Austin Safe Routes to School

Taking SRTS to Urban & Low Income Schools

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Project Overview

- 8 Elementary & 2 Middle Schools
- 2.5 year Non-Infrastructure Grant from Texas Department Of Transportation
  - Education
  - Encouragement
    - Award Winning Media Campaign!
  - Enforcement
  - Evaluation
Benefits of SRTS for Urban/Low Income Youth

- Eat breakfast on time
- Safety in numbers
- Creates sense of community
- Gives children something to belong to
- Parent availability
School Profile: Zavala Elementary

- Spanish & English speaking parents
- Economically Disadvantaged
- Neighborhood school
- Excellent infrastructure
- Great support
Crime and Violence

- High crime area
- Perception of safety
- Lack of trust between families
- Parents concerns- bullying, gangs, drugs, kidnappings
Addressing Crime & Violence

• Don’t be afraid!
• Create communities that care
• Build trust between parents
• Identify resources and community assets
Designing Programs for Urban/ Low Income Schools

- Know your audience
  - Work with people from the community
  - Learn history

- Invest time
- Utilize existing resources
- Collaboration between systems
Messages/ Strategies for Children

- FUN!!!
- Special privileges
- Responsibilities & Roles
- Simple Incentives
- Experiential Learning
## Messages/ Strategies for Parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Messages:</th>
<th>Strategies:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Academic achievement</td>
<td>• Create simple ways to help</td>
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<td>• Family connection</td>
<td>• Be a part of their community</td>
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<td>• Keep children safe</td>
<td>• Reward their contribution</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Creating stronger communities</td>
<td>• Help them see the whole picture</td>
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<td>• Take back your community</td>
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TAKE TIME.

Walk or bike to school together.

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Other Strategies

- Eyes on the street
- Media campaign & events
- Be consistent
- Integrate with school activities/ initiatives
Challenges

- Leadership Roles/Responsibility
- Undocumented immigrant population
- Fear of police
- Over-burdened schools
- Time commitment
Results

• Zavala Elementary showed increase in children walking to school
• The real numbers
  – How many kids are walking together
  – Are kids getting to school on time?
  – Benefits of walking/ biking to school aren’t easy to measure
• Students LOVE it!
• Champions have taken over project- strong potential for success/ sustainability
Thank You!!

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