



Utah's New SRTS Programs Exceed Projections

New web-based mapping software and 35-minute musical assembly encourage safe walking for educators, students and parents

SALT LAKE CITY (May 18, 2010) – The Student Neighborhood Access Program (SNAP)[™] impact for the 2009-2010 school year exceeded planned expectations through the newly launched safe route mapping software and assembly program. SNAP is Utah's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) encouragement campaign administered by the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT).

"We have seen a tremendous increase in the excitement of schools and parents to get students walking and biking safely to school," said Cherissa Wood, Utah's Safe Routes to School coordinator. "We believe schools that create a safe routes map will be more likely to get these maps into the hands of their students and help us encourage more children to walk and bike to school safely."

SNAP Software

In fall 2009, UDOT launched its newly redesigned SNAP Software, a custom tool to assist schools in creating their safe routing plan maps. Already more than 60 percent of Utah's elementary, middle and junior high school principals have accessed the free SNAP Software online to create a safe routes map for their school. The former program, which was not web-based, had only 10 percent participation in two years.

The Web-based software allows use on any PC/MAC and principals can print or share the map online with parents and students. SNAP Software interfaces with Google[™] Maps to provide improved accuracy and ease of use. The program includes mapping symbols specific to identifying a safe route. Other features include a Spanish option and large format and quadrant printing.

The redesigned SNAP Software was created with feedback from more than 100 principals. In addition, UDOT provides a detailed SNAP Planning Guide on how to map a safe route and create an inventory of the school's walking and biking area.

"SNAP, Walk 'n Roll" Assembly

UDOT also launched in fall 2009 "SNAP, Walk 'n Roll," an interactive assembly-meets-rock-show program to encourage elementary students to safely walk and bike to school. Since its debut, nearly 40,000 students in more than 60 schools have participated in the assembly, which is offered free of charge with SRTS funding.

"This was the best informational assembly that has come to our school in 20 years," said Mrs. Barnes, a third grade teacher at Crestview Elementary in Holladay, Utah. "The presenters held the kids' attention with songs, movement, color and energy. This information is what I want my students to remember."



Through original, upbeat music and a cast of larger-than-life characters, the four-member SNAP Team helps students get excited to walk and bike to school. Subjects taught include the importance of following a safe routes or “SNAP Map,” how to read the traffic signs and signals, why students need safety gear and how to be safe when walking near construction.

The program’s soundtrack ranges in style from pop and hip hop to country and includes messages about looking left, right and left again, wearing bright colors and obeying the rules of the road. All the messages and songs were focus grouped by five sets of elementary children and parents. The songs are available for free download by the students following the performance to further reinforce the messages.

Already, schools have seen an increase in the number of students choosing to walk or bike to school following the assembly. Barbara Yost, principal of Foothills Elementary School said, “Our students really enjoyed the assembly and I think they really learned about safety. Almost all of our students wear helmets when using a scooter or bike now and they are more aware of crossing intersections safely.”

The success of the assembly will carry into next year, when students will receive an activity booklet to bring home and discuss with their parents. There is already a waiting list of more than 100 schools for this fall.

For more information about UDOT’s SNAP campaign, software, assembly and to hear the SNAP, Walk ‘n Roll soundtrack visit <http://udot.utah.gov/SNAP> or e-mail snap@snapforschools.com. A video demo of the assembly is available on the UDOT YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/UtahDOT>.