



Safe Routes
to School
**National
Partnership**



ANNUAL REPORT 2014

Dear Friends,

Amazing changes are taking place in the world of active transportation and active play for children. As demand for healthy community design increases, evidence that Safe Routes to School effectively increases walking and bicycling to school continues to grow. This creates opportunities to go beyond "making the case," and focus on diversifying and strengthening the movement.

To that end, during 2014 the National Partnership built broad coalitions with transportation, environmental justice, health and social equity advocates, supporting work from the local to the national level. Health equity remains a priority, so we've integrated equity and health language into federal legislation and state policies, while developing capacity in local leaders of underserved communities and schools. Collaboration with our partners is key to the many successes at the regional and state levels for advancing Safe Routes to School, shared use and Complete Streets policies.

Incredibly, the Safe Routes to School movement in the United States, and the National Partnership, began in 2005, so 2015 brings our (collective and organizational) 10th anniversary. So much has been accomplished in the first decade and 2014 was a pivotal point that linked our past to a very promising future.

As we review 2014, we'd be remiss not to honor our founder, Deb Hubsmith, who was instrumental in initiating Safe Routes to School nationwide. She stepped down as our executive director in September 2014 as she battled acute myeloid leukemia, although she remained an active and vital member of our board of directors. Sadly, she lost her battle on August 18, 2015. While we mourn her passing, we are eternally grateful for her leadership and vision to create a country where all kids can safely walk, bike and experience active play daily.

With gratitude for your support,



Risa Wilkerson
Board Chair



In Memory
Deb Hubsmith
Founder
1969 • 2015

DIRECTOR'S OUTLOOK

As we look forward in 2015 and beyond, we are certain that there is much work to be done and an increased commitment by many to the pillars upon which the National Partnership was built. This report illustrates the many successes that we had in 2014 and celebrates Deb Hubsmith's love and compassion that founded and grew this organization.

For Deb's work to continue and for the successes to move us forward, we must remain in communication as partners and continue our commitment to ensuring healthy and active kids, families, and communities. I am ready for this challenge and I look forward to each of you joining.



Cass Isidro
Executive Director

Bridging Health, Transportation and Equity

The core of the National Partnership's mission is ensuring all students and families have the opportunity to safely walk and bicycle to school and in everyday life. While equity has always been a focus for our organization, this year it has become more important than ever as we more deeply understand the barriers to making our mission reality.

The fact is that children from low-income families are twice as likely as children from wealthier families to walk to school, but they often face significant traffic and personal safety challenges on the trip to school. Low-income, urban residents are more likely to experience busy streets, poor pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and threats from crime and violence. Low-income, rural communities often lack sidewalks and may see high-speed state highways bisecting their communities. Further, low-income communities and communities of color often have poorer infrastructure and don't have the funding, strong policies, or staffing resources available for building streets that are safe for walking and bicycling. It is no surprise, then, that childhood obesity rates are higher among low-income children, children of color, and children in rural communities.

In 2014, we reaffirmed our commitment to underserved communities and schools. We dedicated more resources and staff than ever before to advocating for the inclusion of equity and health language in federal legislation and state policies, to working with social equity organizations and health organizations across the country, and to leveraging our deep expertise to share best practices, core knowledge, and research. We aim to create communities that support health for children who are low-income, of color, native, recent immigrants, underserved, or who have disabilities.



The National Partnership made great progress in 2014 with equity efforts:

- Provided coaching and support to 22 communities that were predominantly low-income, tribal, or of color, to help achieve specific successes advancing shared use and streetscale campaigns.
- Identified champions and built leadership through our two national task forces – the National Active Transportation Diversity Task Force and the National Shared Use Task Force – and leveraged the expertise of task force members to explore challenging issues related to equity, active transportation, and health.
- Published and shared fact sheets in English and Spanish that identified specific actions that could address the threat of violence and support Safe Routes to School. Developed resources on Safe Routes to School and shared use for Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities.



EQUITY ASSET MAP

We partnered with the NAACP to develop an Equity Asset Map to identify potential areas of collaboration among National Active Transportation Diversity Task Force members and their partners. The map highlights initiatives in 17 states and more than 70 communities focused on combating gentrification, increasing mobility options, addressing crime, increasing access to healthy food, and improving conditions for bicycling, walking, and physical activity.



Focusing on Federal Policy to Guide State and Local Action

Federal policy directly affects the flow of funding and resources as well as the ability of local communities to support Safe Routes to School programs. States and regions now exert more local control over their transportation projects and priorities as a result of the 2012 transportation legislation known as MAP-21. However, advocacy at the national level is critical to ensure that federal policies support, rather than undermine, increased local and state investments in active transportation and healthy community design.

In 2014, Congress was tasked with reauthorizing the federal transportation bill that was passed in 2012. We actively engaged with Congressional offices to provide input on a draft transportation bill throughout 2014 and advocated for provisions in the bill that would support Safe Routes to School, Complete Streets, and investments in bicycling and walking.

We alerted our network of supporters and weighed in on amendments that would require states to set meaningful safety performance measures specific to bicycling and walking, provide greater local control and transparency for Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding, and allow 100 percent federal funding for Safe Routes to School projects – key for low-income communities.

Although Congress ultimately failed to pass a reauthorization bill, our efforts ensured that the Senate's draft transportation bill was strongly supportive of our policy priorities, providing a baseline for 2015 action.



SHARING OUR PERSPECTIVE FROM CAPITOL HILL

For advocates and organizations working at the local and state level, the National Partnership is a critical source of information about federal policy. We published key updates in 2014:



- A report analyzing how states are implementing the relatively new Transportation Alternatives Program, focusing specifically on the impact on Safe Routes to School: *Safe Routes to School: How States are Adapting to a New Legislative Framework*.
- A new guide to the federal transportation law for disadvantaged communities: *Integrating Safe Routes to School into the Transportation Alternatives Program: Reducing Barriers for Disadvantaged Communities*.
- Monthly blog posts and e-newsletter articles with updates for our networks on latest happenings on Capitol Hill.



Coaching Partners, Sharing Expertise

We are gratified to see increased demand for active transportation and healthy community design across the US. Small grassroots efforts plus national, state and local partner organizations are all instrumental in making things happen, and we are proud to support them.

- Published more than 20 reports and fact sheets covering relevant, critical topics related to Safe Routes to School, Complete Streets, shared use, federal and state policy, and equity.
- Hosted 11 webinars and educated 4,500 people on topics such as shared use, bicycle safety education, building school district Safe Routes to School policies, and more.

We provided expertise and support covering a variety of channels and topics in 2014, including:

- Developed an interactive toolkit for schools districts to develop customized Safe Routes to School policies.



ADVANCING SHARED USE IN RURAL CUMBERLAND VALLEY, KENTUCKY

Cumberland Valley is a rural region of Southeastern Kentucky where chronic diseases are widespread and residents experience poor health at twice the state's rate. Seeking to create more opportunities for Cumberland Valley residents to be physically active, the team at Spread the Health Appalachia applied for technical assistance and coaching from the National Partnership to help them advance shared use agreements in four counties. By bringing together key partners and leveraging the National Partnership's resources and coaching, Spread the Health Appalachia succeeded in passing an agreement in Bell County that will give residents access to three facilities at the local high school. The first is a cross country trail, which can be utilized for walking or running through the beautiful Appalachia hills. Residents will also soon be able to use an outdoor track and a softball/baseball field, which were under construction and slated to open in spring 2015. Another agreement was adopted at Dewitt Elementary School, located in a remote area of Knox County. Students will benefit from the new construction of an outdoor track and play space at Dewitt, while the community will have access to the facilities every day during non-school hours.

NEW COLLABORATIONS BETWEEN SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL AND SCHOOL BUSING PROFESSIONALS

In April 2014, the National Partnership convened a diverse group of representatives from different areas in the school transportation field. This was a first-of-a-kind meeting to discuss school bus funding formulas, trends within the field, and areas of potential collaboration between Safe Routes to School and student transportation. The resulting report and companion webinar, *Buses, Boots, and Bicycles: Exploring Collaboration Between Safe Routes to School and School Busing Professionals to Get Children to School Safely and Healthily*, presented a comprehensive look at student transportation in the United States and proposed ways that Safe Routes to School professionals and transportation directors could collaborate more effectively to ensure that all children safely access their local schools.

"This was one of the best webinars I've attended in the past 6 years. It was meaningful because I am now working with our school system's Transportation Department and this will help them feel more like a contributor to the overall Safe Routes to School initiative...and how they can do it!"

—Buses, Boots, and Bicycles webinar attendee

Catalyzing Support for Healthy, Active States and Communities

Over the past year, we were proud to catalyze support at the state and regional level, particularly in localities where we employed full-time state advocacy organizers and regional policy managers. We were able to advance policies that support Safe Routes to School and active transportation, and also increase investment and staffing for Safe Routes to School initiatives. This was a major achievement at a time when federal funding for Safe Routes to School was consolidated into the Transportation Alternatives Program, and the program's funding was reduced by 30 percent. We were glad to see low income communities get a much-needed boost and to see equity become a priority for funding initiatives.

INCREASING FUNDING FOR SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

In the state of California, we successfully advocated for a 35 percent increase in funding through the Active Transportation Program (ATP), with funds guaranteed to go to communities most in need. In August 2014, 145 walking and bicycling projects – 94 of which will provide Safe Routes to School for kids statewide – were awarded state and federal funding totaling almost \$134 million. An additional \$147 million in ATP Cycle 1 funds was awarded to another 115 projects in November 2014.

We broadened the base of support for Safe Routes to School and active transportation within the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) by strengthening relationships with environmental justice partners. We served as a critical source of information for Southern CA communities as they began to implement funding received under Cycle 1 of the ATP and prepare applications for Cycle 2.

In the Bay Area, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) threatened to cut Safe Routes to School funding by half for fiscal year 2016-2017 and eliminate its Complete Streets policy. As a result of our advocacy, MTC restored the full \$5 million in Regional Safe Routes to School funding, re-affirmed its Complete Streets policy, and engaged a stakeholder process to recommend improvements.



In the Pacific Northwest, we worked closely with regional partners to develop and submit six Safe Routes to School project applications to the Regional Travel Options (RTO) program, of which four were awarded funding that totaled \$458,000. We also provided key coaching and support as a coalition member of the For Every Kid campaign, which aims to reach 150,000 students in the Portland Metro area by ensuring that every school district has Safe Routes to School programs in place.



In Greater Washington, we ensured that Safe Routes to School interests were well represented in applications for TAP funding in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG). The projects included \$2.94 million in walking and bicycling funding and \$1.3 million for Safe Routes to School projects. We also hosted Complete Streets workshops in MD and Safe Routes to School workshops in VA, educating local elected officials and municipal staff about policy creation and implementation.



In New Jersey, we leveraged relationships with state decision makers to secure ongoing funding for Safe Routes to School and active transportation programs. As a result we secured commitments to keep Safe Routes to School as a separate program under TAP; not transfer funds from TAP to other programs; continue to fund the NJ Safe Routes to School Coordinator position; and cover the 20 percent local match with toll revenues.



In North Carolina, we rallied an unfocused advocacy community to coalesce around a strategy to raise the profile of active transportation among reluctant policymakers. Our report, *North Carolina: Writing the Next Chapter of its Transportation Legacy*, offered an in-depth analysis of the state of walking and bicycling infrastructure in the state, citing inequitable safety statistics for non-motorized transportation and focusing on state funding levels that fall far below what is needed for bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

ADVANCING POLICIES FOR SHARED USE AND COMPLETE STREETS

We provided input and support to the Florida Department of Transportation to help shape a statewide Complete Streets policy leading up to its adoption in September 2014. We shared our expertise in Safe Routes to School and Complete Streets as part of a webinar series through FDOT's Healthiest Weight Initiative and connected local Complete Streets advocates with experienced staff at the Department of Economic Opportunity to help initiate policy change.

We partnered with Bike Walk Mississippi to broaden support for Complete Streets statewide. We created a central database of tools and resources, provided on-the-ground assistance to 12 communities, and lifted up examples of best practices and creative strategies from communities with successful policies.

We educated Tennessee school districts about the state's shared use law and highlighted Chattanooga's passage of an open use policy for elementary schools as a best practice for other districts. We also assisted with efforts in all four major metropolitan areas in the state to put Complete Streets policies into place and encouraged regional and local communities to develop their own policies.

In Ohio, we provided education and support for creating shared use policies with all 16 grantees of the state's Creating Healthy Communities program, resulting in the formal adoption of shared use agreements in six communities. In Columbus, the city put five different shared use agreements into place. We secured a contract with the Ohio Department of Health to provide ongoing assistance to grantees on Safe Routes to School, active transportation, school siting and related policies.

CREATING ACTIVE SCHOOLS

School-based strategies for increasing physical activity are crucial to combatting the childhood obesity epidemic. The National Partnership's Fire Up Your Feet program offers an engaging, active opportunity to expand the movement for physical activity by encouraging families, students and schools to work together and be active before, during and after school and in daily life.

Any school in the country can take advantage of Fire Up Your Feet resources, which include fact sheets on walking and bicycling infrastructure, safety tips, and classroom activities designed to help schools and families make physical activity a part of daily life.

The Fire Up Your Feet Activity Challenges each fall and spring offers schools in certain states and regions the chance to compete for cash awards that can be used to support health, wellness, and Safe Routes to School programs. Students, parents and school staff can track their physical activity before, during and after school with Fire Up Your Feet and help their school earn challenge awards to be used for physical activity and wellness programs.

Fire Up Your Feet 2014 Impact

1,649
schools registered
65,848
total participants tracking physical activity

42%
of active schools are lower income
76%
of participants reported increased physical activity during the Fire Up Your Feet challenge period

"We used money won from the Fall Challenge to fund an event that families could participate in with their kids, which got everybody moving and having fun together."

– School Coordinator

"Healthy schools are a key component of our approach to creating Total Health for our members and the communities we serve. Fire Up Your Feet is a great way to engage more people in this important work while providing schools with resources they can really use to increase physical activity before, during and after school."

– Loel Solomon, Vice President,



Growing Stronger with Our Partners

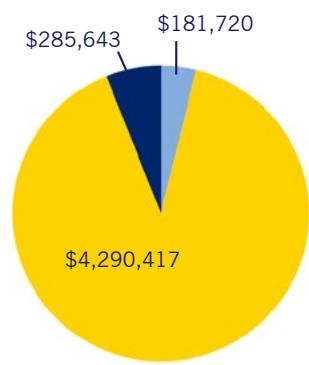


FINANCIALS AND SUPPORTERS

The National Partnership is generously supported by individuals, partners, corporations and foundations with significant support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Kaiser Permanente, The California Endowment, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Clif Kid.

Safe Routes to School National Partnership **Income by Class 2014**

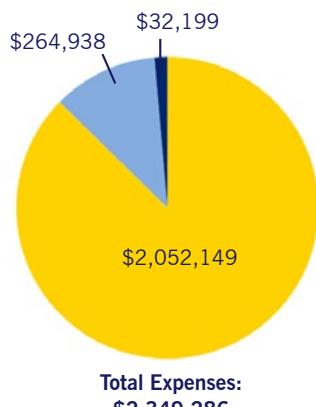
- Foundations (90%)
- Corporations (4%)
- Government Contracts, Individual & Partner Support (6%)



Total Income:
\$4,757,780*

Safe Routes to School National Partnership **Expenses by Class 2014**

- Program (87%)
- General & Administrative (11%)
- Fundraising (2%)



*\$1,953,730 of income restricted for use in 2015-16

Our partners play a critical role in advancing policy change, implementing Safe Routes to School programs, and spreading the word about critical issues, new research and best practices. We welcomed nearly 100 new partner affiliates in 2014, expanding our network to 750 partners that are committed to supporting the movement for Safe Routes to School and healthy community design nationwide.

Thank you.

SPECIAL THANKS TO PEOPLEFORBIKES

PeopleForBikes hosted the National Partnership from 2005 to 2014, providing initial funding and generous grants for ongoing general operating support. The National Partnership gained independent non-profit status in 2014, and we remain grateful for this initial support and value the continuing partnership, support, and generosity of PeopleForBikes.



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