How Partnerships are Making Walking and Biking Safer and More Appealing in North Carolina

Seth LaJeunesse

Lifesavers: National Conference on Highway Safety Priorities
March 26, 2017, Charlotte, NC
What lies ahead

• Description of a statewide partnership in NC
• Overview of partnership’s evaluation
• Spotlight on local partnerships
• How partners can support more walking and bicycling
A North Carolina partnership
A Partnership between NC Department of Transportation & NC Division of Public Health
Active Routes to School project goal

Increase the number of elementary and middle school students who safely walk and bike to school
### Active Routes project activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness-Raising Events</td>
<td>• Increase one-time awareness events about the importance of Safe Routes to School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing Programs</td>
<td>• Increase the number of ongoing programs that encourage walking and biking to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainings/Workshops</td>
<td>• Increase the number of trainings on how to implement Safe Routes to School-related activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Changes</td>
<td>• Increase the number of policies that support walking and biking to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built Environment Changes</td>
<td>• Develop a plan for an infrastructure issue statement to identify a physical improvement to local infrastructure for future exploration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Active Routes project evaluation
Active Routes project evaluation

• **Processes**
  – Stakeholder meetings
  – Cross-sector partnerships

• **Outputs**
  – Walk and Bike to School Day events
  – Walking school buses
  – Use of the Let’s Go NC! curriculum
  – School zone speed enforcement

• **Outcomes**
  – Students walking and biking more often
  – Families’ walking and biking more
  – Schools’ active school travel *readiness*
Some partnership-driven outputs
Walk and bike to school events

For more on events, visit: walkbiketoschool.org
Walk to School Day in NC - 2013 (85 schools)*
*Before Active Routes to School project
Walk to School Day in NC - 2014 (156 schools)*

* Active Routes to School project begins
Walk to School Day in NC - 2015 (235 schools)
Walk to School Day in NC - 2016 (317 schools)
Registered events in NC

- Walk to School Day
- Bike to School Day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Walk to School Day</th>
<th>Bike to School Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>392 (estimated)</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

March 26, 2017
## Schools’ “Active Travel Readiness”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keywords for classifying a school</th>
<th>Archetype</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No interest No activity</td>
<td>Resistor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some interest No activity</td>
<td>Beginner-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some interest A little activity</td>
<td>Beginner-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lots of interest A few activities</td>
<td>Maintainer-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lots of interest Many activities</td>
<td>Maintainer-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lots of interest Many activities</td>
<td>Maintainer-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lots of interest Seeking more to do</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

March 26, 2017
Active Travel Readiness results

"Maintainer" status
Readiness results by school-level income

- High Income
- Medium Income
- Low Income

March 26, 2017
Three strongest predictors of walking and biking to school

From 7,730 parent surveys collected by 73 schools:

1. **Distance from School:** Students living within one mile of school were **10 times more likely** to walk or bike to school than students living beyond one mile of school.

2. **Fun!** Students whose parents perceived walking or biking to school as fun were **3 times more likely** to walk or bike.

3. **Asking permission:** Students who asked their parent for permission to walk or bike to school were **2.5 times more likely** to do so.
Walking and bicycling to school predicted more physical activity for parents…

Average number of minutes parents walked or biked per week by child’s usual school travel mode

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Avg Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Bus</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Vehicle</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpool</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendation

March 26, 2017
…and kids

Average number of minutes students walked or biked per week by how they usually got to school

- Walk: 216 minutes
- Bike: 243 minutes
- School Bus: 96 minutes
- Family Vehicle: 111 minutes
- Carpool: 115 minutes
- Transit: 60 minutes
- Other: 115 minutes
- Recommendation: 420 minutes

March 26, 2017
Spotlight on local partnerships
A Partnership-Based Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program
Partnership opportunity – Checklists

Walkability Checklist

How walkable is your community?

Take a walk with a child and decide for yourselves.

Everyone benefits from walking. These benefits include improved fitness, cleaner air, reduced risks of certain health problems, and a greater sense of community. But walking needs to be safe and easy. Take a walk with your child and use this checklist to decide if your neighborhood is a friendly place to walk. Take heart if you find problems, there are ways you can make things better.

Getting started:

First, you'll need to pick a place to walk, like the route to school, a friend's house or just somewhere fun to go. The second step involves the checklist. Read over the checklist before you go, and as you walk, note the locations of things you would like to change. At the end of your walk, give each question a rating. Then add up the numbers to see how you rated your walk overall. After you've rated your walk and identified any problem areas, the next step is to figure out what you can do to improve your community's score. You'll find both immediate answers and long-term solutions under “Improving Your Community’s Score...” on the third page.

Available at: pedbikeinfo.org/community/walkability.cfm

Bikeability Checklist

How bikeable is your community?

Riding a bike is fun!

Bicycling is a great way to get around and to get your daily dose of physical activity. It's good for the environment, and it can save you money. No wonder many communities are encouraging people to ride their bikes more often!

Can you get to where you want to go by bike?

Some communities are more bikeable than others—how does yours rate? Read over the questions in this checklist and then take a ride in your community, perhaps to the local shops, to visit a friend, or even to work. See if you can get where you want to go by bicycle, even if you are just riding around the neighborhood to get some exercise.

At the end of your ride, answer each question and, based on your opinion, circle an overall rating for each question. You can also note any problems you encountered by checking the appropriate box(es). Be sure to make a careful note of any specific locations that need improvement.

Add up the numbers to see how you rated your ride. Then, turn to the pages that show you how to begin to improve those areas where you gave your community a low score. Before you ride, make sure your bike is in good working order, put on a helmet, and be sure you can manage the ride.
How partners can support more walking and bicycling

1. Highlight the **fun** in walking and bicycling
2. Encourage **parents** to walk and bicycle more
3. Encourage students to **discuss transportation** options with their families
4. Involve **traditionally disadvantaged** communities in programs
5. Create a **welcoming community climate** for safe walking and bicycling to and from (or at) school
6. Develop **meaningful partnerships**!
Thank You

Seth LaJeunesse
lajeune@hsrce.unc.edu
919-962-4236