

THREE

CREATING CONTINUITY: SILVER LEVEL PARTNER

School Partners are recognized as Silver Partners when they have gained momentum for their school program by:

- Hosting two events each school year, such as a safety assembly focusing on walking and bicycling, spring and fall walk to school days, a neighborhood walk-about or bike-about to assess safety issues along travel routes to school; AND
- Offering an on-going encouragement program such as a walking school bus or bike train; OR
- Classroom-based pedestrian and bicyclist safety programs.

Information on several of these programs and activities is available on the Resource Center website at www.SafeRoutesGA.org. For example, Way to Go frequent walker/biker program materials available to download include punch cards and sticker. Downloadable items also include flyers to announce and remind kids and parents about SRTS school program activities.

Neighborhood walkabouts and bikeabouts are exercises used in many SRTS programs to raise awareness among all members of the school community about issues and conditions that effect walking and bicycling. These events also help garner support for needed changes and gather information needed to create school route maps. Participants can use the Walkability and Bikeability Checklist to record their impressions during a community walking or biking exercise. These checklists are available at: <http://tinyurl.com/walk-bikeSurvey> under "Education".

Plan More Walk and Bike to School Days and Other Events

You completed your first successful Walk to School Day or other event as a Bronze Level Partner. As a Silver Level Partner, you agree to create two regularly occurring SRTS activities each school year. For example, you may want to organize "Walking and Biking Wednesdays" where kids are encouraged to walk or bike to school once a week. The Resource Center's ready-made items for Georgia's Way to Go frequent walker/biker program include punch cards and stickers. The items are available to download and print from the website Program Toolkit page. Use the fillable flyers and posters to promote events at school.

Promote Your Events

Tell students, parents and others how to participate. Making announcements at school, publishing school newsletter articles, and sending flyers home are just a few ways to get the word out. Posting signs along the route a few days ahead will help inform the community. Business sponsors may want to hang signs in their stores, too.

SRTS can also be promoted as part of other events such as school fundraisers, festivals and outdoor activities. Be sure to build on the experience and success of your previous event (e.g. Walk and Bike to School Day).

Media coverage of the event brings visibility to the event's purpose and any changes needed to make it safer for kids to walk and bike to school. When media cover your event, they help spread the word of the great health, safety, environmental and social benefits of more children walking to school every day. Colorful signs held by smiling, walking children and adults creates a perfect photo opportunity. Use the press release template on www.SafeRoutesGA.org, under Toolkit.

Tell your SOC about your event ahead of time so they can include it on the website's calendar.

Creating Program Momentum

Engaging local partners will contribute to the momentum of your school SRTS program. Natural SRTS local partners include: Principals, Police and Parents; Public Officials; and Students.

- *Principal, Police and Parents.* Successful events have the support and participation of the principal, police and parents. Ask them to be local partners. The local police department is a valuable resource and will ensure that safety is a priority. Parents add energy and enthusiasm and are invaluable for Walk To School Day.
- *Public Officials.* Partnerships with public officials and other community leaders, such as mayors and city council members often create the momentum for fixing sidewalks and building new trails in record time. Walk and bike to school celebrations give leaders the opportunity to publicly support health, environment and safety initiatives, so consider finding ways to involve them.
- *Students.* Involve students in the SRTS process by asking them to create a map showing where they live in relationship to the school and the route they take to get to school. Ask the students to show locations that need safety improvements along their route to school and why. Students arriving by bus or car can point out traffic safety issues at the school site.

Ideas for Events, Programs and Activities

If you want to add to or expand the type of SRTS activities at your school, take a look at the list of potential strategies in the table in Appendix B. Strategies are organized by the E's - Encouragement, Education, Enforcement, and Evaluation. The table provides helpful information on the role of each strategy for your SRTS program, things to consider when implementing the strategy and resources to help get things started. See Appendix C for a non-infrastructure summary table.

Keeping Track of SRTS Activities

With several programs going, you may want to create an activity calendar. This calendar will help your team know who is coordinating each program, when it will take place, and when the planning for each needs to occur. A sample calendar is in Appendix A.

Consider Developing a Safe Routes to School Travel Plan

Once you have created some momentum from regular SRTS activities and events, consider becoming a Gold Level Partner. As a Gold Level Partner, you may develop a complete Travel Plan, adding recommendations for changes to the physical environment in your school community to the non-infrastructure programs and activities already underway. A plan creates the opportunity to expand your efforts, involve more members of the community, compete for funding for improvements in and around your school, and create a sustainable program that will be around for years to come. Contact your SOC to get started.

WHAT ARE LOCAL PARTNERS?

Each SRTS Team has local partners (not to be confused with Partnership Levels through the Resource Center). Local partners are members of the community who have a connection to your SRTS team goals. If they are not a regular member of your SRTS team, they will work with your team as needed and can help sustain your team's work over the long run. More information about how these local partners can help is found in Chapter 5 Implementing your SRTS Plan, page 14 Encourage your local partners to enroll as a SRTS Resource Center Friend.