Safe Routes to School Program Census Project
AGENDA

1. Overview of the Safe Routes to School Census Project
2. Safe Routes to School Programs: Why Do They Matter?
3. How We Conducted the Census
4. Results
5. Conclusions & Recommendations
Overview:
Safe Routes to School Program
Census Project
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM CENSUS PROJECT

In a nutshell:

• Aim was to inventory & gather information on local Safe Routes to School programs across the country through an online survey

Goal:

• Develop better understanding of scope, nature & effects of these programs
• Identify needs from the field, research gaps, etc.

Results:

• Hundreds of surveys from 44 states plus DC provided new learnings & insights
Safe Routes to School Program
Census Respondents
Why Do Safe Routes to School Programs Matter?
Benefits of Safe Routes to School

**Benefits of Safe Routes to School**

**TRAFFIC SAFETY**
- Reduced traffic injuries & dangers for students and community members at arrival & dismissal through street improvements near schools
- More chances to learn & practice road safety for students

**SAFETY FROM CRIME**
- Increased safety from crime & violence due to more people on the streets, good lighting & better street design
- Less harassment, bullying, or victimization when students walk or bike together or with adults

**COST SAVINGS**
- Household savings from reduced gas & car use
- Education budget savings through reduced student busing costs

**CLIMATE BENEFITS AND CLEANER AIR**
- Fewer student asthma attacks due to less driving & reduced air pollution results
- Cleaner air & reduced greenhouse gas emissions

**COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS**
- Stronger student friendships & relationships through walking & biking together
- Positive social connections for families & neighbors

**HEALTHIER STUDENTS**
- Better health & stronger bones, muscles & joints through more walking & biking
- Reduced risk of chronic disease, diabetes, & obesity

**SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION FIXES**
- Solutions to reduced or non-existent bus service through Safe Routes to School
- Reduced traffic congestion at pick-up/drop-off times

**BETTER ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**
- Better focus, improved concentration & less distraction for students who are active before school
- Fewer absences and less tardiness when students walk or bike in groups
Safe Routes to School increases the number of kids getting healthy exercise on the way to school.
The 6 E’s

Education

Engineering

Evaluation

Encouragement

Enforcement

Equity
Why the Six E’s?

Comprehensive approaches are effective

Increases in Walking & Biking to School

- Engineering: 10%
- Encouragement & Education: 30%
- Together: 50%
How We Conducted the Census
HOW WE CONDUCTED THE CENSUS

• Inventoried and gathered information on local Safe Routes to School programs across the country through an online survey
• Collected survey info on national basis, & dug deep in 4 states (New York, Nevada, Illinois and Michigan)
• Developed reports (national & for 4 focus states)
  • Safe Routes to School policy environment
  • Snapshot of local programming
  • Observations and recommendations
Safe Routes to School Census

***If this is not your information, please CLICK HERE to start a new survey!***

1. Community Identity
   - First Name *
   - Last Name *
   - Title *
   - Email *
   - Name of Safe Routes to School Program *
   - Organization *
   - City *
   - State *
   - Please select...

2. Does your Safe Routes to School program serve students directly? *
   - Yes
   - No
   - Don’t know/not sure

3. Our Safe Routes to School program has the following staff: (check all that apply)
   - Full time paid coordinator/lead
   - Part time paid coordinator/lead
   - Additional paid staff
   - Unpaid coordinator/lead
   - Unpaid staff (people working for free more than 4 hours/week)
   - We do not have a Safe Routes to School coordinator, lead, or staff

4. Where is your program housed?
   - Police department
   - Transportation department/public works department
   - Planning department
   - Parks and recreation/community services

---

Snapshot of Survey
SURVEY OUTREACH

• Round 1: Safe Routes Partnership direct email to contacts in our national database
• Round 2: Asked national partners + state partners (Ys, nonprofits, associations, state DOT staff, state health staff) to disseminate link, our website, social media, e-newsletters, and listserv posts
• Round 3: Direct emails/calls to known programs
• Round 4: Additional broad outreach using map
Safe Routes to School Program
Census Respondents

www.saferoutespartnership.org/safe-routes-school/local-work/census
Safe Routes to School Program
Census Respondents

www.saferoutespartnership.org/safe-routes-school/local-work/census
RESULTS

Big picture:

- 511 total submissions
- 427 that weren’t duplicates & met our criteria
- 15 from statewide programs
- Final results included DC & 44 states (every state except Alaska, Arkansas, Mississippi, Kentucky, West Virginia, Connecticut)
- States with the most respondents included: California, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Oregon, Virginia
- Limitation: quantitative results not representative
Basic Characteristics of Programs
Host or Sponsoring Agency (Multi-School Programs)

- School district/school: 26%
- Nonprofit: 19%
- Transportation department/public works department: 16%
- Health department: 12%
- Planning department: 7%
- MPO or regional planning: 5%
- Parks & rec/community services: 3%
- Police department: 1%
- State DOT: 1%
- Other: 10%
- State DOT: 1%
- Police department: 1%
- Parks & rec/community services: 3%
- MPO or regional planning: 5%
- Planning department: 7%
- Health department: 12%
- Transportation department/public works department: 16%
- Other: 10%
Mostly or all (over 50%) Title I (low income) schools: 39%

Some (11-50%) Title I schools: 20%

A few (1 to 10%) Title I schools: 9%

None of our schools are Title I schools: 11%

Don't know/not sure: 21%

Some (11-50%) Title I schools: 20%
Predominant Student Race/Ethnicity

- White: 249 (60%)
- Latinx/Hispanic: 161 (39%)
- Black/African American: 108 (26%)
- Asian American/Pacific Islander or Hawaiian Native: 48 (12%)
- American Indian or Alaskan Native: 16 (4%)
Rural/Suburban/Urban

- Urban: 39%
- Suburban: 37%
- Rural: 21%
- Don't know/not sure: 3%
Age of Program

- Over 15 years old: 1%
- 11 to 15 years old: 19%
- 6 to 10 years old: 31%
- 5 years old or less: 49%

The oldest program was Palo Alto’s program, which was begun in 1960 and is 59 years old!
Building Blocks
We do not have a Safe Routes to School coordinator, lead, or staff.
Almost 2/3s of local Safe Routes to School survey respondents have a task force or advisory team.
Safe Routes to School Supportive Policy Language

- None/not sure: 39%
- In other policies: 15%
- Comprehensive plan: 21%
- School district or school board policy: 23%
- City/county Safe Routes to School policy or resolution: 23%
- Safe Routes to School/ school travel plan: 30%
- Other plans (bicycle plan, pedestrian plan, Active transportation plan, etc): 32%
Program Activities
“We walk FROM school - Twice a month all year long.”

“Bike fleet of 40 bikes and helmets.”

“Training of school staff /bus drivers with bike ped certifications and aiming at integrating bike ped safety for after school programs.”

“Conducted walkability audits with middle school girls.”

“We provide minor bike tune-ups at bike rodeos.”
We work with those schools that show interest.

We have a Safe Routes to School plan that has identified schools.

We prioritize schools based on economic data such as median household income, poverty rates, free and reduced price lunch eligibility, etc.

We prioritize schools based on collision history.

We prioritize schools based on health data.

Other

Other

Don't know/not sure

247 (60%)

145 (35%)

102 (25%)

69 (17%)

49 (12%)

94 (23%)

42 (10%)
### Targeted Outreach & Programming

- **Students with disabilities**: 75 (18%)
- **Students who are immigrants**: 61 (15%)
- **Girls (can include trans students and/or nonbinary students)**: 42 (10%)
- **Other**: 43 (10%)

**Targeted Outreach & Programming**

- “We promote inclusive active transportation programs, as well as ADA-compliant infrastructure.”
- “Providing SRTS outreach materials in multi-language and video.”
- “Bike assembly, Girls on the Run, and bicycle safety.”
- “We have an ADA adaptive bike and assist with a bike education therapy group for those with disabilities.”
- “Community partners have Girls Only bike rides, Women/Trans bike repair nights, and adaptive bike opportunities.”
Reaching more students at each school
Introducing new program activities
Increasing our funding
Establishing a Safe Routes to School policy or revising existing policies
Expanding to more schools
Reaching specific demographic groups (e.g. girls, Latinx students, English language learners, students with...)
Developing a task force
Other

Plans for Improvement

Other: 44 (11%)
Developing a task force: 94 (23%)
Reaching specific demographic groups: 108 (26%)
Expanding to more schools: 156 (38%)
Establishing a Safe Routes to School policy: 166 (40%)
Increasing our funding: 181 (44%)
Introducing new program activities: 204 (50%)
Reaching more students at each school: 221 (54%)
Open Ended Questions

Successes
- “Our tremendous partnership with public works, schools, and more have led to site assessments and implementation of short term recommendations at every school.”
- “56% of MS students bike and 51% of HS students. 65% alt mode use overall (77% middle, 70% High). Continued growth at a rate of 1% per year.”
- “Of our 40 K-8 schools, all participate in walk to school day, and 50% are working on weekly walk to school days.”

Challenges
- “When working with a large urban school district it takes almost 5 years to establish a SRTS program.”
- “Need more funding for better outcomes.”
- “Schools have so much on their plate, Safe Routes to School is always competing for airtime.”
- “The process is long and involves many organizations.”
- “The biggest issue is developing the case for change and building the political will for prioritizing walking and biking over the car.”
- “Rural schools have barriers due to distances.”
Conclusions & Recommendations
LEARNINGS

• Hundreds of great programs around the country
• Uneven geographic spread: variable strength of Safe Routes to School in different places
• Solid rural presence, proportionate to population
• 51% of programs are more than 5 years old
• Many programs without staff or funding
• Programs expressed the desire for a wide range of additional resources: mapping assistance, assistance engaging & connecting with older adults, evaluations, volunteer recruitment, funding, application assistance, more templates, etc.
CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

• Some states are doing a great job of using federal money & combining different resources to provide financial & technical support for local programs; others could be doing more
• Many lessons to be learned from incredible programs around the country
• Programs need more funding, more policy support, more technical assistance, and more resources