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SOUTH CAROLINA Resource Center Newsletter



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Resource Center News: SRTS Forum Preview

Save the Date! The SRTS Resource Center is planning a Statewide Safe Routes to School Forum on June 18, 2015, at Spring Valley High School in Columbia. There will be 12 breakout sessions to choose from, along with a key note speaker and a closing ceremony. Registration will be available soon!

One of the breakout sessions will cover SRTS Safety Assessments. The School Safety Assessment is an interactive assessment of the physical environment regarding school transportation, and an observation of student and parent behaviors. These assessments are designed to:

- Assess the current infrastructure for walkers,



Rodney Oldham, CHES, CPT

From our State Coordinator:

February is American Heart Month, and its purpose is to raise awareness about heart disease and strokes. Honor American Heart Month by holding a "Heart Walk" at your school. Use our [Heart Walk Flyer](#) and other resources to help plan your event. Take this time to speak with your students and loved ones about healthy lifestyles

bikers, and car riders

- Identify potential recommendations for safety improvements
- Observe school dismissal and discuss the safety of the pick-up procedures

During the session, you'll be led through the process and go on a mock Safety Assessment with the following presenters:

- **Neal Martin** is the Project Director for the Child Passenger Safety Program at the South Carolina Department of Health & Environmental Control (SC DHEC). He has a BS degree and has served in this capacity at SC DHEC Injury & Violence Prevention Division for 15 years. With a focus on occupant protection, he conducts observational surveys at the school transportation safety assessments. The survey records seat belt and child safety seat usage observed in the student pick-up line.
- **Patricia B. Smalls** is an Engineer II for District Six Traffic Engineering Office with the South Carolina Department of Transportation. Ms. Smalls holds a Bachelor's Degree from South Carolina State University and has work for SCDOT for over 17 years. Ms. Smalls is responsible for school site reviews, reviewing and revising school zones, traffic signals, signing plans, and marking plans within District Six. She has been assisting with Safe Routes to School projects in her District since 2006.

Look for Forum Registration on the [SC Safe Routes to School Resource Center website](#) soon!

Upcoming Event: Getting Ready for SC Walk to School Day

and how each person's choices can affect their heart health. The American Heart Association offers **free** lesson plans for [elementary school](#) and [middle school](#) students. Use Heart Month to introduce the idea of walking or riding a bicycle to school as ways to help lead a healthy life.

Grant Opportunity: Smart Start Grant

With support from the National PTA, schools and communities have the opportunity to apply for grants to help them implement a health initiative at their school! The [Smart from the Start Awards](#) are designed to encourage preschool teachers to create practical, long-term improvements in nutrition and physical activity at their preschool. **Early education centers and schools with a Pre-K program are eligible to apply.**

The grand prize winner will receive \$20,000 and ten runners-up will each receive \$2,500. Applications are due February 27th. [Click here](#) to get started and submit your story about how your program is promoting lifelong healthy habits. Don't forget that the SRTS Gold Partner

The official event is scheduled for Wednesday, **March 4th**, and schools will be celebrating throughout March. Here are some creative ways to participate in SC Walk to School Day:

- Host a [Walk AT school](#) event with posters, music and incentives from the Resource Center.
- Tie in your event with the March of Dimes, Jump Rope for Heart, or St. Patrick's Day and Earth Day celebrations.
- Promote [park and walk locations](#) to include business partners or local grocery stores. Encourage them to donate water and healthy snacks.
- Organize a [Walking School Bus](#) or Bike Train.
- Plan a safety assembly and have students practice what they learned.
- Increase parent involvement by sending home letters, including blurbs in your school newsletter, and making announcements.
- Have students walk around the school's campus before or after school or during lunch.
- Plan a 5K event to kick off SC Walk to School Month in March.
- Host a poster contest and talk about walking and biking safety tips.
- Download sample [lesson ideas and activities](#) for the classroom to get students excited about Walk to School Day!

No matter the activity, the goal is to emphasize how walking and biking are healthy and fun. [Click here to register now](#). **Incentive items for the events will be distributed on a first-registered, first-served basis.** Please contact your [School Outreach Coordinator](#) with any questions or to receive assistance with planning your school's SC Walk to School Day!

Spotlight on our School Partners: SC Walk to School Day Events

level requires an on-going walking or bicycling program - this could be an opportunity for funds!

Spotlight on a Friend:

Many of our Friends play a vital role in supporting Walk to School Day events. We would like to thank the following organizations for their partnership and assistance.

Upstate: [Chartwells](#), the cafeteria food service provider in Spartanburg and Anderson Counties, works with the schools to plan healthy breakfasts and snacks for schools' events. They also send their mascots to participate in walks and dieticians to talk with students about healthy eating.

Midlands: [Operation Lifesaver](#), a national effort to educate individuals on railroad tracks and crossings is a valuable Friend to SRTS programs in South Carolina. Janice Cowen, the state coordinator for South Carolina has worked with schools on their Walk to School Days to provide safety presentations. In addition, Train police officers can be asked to patrol the tracks near your school on

Upstate: League Academy, in Greenville, plans a Park and Walk event for every Walk to School Day. Students, parents, and teachers meet at Holmes Park and walk to school together. This past October, they nearly doubled their past participation record with close to 200 walkers on International Walk to School Day! Here's to hoping they surpass that with even more participants on SC Walk to School Day!

Midlands: Pocalla Springs Elementary, in Sumter plans a Walk AT School event every year so that all students may participate. Every student throughout the day will walk the bus loop for twenty minutes. The school will be providing music and refreshments. In the past, Shaw Air Force personnel, their local band, and parents have supported the event!

Lowcountry: Drayton Hall Elementary, part of the Charleston County School District, promotes walking and riding to school every day; so it is no surprise that they participate in International Walk to School Day and SC Walk to School day yearly. The school is focusing on healthy lifestyles as they walk to school this March. Organizers expect a solid turnout with the dedication that their students show each Walk to School Day.

Learning Opportunity: 10 Steps to Walkability Webinar

Join this webinar on Monday, March 9th at 1:00pm for a quick review of best practices for those interested in building more walkable communities. Many individuals are overwhelmed by the challenges and costs associated with these changes. But there are successful, low-cost, simple approaches that are ideal first steps. Based on interviews with some of the most experienced and successful advocates and implementers for

the day of your event, to prevent students from walking on or near the tracks and to discuss the dangers of train tracks with students.

Lowcountry:

Safe Kids Trident Area is great friend to the SRTS Resource Center. During Walk to School days, schools often find a Safe Kids Coordinator walking with students or helping to hand out incentives to the students as they arrive at the school.

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facebook

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"**Like**" us to stay updated on interesting news articles, upcoming events and different funding and learning opportunities!

walkable communities in the United States, this Webinar reveals beginner-strategies that have been shown to work! [Click here to register.](#)



The SC Safe Routes to School Resource Center is a program of the South Carolina DOT

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