

King County Metro

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TOOLKIT

INTRODUCTION



Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs benefit our communities by creating a safer travel environment near schools for students, families, and teachers.



WHAT IS SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL?

SRTS programs promote all forms of active transportation. Families and their students can choose to walk, bike, use a mobility device, carpool or take the bus to help reduce congestion, improve air quality, and increase safety for everyone getting to school.

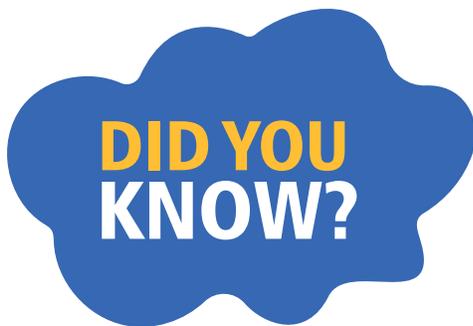
SRTS programs bring together outreach and marketing, fun events, educational programming, safety enforcement and engineering solutions to make walking and rolling to school safer and more accessible for families and to increase the number of students who choose to walk and roll.

This 6 E's Toolkit provides the tools and guidance to help you craft a SRTS program in your community. Using this framework of the Six E's, communities can select the best activities for implementation.

The Six E's of SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

- ★ **Education** – Teaching families, students and the school community about how to travel safely and learning about their transportation choices.
- ★ **Engineering** – Making physical/infrastructure improvements to the environment around schools to create safe and accessible places for walking, biking, bussing and carpooling.
- ★ **Encouragement** – Using events and activities, rewards and incentives to promote walking, biking, bussing, and carpooling and make transportation choices more fun and convenient.
- ★ **Evaluation** – Tracking progress, program outcomes, and assessing the effectiveness of strategies and opportunities for improvement.
- ★ **Enforcement** – Enforcing the bike helmet use, parking restrictions around the school zones, engaging community members and law enforcement and discouraging risky behavior.
- ★ **Equity** – Ensuring that SRTS efforts reach and benefit all population, including communities of color, and people with disabilities.





**DID YOU
KNOW?**

**Children who
walk and/or bike
to school are more
ready to learn***

**Center for Disease Control and
Prevention. (2014). Health and
Academic Achievement.*

Benefits of SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Eliminating a single driving trip to school results in:

- ★ **Cleaner Air and Water** – Sustainable ways to get around don't produce as much harmful emissions.
- ★ **Less Traffic** – Less congestion around schools is safer and healthier for everyone.
- ★ **Increased Social Interactions** –By getting outside for the trip to school, families can talk with neighbors and meet other families.
- ★ **Cost-Savings** – Walking, biking, bussing and carpooling save money on gas.
- ★ **Improved Safety** – More families walking, biking, bussing and carpooling to school improves safety on streets near schools.
- ★ **Healthier Living** – Walking and rolling are great ways to get more physical activity.
- ★ **Better Educational Achievement** – Students who are active in the morning arrive at school focused and ready to learn.



HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This SRTS Program Toolkit details specific SRTS activities that have been successful in schools around the country and can be adapted for local use.

Activities are organized according to five of the “Six E’s.” Equity is an overarching goal of this Toolkit and is addressed throughout the discussion of activities under the other five E’s, with tips for including all students in all activities.

This Toolkit focuses on activities that parents, teachers, or student volunteers can lead. The activities complement other King County Metro SRTS and SchoolPool efforts in communities within King County, and other partners.

This Toolkit was written for:

- ★ **Community Champions such as parents, family members, or other community members** who want to implement a SRTS program at their school.
- ★ **School and District Staff**, who have a valuable role in leading and supporting SRTS efforts at schools. Use this Toolkit to start a program, or identify new activities and events for your SRTS program.
- ★ **City Staff**, who can support SRTS programs by working with school districts and schools to coordinate transportation safety messages, infrastructure planning, construction projects, outreach opportunities, and resources such as route maps and safety tips.

EQUITY



Equity in SRTS programs means ensuring that all students, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, country of origin, and social and economic status, have access to and can participate in all SRTS events and programs. Always seek ways to be as inclusive as possible.

Talking about SRTS: Students who are or have been homeless, who identify with having a disability, and/or who do not have access to a bicycle may feel excluded when discussing active travel to and from school. Using inclusive language and pictures or visuals that resonate with the community can support a more inclusive SRTS dialogue.

Planning SRTS Activities: Students and families may face barriers to walking or rolling to and from school or to participating in other active travel-focused activities. Planning for ways for everyone to participate is essential for equitable and inclusive SRTS activities.

See the Equity Tips sheet in Appendix A for suggestions on how to integrate equity and inclusion in how to talk about SRTS and implement activities.

