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What's Afoot

Mississippi Safe Routes to School



March 2010 Newsletter

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News Briefs

- Meridian Safe Routes
- Helmet Testing
- Hernando Safe Routes

Funding

- Mini Grants Available from NCSRTS
- The CDC offers Prevention Grants to support interventions that reduce obesity through improved physical activity. For more information, visit www.americawalks.org, Latest News.

Free Bicycle Education Available

Bring bicycle education to your students. Bike Walk Mississippi has a list of instructors throughout the state that are able to come into your classroom, gym, etc. Visit BWM for more information: www.bikewalkmississippi.org

Resources

- *Mississippi Department of Education: Lesson plans (Health in Action) centered on SRTS.* These plans provide teachers with new ways to fulfill the health instruction requirements for K-8 students.
- Safer Journeys, interactive program for pedestrian and bike safety education, available on-line and on DVD for free. [Click here for Online Version](#), [Click here for DVD version here](#).
- *The Safe Routes Coaching Action Network Webinars:* Educate individuals and

Welcome back...

MDOT's Safe Routes to School Program offers assistance to communities planning and implementing a Safe Routes to School program. We can help communities understand why Safe Routes to School matters and how to plan for success. Two planning resources are available.

[Steps to Creating a Safe Routes to School Program](#) is a guide developed primarily for communities interested in planning a Safe Routes to School program. The steps outlined in this guide provide a framework for establishing a SRTS program based on what has worked in other communities. Some communities may find that a different approach or a reordering of these steps works better for them. The guide includes ideas, forms and links to resources necessary for planning a successful program. If you would like a copy, please contact Cookie Leffler at cleffler@mdot.state.ms.us or 601-359-1454.



[Safe Routes to School National Course](#) provides a comprehensive overview of the need for SRTS and the strategies available to improve conditions for walking and bicycling to school and to encourage more participation in these activities. The course can assist participants in initiating steps that focus on addressing a particular school's needs or a community or state-level comprehensive approach. Please contact Cookie Leffler at cleffler@mdot.state.ms.us or 601-359-1454 to make arrangements to bring this one-day course to your community.

Golden Sneaker Award

The coveted Golden Sneaker Award was presented to Lake Elementary School in Pascagoula this January. Lake Elementary, with 46.3%, was the school with the highest percentage of walkers to school based on student population. Each student at Lake Elementary who walked on October 7 also received a backpack.

Eastside Elementary in Clinton, 40.5%, came in at 2nd while Our Lady of Fatima in Biloxi, 26.4%, placed 3rd. Both Eastside and Our Lady of Fatima received plaques celebrating their success.



organizations on topics that will assist with successful outreach efforts. See Calendar below for dates/times.

- *The Mississippi Department of Health*: free downloadable safety tools and walkability / bikeability checklists. For more information on these and other offerings like bicycle rodeos and walking school buses, and to schedule an event, contact Babatunde Fahm at babatunde.fahm@msdh.state.ms.us or (601) 576-7786.
- *National Center for SRTS*
- *Bike Walk Mississippi*
- *4-H Interactive Resources* access bicycle education resources and games for children.
- *WalktoSchool.org* plan your walking event this month or to kick start your SRTS program
- *Walking School Bus*

Webinars

[Safe Routes Coaching Action Network \(CAN\) Webinars:](#)

March 30, 2010: 1–2 pm:
What Does It Take to Get Drivers to Yield? Engineering Measures that Work

April 27, 2010: 1–2 pm:
Environmental Measures

May 2010: 1–2 pm:
Ensuring Your SRTS Program Includes Children with Disabilities

June 2010:
 TBD

July 2010:
 No Webinar

August 24, 2010 from 1 – 2 pm: *Understanding Parent Perceptions*

Archive:
 View the entire 2008–2009 Safe Routes C.A.N. webinar schedule

[Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center Livable Communities Webinar](#)

March 18, 2010 from 1 – 2:30 pm CST: *Community*

This year was a great year with 128 events and over 50,000 Mississippi students participating in the 2009 Walk to School Day Challenge. Many schools that do not have the infrastructure that allows kids to safely walk to school held events on campus with 100% participation. School district-wide events were taking place all over the state. Some communities, like Oxford, used WTSD to kick off a regularly scheduled Walking Wednesdays program.

For more information, please contact Cookie Leffler at cleffler@mdot.state.ms.us or 601-359-1454



Below: Lake Elementary School in Pascagoula the Golden Sneaker Award for placing in the Walk to School Day Challenge in October. Backpacks were given to all students who participated. Shown here are the 3rd grade participants. Congratulations, Lake!

SRTS Mini-Grants Available

The National Center for Safe Routes to School is now accepting applications for up to 35 \$1,000 mini-grants for creative, youth-focused ideas that support safe walking and/or bicycling to school. Eligible activities must occur at an elementary or middle school in Fall 2010 and support the overall goal of Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs -- to enable and encourage children nationwide to safely walk and bicycle to school.

"Communities across the country are finding new ways to make it safer for children to walk and bicycle to school," says Lauren Marchetti, director of the National Center for Safe Routes to School. "These mini-grants encourage communities to get students involved in the effort to foster a culture of walking and bicycling in their own neighborhoods and schools."

Mini-grant applications are available now at www.saferoutesinfo.org/minigrants. Applications are due Wed., April 7, 2010, and recipients will be announced by Wed., May 26, 2010.

Oxford School District and the University of Mississippi received a mini grant in the first award cycle to support Oxford Middle School sixth, seventh and eighth grade students as they design, pilot, disseminate, and assess the effectiveness of a SRTS social marketing campaign aimed at their peers. Among other efforts, students will create three short films encouraging their peers to walk or bicycle safely to school. The goal is to increase participation from 6 to 15% of the 33% of middle school students who live within one mile of the school.

Approaches to Pedestrian Safety Education:

Podcasts

- *Brief monthly shows featuring interviews from SRTS programs across the country can be accessed here.*

Calendar

March 9-11, 2010
National Bike Summit
 Washington, DC:
www.bikeleague.org

April 24 – MDOT Safety Fair from 10 am – 2 pm,
 MDOT Shop Complex: 2567 N. West Street, Jackson; free food, bicycle rodeo, driver safety exhibits: Rover, SIDNE and the Convincer, a climbing wall and much more. For more information, contact Christy Milbourne at cburke@mdot.state.ms.us or Jessica Mizell at jmizell@mdot.state.ms.us or call 601-359-1454.

September 13-17, 2010
ProBike/ProWalk Conference
 Chattanooga, TN

October 6
 Calendar Art Contest
 Deadline

November 10
 Calendar Art Contest Winners notified

November 10-12, 2010
 Mississippi's 1st annual SRTS Conference; IP Casino in Biloxi

Mississippi SRTS State Network

Mississippi has joined the State Network Project of the SRTS National Partnership. The Mississippi State Network will work to increase physical activity among all students, work to leverage additional state resources for SRTS initiatives, and advocate to remove barriers to walking and bicycling to schools through policy initiatives.

Partners across the state who are involved in health, transportation, youth, environmental and smart growth issues are working together to develop and implement an action plan.

If you would like to join the Mississippi SRTS State Network or would like more information, contact Karen Mogridge, Bike Walk Mississippi at bikewalk@bikewalkmississippi.org or 662-801-0176

Tips Kids Can Use: Walking Safely to School

Walking is fun, but you need to be safe while doing it. Follow these tips to make sure you get to and from school without any problems.

1. Walk together
2. Be seen
3. Look for traffic
4. Cross the street safely
5. Obey traffic signs, signals and adult school crossing guards

For more resources and information on Safe Routes to School, please visit the National Center for Safe Routes to School Web site at www.saferoutesinfo.org

On The National Scene

Livable Streets Education Program in New York City – provides lessons plans and tools to schools on traffic calming, environmental improvements, alternative transportation and SRTS. The goal of this highly interactive program is to “inspire students to make the changes they want to see on their streets and in their neighborhoods.” You can read more at www.streetseducation.org.

Calendar Art Contest

Copies of the **2010 Mississippi Safe Routes to School Calendar** are still available. The calendar features monthly themes based on the key safety concepts taught to children in pedestrian and bicycle safety classes. If you would like to request copies, please contact Cookie Leffler at cleffler@mdot.state.ms.us or 601-359-1454.



Themes were developed to be consistent with seasons as well as the key concepts and skills taught through our trained Bicycle Instructors and their curriculum.

THEMES

Entries will be selected from the themes listed below:

- January: **Chandler Conner, Ward Stewart Elementary, Starkville:**



Lake Elementary Principal Greta Adams and Harry Schmidt, City of Pascagoula's Director of Community Development pose with the Golden Sneaker Award and a resolution given to the school from the city council.



Lake Elementary School students during their Walk to School Day journey.

"An early morning walk is a blessing for the whole day."
-Henry David Thoreau

Dress for safety while walking—white/light colored clothes, something reflective

- February: **Jesus Ramos, Crestwood Elementary, Meridian:**
Bus safety—avoid blind spots, never walk behind buses
- March: **Anna Brazzeal, Ward Stewart Elementary, Starkville:**
Always wear a helmet and wear it right (eyes, ears, mouth test)
- April: **Michael Barfield, Crestwood Elementary, Meridian:**
Dress for safety while biking—white, light, tight
- May: **Jacob Young, Florence Middle, Florence:**
ABC Quick Bike Check—Air in tires, Brakes work, Chain moves freely, Quickly check the whole bike
- June: **Perry Leffler, St. Richard Catholic School, Jackson:**
Watch for roadside hazards—rocks, drain grates, car doors
- July: **Jameelah Truitt, Central Elementary, West Point:**
Follow rules of the road—stop signs, traffic lights, crosswalks
- August: **Trevon Bobbett, Florence Middle, Florence:**
When biking, ride on the right side of the road
- September: **Doss Haynes, Ward-Stewart Elementary, Starkville:**
When walking, stop at edges—curbs, driveways, parked cars
- October: **Bailey Allred, Florence Middle School, Florence:**
Look left, right, left again before crossing
- November: **Brandon Tillman, Crestwood Elementary, Meridian:**
Don't dart out between parked cars or run in the street to catch a ball
- December: **Lily Mitchell, Della Davidson, Oxford:**
Walk facing traffic if there are no sidewalks

Stay tuned for information on our 2011 calendar!

Safe Routes : What's Afoot

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A Project of the MS Department of Transportation Funded by the Federal Highway Administration Produced by [Bike Walk Mississippi](#)

Contact Us

Feel free to forward this newsletter to other interested parties.

