Consider

Formalized Walking School Buses are typically organized, coordinated, and monitored by a Safe Routes to School program. The Walking Bus coordinator recruits the adult “drivers,” provides training to them, and monitors their reliability and on-going commitment. The “driver” training may include basic pedestrian safety rules, behavior management techniques, first aid and emergency procedures, as well as basic procedures dealing with routes, schedules, inclement weather, contingency plans, etc. The Walking Bus coordinator may also be responsible for setting up the routes and time schedules for each route.

Formal Walking School Buses typically

require some minor equipment, such as safety vests, hand-held stop signs, cell phones or walkie-talkies, and first aid kits for emergencies. It is important to determine how liability will be handled. You will need to check to see if the school’s insurance policy covers volunteer activities off of school grounds. It may not, and therefore some Walking School Bus programs require that parents of participating children sign a permission slip or liability waiver; some seek out insurance policies that will cover this type of liability.

Less formal Walking School Buses need a minimal level of organization. They are organized and run by parents themselves. These types of Walking Buses may be inspired by a SRTS program, but neither the program nor the school have any direct responsibility for them. Participating families agree on their own when the buses will run, which adults will be available on any given day, who can participate, and how contingencies will be handled.

Resources for Addressing Liability Issues

The following are some options to consider for addressing liability issues.

- Schools have insurance policies. The policy may or may not cover an activity that is beyond a school facility.
- School systems have Risk Management Departments that deal specifically with liability issues. They may be able to help find solutions to liability issues; however, they may also consider a Walking School Bus or a Bike Train beyond their purview.
- Organizations, such as non-profits, PTA’s, or other youth-oriented organizations can obtain general liability insurance to cover Walking School Buses, Bike Trains, and other SRTS activities.
- The Chicagoland Bicycle Federation has developed a paper entitled “Safe Routes to Suits,” detailing many aspects of liability issues involved in SRTS programs and how they can be addressed.
- Informal Walking School Buses and Bike Trains do not involve organizational liability. Responsibility arrangements, including liability agreements, are informally made between supervising adults.



Walking School Buses can be introduced to school communities as part of Walk and Roll to School event days. (See Walk and Roll to School Day, page 10-10.) They can also be set up as monthly or periodic “special opportunities” to walk to school with a supervised group, reaching out and encouraging families who can’t or don’t walk to school on a regular basis, but would make the effort to do so on certain occasions. (See Walk and Wheel Days, page 10-15 and Park and Walk/Ride, page 10-17.)

Challenges

- In some communities, it can be a challenge to find enough adults who are willing and

able to take on bus “driver” and “monitor” roles reliably.

- Concern about liability issues with children that are not their own can keep some adults from participating in Walking School Buses.

Resources

- The National Center for Safe Routes to School Walking School Bus Guidebook (<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org>).
- “Guidelines for Walking School Bus Drivers and Monitors,” see Appendix a-44.

Bike Trains

Description

Bike Trains are caravans of child and adult bicycle-riders who ride to or from school together. The groups are lead by an adult “engineer,” and another adult serves as the “caboose” at the end of the caravan; adults are interspersed among the children in between to provide supervision and guidance. Some Bike Trains are formally organized, with a designated starting point and scheduled stops at “stations” along the routes. Other Bike Trains are informal, with groups of neighborhood parents and students meeting up on a regular basis to ride to/from school.

Purpose and Benefits

Bike Trains provide families a supported way to bicycle to school. A group of brightly dressed children and adults makes a strong presence on the street, creating a greater feeling of safety among the riders. Bike trains work particularly well for older children who have taken a bicycle safety class, giving them an opportunity to practice their skills. Many children of all ages who ride bicycles at home are delighted to have an opportunity to use them to go somewhere.



A Bike Train makes its way down Ponce de Leon Ave. in downtown Decatur, GA. Families are waiting on the sidewalk to “hop on” the train.



A Bike Train arrives at BB Harris Elementary School in Duluth, GA.

How To's

- Identify adults who have an interest in bicycling and some background knowledge. These adults may be parents, or they may be cyclists from the community. Determine if they are willing to provide leadership or support for building a Bike Train program.
- Identify families that might be interested in participating in a regular Bike Train. One way to do that is to offer a Bike Train as part of a Walk and Roll to School Day event (see the Walk and Roll to School Day section of this chapter) and build a more regularly scheduled Train program from there.
- Identify a Bike Train “engineer” to lead the group, and a “caboose” to follow the group in back. You will also need other adults to ride with the children to provide appropriate supervision when riding on the road. A 1:4 adult/child ratio is recommended.
- Determine a suitable route for children to bicycle.
- Develop Bike Train schedules with starting points, pick-up stops, and ending points; be as specific as you can about where children will be met (which side of the street, which

Bike Trains at Mason Elementary in Duluth, Georgia

Planning their kick-off Walk and Roll to School Day, the Mason Safe Routes to School Team thought they'd include a bike train, but, with only one student ever seen biking to school, they didn't actually expect more than a rider or two to pedal with the train that morning. To their great surprise, 45 children showed up with bikes and helmets, eager to participate in Mason's first-ever bike train.

With that overwhelming start, the Mason bike train has become an integral part of the school's monthly "Walk and Roll to School Day" events. The train is staffed by volunteers from the local Gwinnett County Bicycle Users Group and a few Mason parents; the "engineer" leads the group, the "caboose" brings up the rear, and adults are interspersed between the children, with a typical ratio of 1 adult to 4 children. The train has two starting "stations" in the morning, and, if all goes well, the two groups meet up to form a large train that rides down the highly traveled road to the school. In the afternoon, the bike trains run back to their starting "stations."

Prior to each event, the Safe Routes Team sends a flyer home with each student announcing the Walking School Bus and Bike Train schedule. The flyer includes a permission slip, and students must turn the permission slip signed by a parent in order to participate. Children in grades K-2 must have a parent accompany them. The train leaders are provided a list of participants at the start of each ride. This procedure helps

clarify liability issues and assists in planning for the number of adults needed for the event.

Riders are asked to bring their own helmet and lock, but the bike train leaders always have extra helmets on hand, just in case. As the group gathers, the leaders distribute bright neon-green reflective safety vests. The vests provide high visibility for safety on the road and have become the "signature" of the Mason bike train.

A few years ago, biking to school was unheard of at Mason. The monthly well-supervised bike trains have shown families in the neighborhoods around the school that biking can be a transportation option, and many have now incorporated biking into their own daily travel patterns.



Pulling in to their final "train" destination, Mason Elementary Bike Train riders park their bikes.



door at the school, etc.) Be sure that each location has a safe place for children to stand and wait for the Bike Train.

- Develop policies and procedures regarding: frequency of the Bike Train and whether it will run both morning and afternoon; who it will serve; behavior expectations for children; and contingency plans for weather, emergencies, and sickness.
- Develop “driver” and “monitor” schedules; determine contingency plans for when the designated adults are unable to be there.
- Determine how liability will be handled. (See Walking School Buses, page 10-4 - Resources for Addressing Liability Issues.)
- Provide a training for all “engineers” and “caboosees.” (See “Bicycling with Children Training for Adults,” page 9-16.) The training should include: basic knowledge of the rules of the road for bicycles; minor bicycle repair; how to bicycle with kids; how to assist children in carrying loads; and the policies and procedures you have established for your Bike Train.
- Obtain equipment: safety vests, helmets, bike repair kits, first aid kits, and headlights and flashing red lights for travel in darkness.
- Do a “trial run” with a small group of children, and make any route or schedule changes as needed.
- Advertise the Bike Train to the intended audience. Let them know how they can participate, who to contact, etc.
- Recruit additional adults to participate in the Bike Train according to the interest level, keeping a 1:4 ratio whenever possible.
- Run the Bike Train, and periodically evaluate how it is going.

Details to Consider

In some ways, organization of a Bike Train is similar to the organization of a Walking School Bus. (See Walking School Bus, page 10-4.) However, Bike Trains are not simply “Walking School Buses” on wheels; they require some specialized knowledge of bicycling. Bike Train leaders should be very familiar - and comfortable - with the rules of the road for bicycling. They should also have some knowledge of how bicycles work, so that they are able to do minor on-road repairs if needed: fixing a flat, slightly adjusting brakes, or putting a chain back on a bike, for example. They should also be well versed in using auxiliary equipment, such as how to fit a helmet and how to carry and secure loads (books, instruments, and other items children carry to school). Often adult cyclists in the community have some of this knowledge and are excited to share it with children; however, they will likely need some special training on how to guide and supervise children on bicycles, both on road and on trails.

It is important to define the potential participants for a Bike Train. Some Bike Train programs require that students be a certain age before they are able to participate (generally 3rd grade). Other programs allow younger children to participate as long as they are accompanied by a parent or guardian. Some programs limit the program to those that have their own equipment while others provide bikes and/or helmets for children who do not have their own.

It is also important to put serious planning into developing Bike Train routes. Trails and multi-use paths can be an important part of a route, where they exist, but often routes to school require some interface with motorized traffic. When possible, choose a route that primarily uses neighborhood streets. When more heavily trafficked streets must be used, it is important to evaluate the skills that might be required to negotiate certain



traffic patterns. For example, it is recommended that young children not be required to make lane changes or left turns in heavy or fast-moving traffic; at that point, they may need to get off their bicycles and become pedestrians to make crossings. It is strongly recommended, however, that Bike Trains not be specifically routed to travel any distances on sidewalks for several reasons: 1) bicycling on the sidewalk is illegal in Georgia (though rarely enforced); 2) large groups of bicycles do not mix well with pedestrians and; 3) motorists backing out of driveways do not expect fast-moving vehicles to cross their paths.

Finally, in establishing a Bike Train, it is important to consider equipment. First, it is important for bicycles to be in good, safe working order to start; leaders should always carry bike repair tools for repair emergencies. If students are required to have their own helmets, it is still important to have on hand a few back-up helmets in case one is forgotten at home. Bright-colored vests are highly recommended to increase visibility to motorists. If the Train travels in dark early morning hours, it is critical that several riders have front headlights and back flashing red lights. At school, it is important to have secure parking racks for the bikes. Locking the bikes is also a consideration; some programs require that each student have a lock, others provide locks for those who may not have their own. (Note: It may be necessary to teach children how to lock a bicycle securely.)

Challenges

- Addressing liability issues can be a challenge, since students on their way to school do not necessarily fall under a school's insurance policy. Be sure that adult participants feel they have the liability coverage they need.
- In some school communities, it may be difficult to find enough experienced adult bicycle-riders to adequately supervise on-road bike trains.
- It can take some time and, sometimes, trial and error to identify an appropriate bike train route for children.
- It can be a challenge to guide adult cyclists in serving consistently as good role models for children; those knowledgeable about cycling don't automatically demonstrate good cycling behaviors nor do they necessarily know how to guide and support children.
- It can be time-consuming to ensure that children use equipment that is in good working order.

Resources

- "Guidelines for Bike Train Engineers and Cabooses," see Appendix a-46.
- *Bicycling With Children: A Complete How-To Guide*, by Trudy E. Bell with Roxana K. Bell, Mountaineers Press, 1999 (http://home.att.net/~trudy.bell/Bicycling_with_Children.html)

Walk and Roll to School Days

Description

Walk and Roll to School Days (also called Walk and Bike to School Days) make walking and bicycling a fun, school-wide event. On the designated day, students, parents, and other community members walk and bicycle to school. When they arrive at school, they are greeted with a celebratory reception. Often, the SRTS program lends extra support and encouragement by offering Walking School Buses and Bike Trains, organized groups of walkers and bicyclists. (See Walking School Bus and Bike Train sections) along specific routes to school. Walk and Roll to School Day events can be held as a program kick-off, as a once-a-year activity (as in International Walk to School Day), as a monthly event, or as frequently as the school community desires.

Purpose and Benefits

Walk and Roll to School Days are often a cornerstone of a Safe Routes to School encouragement program. A special event puts walking and bicycling in the spotlight, raising school community awareness of the importance and benefits. At the same time, an event can motivate more and more students



Students and parents fill the streets on foot and bike on "Walk and Roll to School Day" at Mason Elementary in Duluth, GA.

and their families to "join the fun." The school-wide excitement creates an atmosphere in which families that have not considered walking and bicycling as an option can give it a try in a supported way. For students who already walk and bike, the event brings celebration to what they are doing. In addition, families who cannot regularly be involved in SRTS activities may be able to participate in a special, celebratory event.

Walk and Roll to School Days are also excellent ways to involve the broader community in SRTS efforts. Often Walking School Bus participants carry signs telling passing motorists what the event is about. Many programs invite elected officials, transportation professionals, school superintendents, law enforcement officers, businesspeople, celebrities, etc. to walk or bicycle with children; this is a direct way for these community members to experience the benefits of a morning journey by foot or bicycle, and to see firsthand what walking



Students at Clairemont Elementary in Decatur, GA, receive stickers and sign a Walk and Roll to School banner at the event reception area.



and bicycling can mean to children. Such a walk or bike ride can also bring to their attention the issues that children face on their school journeys. By inviting the media to cover the event, walking and bicycling messages can reach an even broader community audience.

Many schools join in the yearly "International Walk to School Day" celebrations in October (See Resources below.) However, many SRTS programs have found value in more frequent events. The frequency keeps walking and bicycling prominently "on the radar screen" of the school community, and, with school populations changing from year to year, provides an opportunity for the event to build in recognition and popularity over time.

How To's

- See Appendix a-38 for Walk and Roll to School Day Planning Outline.

Details to Consider

Walk and Roll to School Days require significant planning and coordination, especially if Walking School Buses and Bike Trains are included. In addition to planning the routes, finding appropriate supervision for the Buses and Trains, and liability issues (see Walking School Bus and Bike Train sections), you will need to consider how to accommodate a potentially large number of students, some of whom may have never traveled to school by foot or on bicycle. For this reason, some SRTS programs require permission slips/liability waiver forms. (See Appendix for a sample flyer with a permission slip.) Permission slips not only help to address liability, but may assist in estimating how many students will participate (see Challenges section).

In some settings, where there are high volumes of walker and bike-riders expected at difficult crossings, you may want to request an additional crossing guard for the

event day. You may also consider requesting a police escort. Police on foot or bike are usually the most helpful; they serve as strong role models for the children while providing extra security at challenging points along the route.

You will need to consider how to handle large numbers of walkers and bike-riders converging on the school at the same time: where the reception will be held, how large numbers of walkers will travel across the school grounds, where students will park their bikes, how refreshments and/or prizes will be distributed, and how students will move to their classrooms at the conclusion of the celebration. You may also need to work with the school administration to ensure that the large flow of walkers and bike-riders does not conflict with car drop-off or bus unloading areas.

Most Walk and Roll to School Day events also require significant numbers of volunteers, and thus a volunteer coordinator is often needed. This may be another volunteer position, or, if the event is large enough and/or held frequently enough, the coordinator may be a paid position. The events may also require a small budget, for refreshments, stickers, small prizes, etc.

Challenges

- Walk and Roll to School Days have lots of small, but very important details. Coordinating all of them takes time and dedication.
- Finding enough volunteer help can be challenging; ensuring enough volunteer help early in the morning for event set-up is often the most difficult.
- It can be a challenge to find experienced, knowledgeable adults to lead bike trains. (See Bike Train section, page 10-16.)

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- If you are planning for refreshments or prizes, it can be difficult to estimate numbers of participants. Some SRTS programs prefer to use permission slips, turned in prior to the event, so that they can do a rough estimate. Often, however, students will bring the permission slip back on the very day of the event.
 - If you are running afternoon Walking School Buses and Bike Trains, accommodating/ coordinating a wide range of afternoon destinations can be complicated. Children may not necessarily go straight home after school; they may go to afterschool programs, friends' houses, sports activities, etc., and thus it is more complicated to keep track of who goes where.

Resources

- Walk and Roll to School Day Planning Outline, see Appendix a-38.
- The International Walk to School Day in the USA website provides many supporting resources for holding a Walk to School Day during the international celebration in October (<http://www.walktoschoolusa.org/>)
- The official International Walk to School Day website (<http://www.iwalktoschool.org>), provides a global perspective on the worldwide October event.

Thematic Walk and Roll to School Days

Description

Seasonal or other themes can be included in monthly or bi-monthly Walk and Roll to School Days. The themes can be carried out through artwork, publicity, costumes, refreshments, prizes, games, contests, classroom activities, or any other creative enhancement. Themes can also encompass educational messages. (See Education Through Encouragement, page 9-28).

Purpose and Benefits

Changing Walk and Roll to School Day themes can keep the event fresh and exciting for the students; the main event stays the same, but the themes provide enough variation that the event doesn't get "old." The thematic approach can help focus on particular messages in monthly "chunks," similar to the way many classrooms focus on thematic units of study for a given period of time. Designing and carrying out themes can also add an element of fun for the more creative members of your SRTS Team. Themes also provide many opportunities for additional participation:



Mason Elementary Walk and Roll participants sign a "We're Smart About Our Hearts" banner at a February Walk and Roll to school day event.



Reindeer Walk and Roll to School Day at BB Harris Elementary in Duluth. On a cold December day, the principal (center), dressed as a reindeer, led the bike train to school. Children received red reindeer noses and hot chocolate when they arrived.

students, parents, teachers, artists, musicians, actors, and many others can help to plan and carry out thematic activities.

How To's

- At the beginning of the school year (or prior to) set a year-long calendar of Walk and Roll to School event dates.
- Identify meaningful themes; they may be purely for fun or they may have an educational message.
- Develop publicity using that theme; include the theme on flyers, posters, banners, verbal messages, etc. See Sample Walk and Roll to School Day flyers in Appendix.
- Consider creative ways to express the theme on the day of the event. Common ways are: special signs carried by participants, theme-related costumes, and small prizes related to the theme.



Details to Consider

Seasonal themes are very commonly used in activities in schools, particularly among the younger grades. It is important to find out what is already celebrated and how your Walk and Roll to School Day themes can compliment that. See the Sample Seasonal Theme Chart in the Appendix.

It is also important to find out about your school's policies and its calendar. Some schools, for example, do not permit any specific references to Halloween, Christmas, or any type of religious holiday. Other schools do not hold any extracurricular activities in April due to standardized testing, preferring to do any Earth Day related activities in the

month of March.

Challenges

- Through the fun, it is important to keep safety well in mind. Signs and costumes should never impede visibility or mobility for participants walking and bicycling to school.

Resources

- Sample seasonal and educational theme charts can be found in Appendix a-32 and Appendix a-42.
- The best resource is your own community's creativity.

Walk and Wheel Days

Description

Walk and Wheel Days are “mini” Walk and Roll to School Days, held more frequently and with less fanfare than a big Walk and Roll event. Often Walk and Wheel Days are scheduled weekly, though some schools prefer once or twice a month. These small events are typically called by an alliterative name, such as “Two Feet Tuesdays,” “Walk and Wheel Wednesdays,” or “Foot Power Fridays.” Students and their families are encouraged to travel to school by foot or bicycle, and their participation is celebrated in some small way when they arrive at school: a cheering squad, a small refreshment, a “Frequent Walker/Bike-Rider” ticket, or a small token of encouragement. In some communities, the Walk and Wheel Day is the designated day for a weekly organized Walking School Bus or Bike Train.

Purpose and Benefits

Walk and Wheel Days encourage ongoing and frequent walking and bicycling to school. For some families, walking and bicycling every day is not a convenient option, but once a week effort is do-able. A once a week small event can also help Walking School Buses or Bike Trains to get started; with a weekly event as a focal point, parents in the same neighborhood may see the value of organizing an ongoing group. These small events keep the excitement going, yet, from an organizer’s viewpoint, do not require the extensive coordination that Walk and Roll to School Days involve.

How To’s

- Determine a day of the week or a monthly schedule for holding Walk and Wheel Days; choose an event name accordingly.
- Publicize the event at the outset, and provide ongoing reminders throughout the school year.



Many students, parents, and school staff participate in weekly "Walk and Wheel Wednesdays" at Clairemont Elementary in Decatur, GA.

- Designate a Walk and Wheel coordinator.
- Determine the types of rewards or incentives that will be provided to participants. You may want to combine this with other on-going incentive programs, such as a Frequent Walker/Bike-Rider Program or with any school-wide themes.
- Keep track of participation.

Details to Consider

Walk and Wheel Days are generally informal events, leaving responsibility for the school journey largely up to families. However, some school communities establish walking school buses or bike trains on Walk and Wheel Days as outreach to families that might otherwise not be able to participate. See “Clairemont Walk and Wheel Days” Box. This outreach requires extra effort on the part of the SRTS Team or school staff, but goes a long way toward inclusion of a larger part of the school community.

Challenges

- Walk and Wheel Days require weekly

Clairemont Elementary Walk and Wheel Days

Early every Wednesday morning, an energetic group of 35 to 40 kindergarten through 3rd graders forms at the entrance to their apartment complex. Their principal and some of her staff members greet them warmly as they get ready to walk the half-mile to school. They wave good-bye to the bus driver who takes them to school on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, and happily start on their way to school on foot.

These Walk and Wheel Wednesdays have become a tradition at Clairemont Elementary. While a large percentage of

the school population walks and bicycles to school regularly under the watch of their parents, the children from the apartment complex do not have that ongoing supervision. So, on these special Wednesdays, the staff of Clairemont go, literally, "the extra mile," accompanying this eager group of children on a Walking School Bus through downtown Decatur. The children benefit from the exercise, and the school staff benefit from opportunities to interact with the children beyond the school building. The entire school community, then, can share in the excitement of Clairemont's Safe Routes to School program.

coordination of a small reception area.

- It may be important to limit the amount of tangible rewards children receive for walking and bicycling; children can easily become accustomed to "getting something" every time they walk or bicycle.

Resources

- Many of the resources for Walk and Roll to School Day planning can be helpful in planning Walk and Wheel Days. See "Walk and Roll to School Days," "Walking School Bus," and "Bike Train" sections of this guide.

Park and Walk/Bike

Description

Park and Walk/Bike programs are based on the Park and Ride programs designed for transit systems. Parents can drive their children to a designated place, such as a neighborhood store, church, park, or other place with sufficient, useable parking, and then walk or bicycle with their children the rest of the way to school. Some Park and Walk/Bike programs are combined with Walking School Buses and Bike Trains (see those sections of this chapter); the parking area may serve as the starting point of a Walking Bus or Bike Train, or it may be one of the pick-up stops along the way.

Purpose and Benefits

Park and Walk/Bike programs help to include and involve families who live a significant distance from the school. By facilitating this involvement, SRTS programs can send clear message that walking and bicycling, even short distances, provide important opportunities for physical activity. If regulations permit, even children who regularly ride the school bus may be included; in some areas, the school bus brings children to the Park and Walk location, and children continue their journey to school on a Walking School Bus.

The Park and Walk/Bike program also has safety advantages for all walkers and bicycle riders. When more motorized vehicles park in the designated location at a distance from the school, there are fewer motorized vehicles on the roads closer to the school. Fewer motorized vehicles to contend with makes walking and bicycling easier and safer for children and adults. Reducing the number of cars in the direct vicinity of the school can also reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality around the school.

How To's

- Find a suitable location for a Park and



Families park the car in a designated place and walk the rest of the way to school.

Walk/Bike program. The location should have unused parking areas during school arrival and dismissal times. If Walking Buses or Bike Trains will be forming there, you will need to ensure adequate space for groups of children and adults to safely gather.

- If needed, obtain permission from the owner of the parking lot or designated parking location.
- Publicize this option to the school community; combine with Walking School Bus, Bike Train, or Walk and Roll to School Day efforts if appropriate.
- Monitor the location for safety.

Details to Consider

In some areas, SRTS programs have created "no drive zones" around the school during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal times. These programs have set up several Park and Walk/Ride areas on the outskirts of the "no drive zones" so that families coming from different directions have a place to leave cars and walk and bike the rest of the way.



Challenges

- Designating a Park and Walk/Bike location can be a challenge. It is important to find an appropriate setting that does not infringe on private property rights or obstruct traffic.

Resources

- Safe Routes to School On-line Guide (http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/guide/encouragement/park_and_walk.cfm)
- Arborfield, England Park and Walk - Walking Bus (<http://www.arborfield.wokingham.sch.uk/walking%20bus.htm>)



wins the Award for that time period. The Award is passed from winner to winner after each designated time period. Some schools calculate mileage by group, rewarding a classroom of students for their combined participation.

Purpose and Benefits

Incentive programs and contests promote walking and bicycling as “regular” behaviors rather than as “special events.” They often build on the initial enthusiasm that Walk and Roll to School Day events can spark. The intent is to keep walking and bicycling exciting for children, thereby encouraging families to integrate these transportation choices into their daily lives.

How To's

- Determine the type of incentive program you would like to conduct. Will you reward frequency, mileage, or participation? Decide on the types of rewards you will use. If the rewards are tangible prizes, decide how they will be funded. (Local businesses are often good sources of prize donations.)
- Decide how long the program will run. Many incentive programs run for a short specified amount of time. Sometimes the excitement of a reward wanes when the program is on-going; however, sometimes it takes the school community a while to catch on to the idea, so “build-up” time should be included as well.

- Gather or create the materials you will need to run the program (punch cards, Golden Shoes awards, etc.)
- Determine where participants will turn in their information (classroom, office, PTA box, a collection box in a school hallway) and who will be in charge of collecting it.
- If the program is based on mileage, determine how participants will track their mileage (pedometers, pre-determined mileage per journey, etc.)
- Publicize the program.
- Conduct the program and monitor its success.

Details to Consider

It is important to consider the types of rewards that are appropriate for your school community. For example, be sure to check whether it is appropriate to use food as a reward in your school community, and consider the health message that certain foods can convey. For many young students, rewards need not be fancy; a sticker, names on a poster in the hallway, or simply being recognized in front of other students by the principal may be all that is needed. Young students, however, need more immediate gratification, so the rewards must be given fairly frequently. Older children may or may

The Frequent Walker/Bike-Rider Program at Clairemont Elementary

The “Frequent Walker/Bike-Rider” Program at Clairemont was launched at an October International Walk and Roll to School Day. As the students arrived, they were shown how to fill out a card and drop it in the bright yellow “Frequent” box. Over the next six weeks, the school held weekly prize drawings at their morning assemblies.

The program became wildly popular; the weekly drawings for small prizes were very motivating to the 300 K-3 age students at Clairemont; even a teacher and the principal participated and won prizes. Over a 6-week period, 1,836 Frequent Walker/Bike-Rider tickets were submitted, indicating that as many trips had been made by foot or bike!

not be satisfied with simple rewards; you may need to consider holding periodic drawings with larger prizes for children in the upper grades. You may consider prizes that support the walking and biking theme, such as bicycle equipment, bright-colored bookbags, hydration packs, or even a bicycle as a "grand prize."

It is also important to consider issues of inclusion. While incentive programs and contests can generate much excitement and enthusiasm among those who are able to walk and bicycle to school, children who live too far or cannot otherwise participate can feel left out. Consider ways to include all children in the fun at some level. For example, see Park and Walk/Bike on page 10-17.

Challenges

- Although contests and incentive programs create an excitement of their own, it is important to make them part of a process to encourage on-going walking and bicycling, not an end in itself.
- Making sure that as many members of the school community as possible are included in the excitement takes some creative thinking.



Students at Clairemont Elementary in Decatur, GA fill out Frequent Walker and Bike-Rider cards.

Resources

- Sample Frequent Walker/Bike-Rider Program materials can be found in Appendix a-48.
- Walk and Bike Across America, (<http://www.saferoutestoschools.org/walk/>)
- Golden Sneaker Award (<http://www.safeoutestoschools.org/Forms/GoldenSneakerGuide2006.pdf>)

Assemblies

Description

School assemblies provide opportunities to convey a message to a large audience. Assembly programs may be purely motivational or celebratory, or they may include an educational component. Programs may include skits, chants, photographic or artistic presentations, music, guest speakers, or any other means of creatively presenting an encouragement message.

Purpose and Benefits

A Kick-off Assembly is an excellent way to introduce a Safe Routes to School program to a school community. Consider including members of the school staff as major players in the assembly program; young children often enjoy seeing their principal and/or teachers promoting “fun” activities such as walking and biking, and this sends a clear message that the school staff is supportive of your Safe Routes to School efforts.

Assemblies can also be used effectively to promote an event, such as a Walk and Roll to School Day (see Walk and Roll to School Day, page 10-10), or to promote, explain, or celebrate an incentive program (see Incentive Programs and Contests, page 10-19). Classes working on educational activities, such as health, air quality, or transportation choice activities might use an assembly as a format for sharing what they have learned with the broader school community.

How To's

- Arrange for an assembly through the school administration; typically, the principal will decide on timing, length of the program, and the location.
- Develop the program: make sure there is a clear purpose, gear the program to a specific audience, and make it fun and engaging.



A member of the Gwinnett County Bicycle Users Group dazzles students with cool bicycle safety equipment at a BB Harris Elementary assembly.

- Determine who will lead the assembly and who the presenters will be.
- Arrange for necessary equipment.
- Publicize the assembly to school community members - let teachers know about the assembly well in advance and, if appropriate, invite parents.
- Hold the assembly.
- Evaluate whether you have achieved your purpose, what went well, and what could have been done differently.

Details to Consider

Assembly programs work best when they are short, visual, focused on a single topic or theme, and actively engaging for the students. It is important that assemblies be age-appropriate; even though the message may be the same for all grade levels, a presentation engaging to kindergartners often looks quite different than a presentation for 4th or 5th graders.

Challenges

- Arranging for an assembly can be a



challenge in some schools. Assemblies require interrupting the regular school day and many principals are concerned about cutting into instructional time. Some principals require that the assemblies be planned far in advance.

- It can be a challenge to design an engaging assembly program for a large audience with a wide range of ages and attention spans.
- Ensuring that guest speakers be effective presenters to child audiences can be challenging. Some adults may be very good at what they do, but aren't familiar with ways to convey information to children in engaging ways.

Resources

- Teachers and students are likely the best resource for designing engaging and age-appropriate assemblies.
- Police and fire departments often have officers that do safety programs for schools.
- Environmental and transportation groups may also offer children's programs.
- Local celebrities or mascots may be tapped to provide extra excitement to an assembly.

Clubs

Description

Clubs typically have a special focus, such as walking for physical fitness, group bike riding, bicycle mechanics, or walking and bicycling as it relates to the environment. Clubs can also serve as a support to the SRTS program in general, providing a structured way for students or parents to get involved. At one middle school, for example, a group formed a Safe Routes to School Cheerleading Club; on Walk and Roll to School Days, the student members cheered their fellow students who arrived at school by bike or on foot. At another school, the mothers formed a club to assist with education and encouragement efforts.



Fourth and fifth graders at Glennwood Academy in Decatur, GA, take apart a bicycle during a Bike Mechanics Club meeting.

Purpose and Benefits

Clubs help to deepen interest in and enthusiasm for walking and bicycling. Fostering a natural desire to “belong,” they provide a way to build social relationships around a common interest or activity. For example, a third-grader might not be excited about the prospect of walking around a track by herself, but doing so once a week with her friends and

a supportive adult as part of “team” could easily build positive associations with walking. Clubs can also offer opportunities to students who may not otherwise be able to participate in Safe Routes to School activities.

How To's

- Find members of the community who are interested in sharing their expertise or play a supporting role; this may be a school staff member, a parent, or someone from the broader community.
- Find a location and time to hold the club.
- Determine liability coverage.
- Obtain equipment, if necessary.
- Publicize the club and recruit members.
- Monitor the club activities.
- Hold events or activities that allow club members to share what they do in the club.

Details to Consider

Clubs are often extracurricular activities. They may be sponsored by the school itself or an outside entity, such as a non-profit organization, a health department, a parks and recreation department, an after-school program, or even a business. It is important to clarify relationships between the SRTS program and the sponsoring entity, ensuring that logistics, liability, etc. are adequately addressed.

Clubs can also be part of the school day. Some schools provide opportunities for students to walk on a track or on the school grounds before the morning bell rings. Other schools allow for special interest groups to meet during the school day, and others conduct “mini-course” elective programs. While school staff must be present as the official sponsor, often adults from the

The Foot Power and Bicycle Mechanics Clubs at Glennwood Academy

For nine-week periods, 4th and 5th grade students at Glennwood School in Decatur spend the last hour of Friday afternoons in "clubs," learning about things that interest them. Members of the "Foot Power Club," under the direction of the school counselor, learned about the relationship of fossil fuels, automobiles, air pollution, and the "power" of human feet for transportation. The students created "scientific dramas," conducted research on their own transportation modes, and calculated the amount of pollutants emitted into the air by their own car travel and by motorists across the Atlanta area. They also had opportunities to take a walking field trip



Members of the Glennwood "Foot Power Club" calculate the amount of pollution they DIDN'T put into the air when they walked and biked.

and ride bicycles to learn more about walking and biking as transportation.

Building on the success of the Foot Power Club, the "Bicycle Mechanics Exploration" became a very popular club offering. A veteran mechanic from a local bike shop led the group, and boys AND girls clamored to participate. The students learned about the science behind the "not-so-simple machine" through hands-on mechanic work. Over

the weeks they worked in teams to build a bicycle. Each received a T-shirt smock at the beginning of the club, and a mini-toolkit at the end.

community with special interests in the particular area serve as leaders for these activities.

Clubs often limit their focus to the members they immediately serve. In order to broaden the encouragement value of clubs, it is recommended that leaders incorporate ways to share the learning and activities with others in the school community. This can be done through celebrations, presentations, skits, artwork, photographs, newsletter articles, etc.

Challenges

- Finding community members to lead clubs who have the combination of expertise,

time, and the ability to work with children can be a challenge.

- In many settings, working with children requires some type of liability insurance. If the club is not under the auspices of a school or another established group, this can be somewhat costly.

Resources

- Members of adult bicycle clubs - The Georgia Bike/Ped website provides a list of bicycle clubs in the state (<http://www.dot.ga.gov/travelingingeorgia/bikepedestrian/cyclingandwalkingingeorgia.aspx>)
- Local League Cycling Instructors from



the League of American Bicyclists
(<http://www.bikeleague.org>)

- Members of adult walking clubs or fitness groups
- Physical education instructors
- Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts
- Local bike shops or sports stores

Fix Your Bike Day

Description

"Fix Your Bike Days" bring together children who have bicycles in disrepair and adults who have bicycle mechanical skills. During the event, mechanics donate their expertise to diagnose the needs of the bicycles brought to them and to fix the ones that are easily repairable. Often the bicycle needs are simple: flat tires, broken or loose seats, rusted chains, or broken pedals. Some Fix Your Bike Days double as a bicycle mechanics clinic; the mechanics teach the child bicycle owners basic bicycle maintenance skills as they work together on the bikes. Some Fix Your Bike Days also include some safety training and/or helmet give-aways.

Purpose and Benefits

Many children's bicycles are declared "broken" and condemned to sit unused in storage spaces simply because parents or guardians don't know how to fix them. Some bicycles are not fixed because families cannot afford to pay the fee at a bike shop. Fix Your Bike Days give these bicycles a second chance, making biking to school more accessible to more children.

An additional benefit to Fix Your Bike Days is the potential connection to the broader community. Many bike shop owners, mechanics, and bicycle enthusiasts are excited to see more children biking to school, and Fix Your Bike Days provide opportunities for them to get involved and show their support for Safe Routes to Schools efforts.

How To's

- Decide on the goal and scope of your event. Do you want to fix as many bikes as possible? Do you want to teach mechanical skills? Do you want to add a safety education component? To what extent will you seek to repair a bike? See "Details to Consider" section below.



A volunteer bike mechanic makes minor repair on a child's bicycle at "Fix Your Bike Day" in the Edgewood neighborhood in Atlanta.

- Identify an event coordinator(s).
- Choose a date for the event; be sure it does not conflict with other school or community functions or events.
- Find a location for the event. Be sure it is big enough to hold more than the number of people you expect to attend.
- Determine your audience - all students from the elementary school? students of a certain age level? any child from the community? Do parents need to accompany a child?
- Recruit mechanics who are able to donate their time and are comfortable working with less than "state-of-the-art" children's bikes.
- Obtain repair tools and supplies - tubes, tires, lubricant, etc. You may find sources who are willing to donate this equipment, or you may need to find funding for it.
- Plan the mechanic stations. One option is to establish an initial "triage" station at which mechanical problems are "diagnosed"



and then sent on to other stations. Those other stations might then specialize in a specific type of repair.

- Prepare for any stations in addition to the mechanic stations, if appropriate - will there be a sign-in table? Will you provide refreshments? Will there be any place for safety information?
- Determine the movement patterns at the event - where will the participants enter? If there are stations, how will they move through them? Where will they exit the event? Be sure to include space for test rides of the bicycles.
- Publicize the event. If you anticipate a large potential demand, you may want to consider a prior sign-up process, or hold several small events targeted at specific age levels or neighborhoods.
- Recruit additional volunteers to help.
- Hold the event. Be sure to take pictures.
- Thank all of the volunteers.
- Evaluate the effort. Did you achieve your purpose?

Details to Consider

In some communities, when word gets out that bikes will be fixed for free, the response is overwhelming. You don't, however, want to overwhelm your mechanics or make children wait a long time, or turn them away from your event, so be sure to clearly state your intended audience in your publicity, and stick to it on the day of the event. Many events take "customers" on a "first come, first served" basis, but you also may want to consider an appointment approach: have a prior sign-up process and stagger arrival times.

It is helpful, too, to pre-determine the types of mechanical issues you will be able to address at the event, and acknowledge that, unfortunately, some repairs may be too involved for a Fix Your Bike Day. Your volunteer mechanics will then know how best to use their time, energy, and repair resources.

Some Fix Your Bike Days are combined with safety education efforts, such as bike safety fairs or rodeos. After the bicycle is repaired, children can rotate through the educational stations. While educating a captive audience of new bicycle-users is an excellent idea, it is a lot to organize, so be sure that you have enough volunteer help to make it a success.

Some Fix Your Bike Day events include helmet give-aways. This works especially well in areas with low-income families who may not be able to afford bicycle helmets for children. However, pure "give-aways" do not typically result in increased helmet use. Many experts recommend that helmet give-aways include: training on appropriate helmet use for children as well as training for their parents/guardians; and ongoing incentive programs (rewards, etc.) in the community to encourage helmet use.

Challenges

- Numbers of participants can be overwhelming; in one community, families waited in line for four hours to have a chance to get a bike fixed for free. While high numbers of participants at an event is generally a positive thing, it can be frustrating and overwhelming to volunteer mechanics.
- Managing the movement of a large number of participants and volunteers through the event stations takes a lot of organizational forethought.
- Some children's bicycles are difficult to fix. They are made with cheap materials



and do not easily accommodate interchangeable parts.

Resources

- Bike shops and sports stores are good resources for mechanics, and bike repair tools and equipment.
- Bike clubs and other bicycle organizations are also good resources for mechanics and volunteers to help with a Fix Your Bike Day event. The Georgia Bike/Ped website provides a list of bicycle clubs in the state (www.dot.ga.gov/travelingingeorgia/bikepedestrian/cyclingandwalkingingeorgia.aspx).

SRTS Arts

Description

Art can take the form of visual arts, music, drama, literary arts, or other ways that school community members creatively express themselves to encourage walking and bicycling to school.

Purpose and Benefits

Arts are an excellent way to bring - and repeat -- the SRTS encouragement message to a school community. By using a variety of visual art, song, drama, and literature, the same message can be repeated in widely varying and enjoyable ways. Art activities can also help to extend the inclusiveness of an SRTS program: families who can't participate in actual walking and biking activities can be involving in making art about walking and bicycling.



Children and adults enjoy opportunities to make Safe Routes to School art.

How To's

- Choose your art modality (see below, Details to Consider section).
- Determine your audience - students? parents? the broader community?

- Find one or several people to coordinate the effort.
- Obtain supplies, if needed.
- For contests, determine criteria for prize awards and obtain prizes.
- If an event or a contest, publicize it.
- Find ways to share the art with a broader audience.

Details to Consider

Visual Art - Posters, banners, murals, signs, drawings, and photographs are all ways in which school community members can share their ideas about walking and bicycling. When displayed around the school, art can convey a strong message that walking and bicycling is supported and encouraged. Poster parties prior to an event are fun, simple ways of getting children and/or adults involved and excited about Safe Routes to School activities.

Poster contests are another way that art can generate excitement about SRTS. Contest themes may focus on ways to encourage



An entry in a "Really Cool Reasons for Walking and Biking to School" poster contest at Glennwood Academy in Decatur.

others to walk or bike to school, such as a "Really Cool Reasons for Walking and Biking to School" Contest; or a contest might be focused on illustrations of safety rules, or illustrations of a student's journey to school. The competition of the contest and awarding of prizes provides excitement and additional focus on Safe Routes to School themes for the school community. For a contest, you will need to decide your criteria for awarding prizes and how and when the prizes will be awarded.

Music - Songs provide a fun way to accentuate an encouragement message. There are many songs in existence with walking themes and some with bicycling themes as well. Some songs can be played as background and some can be sung by children in classrooms or assemblies. Children may also enjoy making up their own songs or instrumental pieces about walking and bicycling.

Drama - Dramatic skits are very effective ways to convey encouragement messages. Skits can be performed for the morning announcements (either as auditory skits over the public announcement system or as live or televised visual skits). They can be pre-written for children to learn and perform, or they can be developed by the children themselves.

Literary Arts - Reading and writing about walking and bicycling is an excellent way to integrate basic skills with SRTS concepts. (See Appendix a-24 for Correlations with Standards). There is an abundance of literature, both fiction and non-fiction, at all age levels that include walking and bicycling. Students can also write their own stories, poems, or factual accounts of journeys by foot or bicycle, or persuasive essays about the benefits of walking and bicycling. Stories and essays can also lend themselves to contests, adding the excitement of competition and prizes.



Creativity can transcend spoken language. A Spanish-speaking mother at Dresden Elementary used her creativity to make cardboard Walking School Buses for Walk to School Day.

Challenges

- Creativity can sometimes "run wild," so if you have a preconceived way in which you want a message expressed, you may need to provide some structure to an artistic venture. Finding a balance between free creativity and structured outcomes can be a challenge.

Resources

- The best resource here is the imagination!

SRTS Promotional Items

Description

Many SRTS programs develop "product recognition" identities with a logo - usually including children walking and biking - signature colors, and a catchy slogan with an encouragement message. These images can be printed on promotional items such as T-shirts, stickers, pencils, bookbags, safety vests, shoelaces, wristbands, or other popular items used at school.

Purpose and Benefits

T-shirts and other promotional items can become "trendy" within a school. This creates excitement and a sense of belonging for those wearing the shirt or using the bookbag or pencil. At the same time, these items extend the encouragement message to other members of the school community, and possibly to the community at large.

How To's

- Decide on the promotional item(s) you want to print.
- Develop a design.
- Decide on a distribution plan.
- Determine the cost and source of funding.
- Place the order, allowing plenty of time for printing and delivery.
- Distribute and evaluate.

Details to Consider

It is important to consider how the promotional item is distributed. Will it be distributed to all members of the school community? Will it be "earned" as a prize? Will it be available for purchase? Deciding on a distribution plan will help determine how many you will need to print, and ultimately, how much it will cost.



Students at Clairemont Elementary sport their "Walk and Roll to School - It's Cool!" T-shirts and matching wristbands.

Printing can be expensive, especially where T-shirts are concerned. However, T-shirts seem to be a popular item for donations from businesses. Some businesses will ask that their logo also be printed on the T-shirt, so you will need to determine whether this type of advertising is appropriate for your school community.

Challenges

- It takes some creativity to develop images that appeal to a wide range of ages and to both genders; 5th grade boys and kindergarten girls may have very different ideas about what is "cool."
- Finding ways to distribute the items in an inclusive manner can also take some creative thinking.

Resources

- Local printing shops or other local businesses. Sometimes promotional items can be obtained as in-kind donations from local businesses.
- There are many companies that will emboss, print, or engrave messages on their products, and many companies that sell reflective safety gear. Most can be found on the internet.