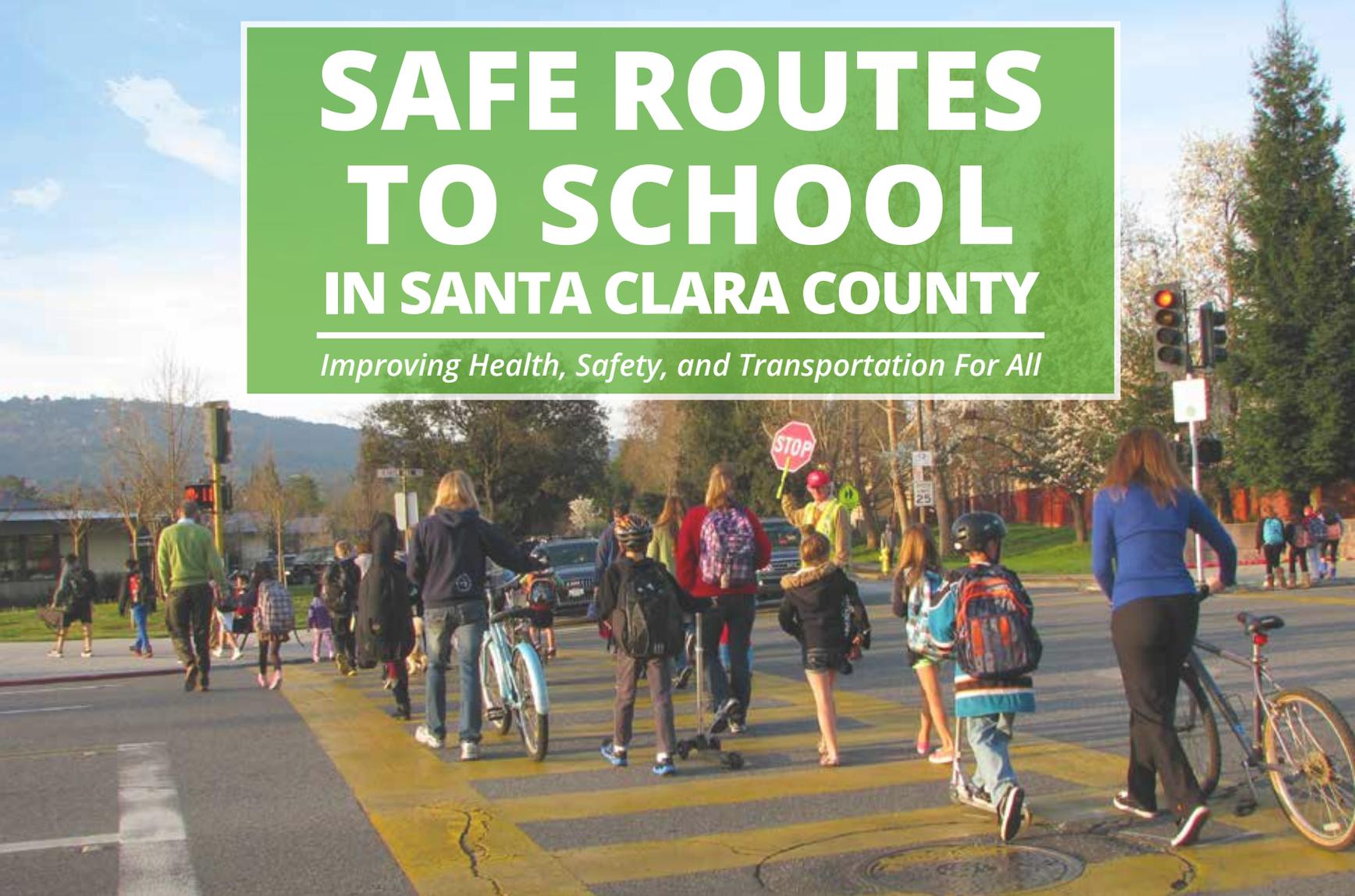


# SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY

*Improving Health, Safety, and Transportation For All*



## WHAT IS SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL?

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a nationwide program that supports the health and well-being of students by encouraging the use of active transportation. In Santa Clara County, the Public Health Department's "Walk & Roll" program implements SRTS services with support of Traffic Safe Communities Network. Using a collaborative approach, the program creates safe, convenient, and fun opportunities for students (K-12) and their families to walk and bicycle to and from school.

The program succeeds by including the whole community and encompassing the "5 E's of SRTS": Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement, and Evaluation. The SRTS program incorporates equity and engagement into all activities to ensure that every student, no matter his or her background or situation, has the opportunity to walk and bicycle to school safely.

See the "Safe Routes for All" video to learn what local providers and partners are saying about the benefits of Safe Routes to School.

<https://youtu.be/0PIO1SZ5iRE>

## A MESSAGE FROM THE TRAFFIC SAFE COMMUNITIES NETWORK (TSCN) CO-CHAIRS



Mike Wasserman,  
Co-chair, Traffic Safe  
Communities Network  
and Supervisor, Santa  
Clara County

One of my favorite parts of the Safe Routes to School program is the way it brings communities together; school districts, police departments, traffic engineers, health care providers, and bicycle and pedestrians advocates all come together to make communities safer and healthier. I have enjoyed attending events like Walk and Bike to School Day because I can see the enjoyment in the faces of the students, and because I know that through Safe Routes to School we are doing something great for the community.



Sara H. Cody, MD  
Co-chair, Traffic Safe  
Communities Network,  
Health Officer and Public  
Health Director, Santa  
Clara County Public  
Health Department

Ensuring safe routes to walk or bicycle to school gives our kids and their families an opportunity to exercise outside each day. This really matters because regular physical activity helps prevent obesity and many chronic diseases. That's why I'm so proud of the Public Health Department for bringing the Safe Routes to School program to neighborhoods across Santa Clara County. Together we are making our streets safer, our air cleaner, and helping our children build healthy habits that can last a lifetime.

TSCN is a coalition of diverse partners that reaches across jurisdictions to promote safe and healthy transportation in Santa Clara County.



## BENEFITS OF SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

SRTS promotes walking and bicycling to school in a safe and healthy environment through safety education and encouragement activities with the support of law enforcement and traffic engineering.

### The benefits of SRTS include:

- Increased physical activity
- Improved traffic safety
- Improved air quality
- Enhanced personal safety
- Connection to one's community
- Greater student academic achievement

## ENCOURAGEMENT

The Walk & Roll encouragement events generate excitement and interest in walking and bicycling, as well as reward and reinforce participation in these activities. These events can be done with little or no funding and can be organized by parents, students, teachers or community volunteers. Schools promote daily, weekly, or monthly Walk and Roll to School Days to foster a safe walking and bicycling environment and nurture lifelong healthy habits.

### Encouragement activities and events:

- International Walk to School Day
- National Bike to School Day
- Walk and Roll to School Days
- Walking School Buses
- Bicycle Trains
- Golden Shoe Award

These types of events show parents and students that walking and bicycling are possible and, of course, fun!

Want to see an encouragement event in action? Check out San Miguel Elementary's International Walk and Bike to School Day celebration!

<https://youtu.be/G81299WU-00>



## EDUCATION

The SRTS Education is directed towards all members of the school community: students, parents, teachers, and administration. The curriculum (pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic safety) and activities improve safety and awareness by teaching students and parents how to safely navigate busy streets and make the connection between active transportation, health, and the environment.

### **The Walk & Roll student and parent traffic safety curriculum includes:**

- In-class pedestrian and bicycle safety education for kindergarten, second grade, fourth grade
- Bike Rodeos (on the bicycle skills training) for fourth, fifth, and sixth grade
- Middle School in-class pedestrian and bicycle safety education and peer to peer leadership training
- Family Fun Bike Nights for families to participate in bicycle and pedestrian safety with bicycle riding activities and short presentations

*"Bicycle and pedestrian safety education is important for students because it teaches them the skills and the knowledge needed to be safer pedestrians and bicyclists on the road. Additionally, such knowledge can empower children to be more independent and less reliant on automotive transportation."*

*—Ernesto Lizaola, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition*

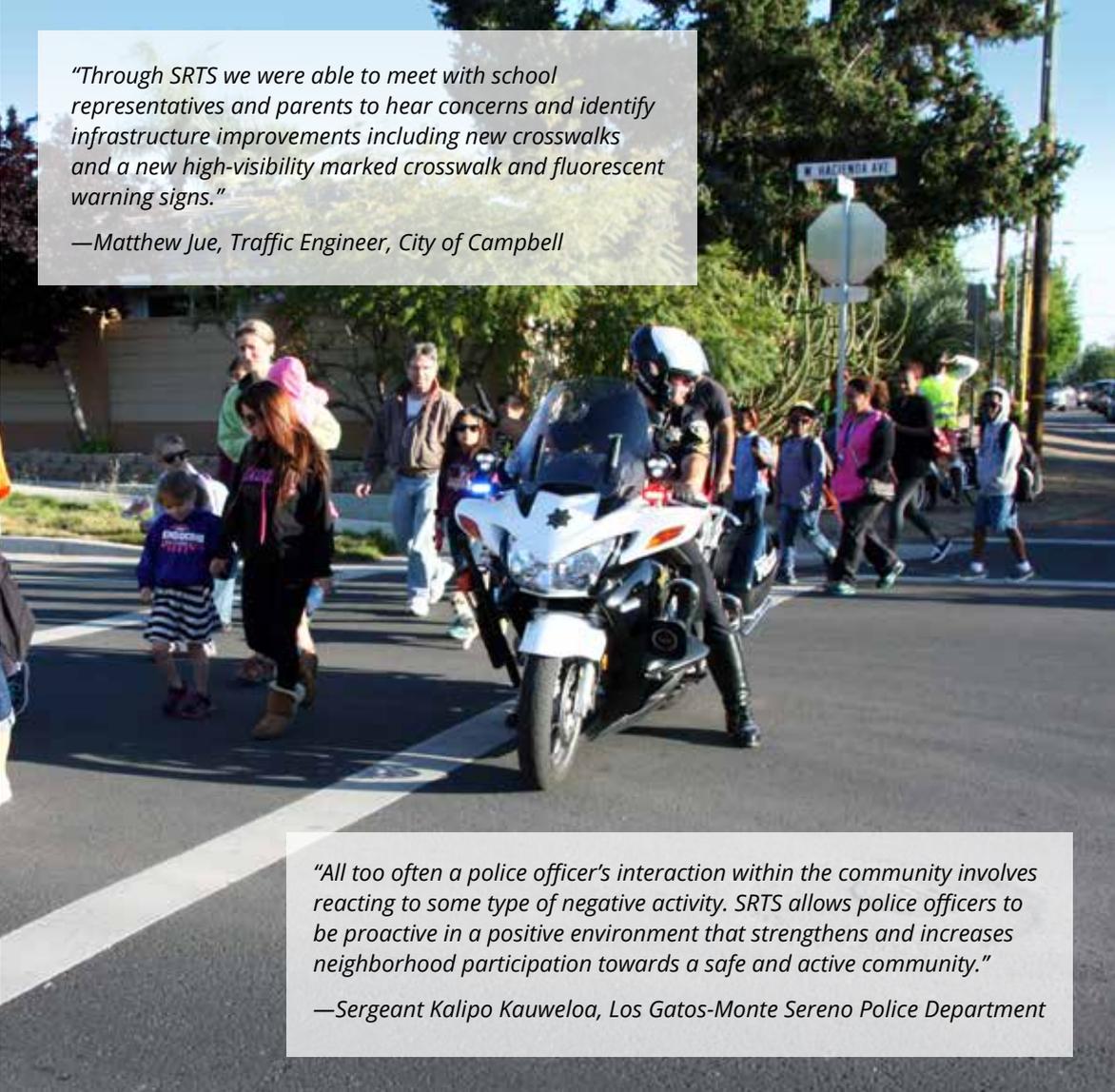


## ENGINEERING

City engineers create supportive environments by installing crosswalks, signage, and other infrastructure changes that can help make streets around schools safer. Working collaboratively with the local city engineer or public works department is imperative for successful implementation.

## ENFORCEMENT

Law enforcement officers improve traffic safety for students by deterring unsafe behaviors of drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists, as well as encouraging all road users to obey traffic laws and share the road safely. Partners that help with traffic safety around schools may include crossing guards, school personnel, students, parents, educators, and neighborhood watch programs.



*“Through SRTS we were able to meet with school representatives and parents to hear concerns and identify infrastructure improvements including new crosswalks and a new high-visibility marked crosswalk and fluorescent warning signs.”*

*—Matthew Jue, Traffic Engineer, City of Campbell*

*“All too often a police officer’s interaction within the community involves reacting to some type of negative activity. SRTS allows police officers to be proactive in a positive environment that strengthens and increases neighborhood participation towards a safe and active community.”*

*—Sergeant Kalipo Kauwelo, Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department*

*"We are committed to encouraging students to walk and bicycle to school. Ongoing evaluation efforts have provided an opportunity to address the needs and concerns regarding students walking and bicycling to school in a safe environment. SRTS has been effective in improving safety awareness and has been a very positive experience for our district."*

*—Superintendent, Dr. Benjamin H. Picard, Sunnyvale School District*



## EVALUATION

There are many benefits to collecting data related to the Walk & Roll program. Measuring how many students are walking and bicycling before the program implementation will provide important information to gauge program effectiveness. Continuous data collection and evaluation guides Walk & Roll strategies to ensure the program is successful by identifying underlying issues as well as meeting the traffic safety needs throughout the school community.

### Walk & Roll evaluation methods include:

- Walkability/Bikeability Assessments to observe student safety behaviors, obtain counts of pedestrians and bicyclists, and review environmental conditions of the neighborhood
- Walk & Roll Planning Meetings to review walkability/bikeability assessment results and develop a school specific plan with a multidisciplinary team (parents, school staff, police, engineers, and healthcare professionals) to get more students to walk and bicycle to school
- Student Travel Tallies to determine trends in student travel modes
- Parent Surveys to identify how students come to school, distances traveled to school, and attitudes and barriers to walking and bicycling

*"Wednesday comes and kids tell their parents 'It's Walk and Roll today!' and that's what it's all about. It's a learned habit that can bring such joy."*

*—Ariel Yule, Parent Coordinator, Cumberland Elementary*



## **BECOME A WALK & ROLL VOLUNTEER!**

The Walk & Roll program thrives because of creative and dedicated volunteers who champion the activities at each school. The volunteers include parents/guardians, grandparents, teachers, school staff, youth, and community members. They have the unique opportunity to make walking and bicycling more desirable and accessible for students, peers, and their families.

For more information on how to become a Walk & Roll volunteer, go to [www.sccphd.org/traffic](http://www.sccphd.org/traffic) and download the *Safe Routes to School Coordinator Manual: A How-To Guide for Promoting Walking and Rolling at Your School*.



**For More Information Contact:**

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