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Resource Center News:
Key Strategies for your SRTS Program

The National Center for Safe Routes to School recently released a study identifying four key factors that all successful SRTS programs share:

1. Identifying an in-school leader, often the principal, to champion SRTS.
2. Conducting activities that reinforce walking and bicycling, such as frequent walker/biker programs and Walk to School Day events.
3. Generating parent support for SRTS.
4. Establishing policies that support SRTS, such as early dismissal for students who walk or bicycle home from school.

It is important to note that non-infrastructure program components play a vital role in influencing beliefs and changing behaviors. These elements of a SRTS program are essential to establishing sustainability.

The National Center for Safe Routes to School also developed a document highlighting the study’s findings and giving examples of how these key factors may be implemented to help increase student participation in walking and bicycling to school.

From our State Coordinator

I am very excited to see the support and enthusiasm for our first ever South Carolina Walk to School Day! Currently, there are over 70 schools registered to hold an event on March 7th!

The National Center for Safe Routes to School identified “conducting activities that reinforce walking and biking, such as Walk to School Day events” and “generating parent support” as key factors to establishing a successful Safe Routes to School program. I encourage all schools to host a SC Walk to School Day event as a kickoff to implementing more SRTS activities and building upon existing SRTS programs.

To learn more about SC Walk to School Day, or to register an event, please click here.
school. Click here to view this document.

Upcoming Event: Creative Ways to Participate in SC Walk to School Day

- Host a walk AT school with posters, music, and incentives from the Resource Center
- Tie in your event with the March of Dimes, Jump Rope for Heart, or Earth Day celebrations
- Create park and walk locations and promote your event to business partners or local grocery stores to donate water and healthy snacks
- Utilize walking school buses and bike trains to include everyone
- Plan a safety assembly and let students practice what they learn
- Send home letters, newsletter blurbs, and announcements to get parents involved
- Have students walk around school campus before or after school, or even during lunch
- Plan a 5K event to kick off SC Walk to School Month in March
- Download sample lesson ideas and activities for the classroom to get students excited about Walk to School Day!

The goal is to create a safe and fun opportunity for your school to walk and bike on March 7th! Get student's moving more and practicing safety skills!

Register your school here. All partner schools with receive free incentive items. The deadline to register is Monday, February 27th and spots are filling up quickly. For questions or to receive additional assistance, please contact your local School Outreach Coordinator.

Spotlight on a Partner: Leaphart Elementary, Columbia

Leaphart Elementary is LEAPING into their new role as a SRTS Resource Center partner! They are packing the month of February full of SRTS activities!

On Tuesday, February 21st, Leaphart will serve as a pit stop for "Ride for Safe Routes" - a group of cyclists who are riding across America to raise awareness for safe, bike friendly roads. The group will host a presentation on bicycle safety skills for the entire school and talk about the importance of SRTS. Click here to learn more about the "Ride".

In honor of National Engineers Week, Leaphart will also be hosting a Safety Audit Walk on Thursday, February 23rd. The walk will include community participants from DHEC, Eat Smart Move More of Richland County, School District 5 of Lexington and Richland Counties and engineer professionals in the community. The purpose of the audit is to identify solutions that would improve the safety of walking and biking to Leaphart.

Keep up the great work, Leaphart Elementary!

Spotlight on a Friend: Palmetto Conservation Foundation Walk

The Palmetto Conservation Foundation, with partnering efforts from the SC SRTS Resource Center and Palmetto Health, will be hosting an evening walk in honor of SC Walk to School Day.

This FREE walk will take place along the Three Rivers Greenway, meeting at the Columbia Riverfront Park located at 312 Laurel Street, beginning at 5:30pm on Wednesday, March 7th.

This family-friendly walk is a great alternative to involve parents unable to participate with the event at your school. We encourage all schools to promote this event to their students and parents. Take advantage of this FREE opportunity!

School Newsletter Corner: SC Walk to School Month

Fill in the bolded information and cut and paste this article into your own school newsletter!

Looking for more ways to be physically active? Tired of sitting in the carpool line? Concerned about air quality in [name of town]? Here is a chance to take action! [School name] has joined schools across South Carolina to participate in Safe Routes to School, a national program that enables and encourages children, including those with disabilities, to safely walk and bike to and from school.
Please call 803-771-0870 to register for this event.

Contest Opportunity: Saris 5th Grade Poster Contest

Saris Cycling Group is holding a national poster contest for all 5th graders. The theme of this year's contest is "Bicycling Takes Me Places". Prizes include a bicycle, helmets and lights! Poster entries are due by March 1, 2012. Please visit the contest website for contest rules and more information.

Please join us for our next event in March, SC Walk to School Day! On [Date], we will celebrate healthy and low-pollution ways to get to school. We invite you to participate in our [Walk to School, Walk at school, or Walk Afterschool] event. Students will be rewarded with incentives as they complete their walk or bike ride. This is also a great time for a conversation to reinforce safety skills and the importance of physical activity. For more information about your school’s event or to volunteer, please call [provide organizer’s name & phone number].

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