

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES — ROADWAY INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

School administrators are key to a successful Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program, so it is critical to understand their perspective on children actively getting to and from school. The California SRTS Technical Assistance Resource Center (TARC) surveyed and interviewed principals and vice principals across California to explore strategies for overcoming their most common concerns, one of them being the need to improve roadway infrastructure.

Every school is unique, but the following steps can serve as a good starting point for improving infrastructure around schools in communities.

Step 1: Conduct a Walkability and Bikeability Survey

The first step in improving roadway infrastructure is documenting the problem. There are a variety of easy-to-use checklists or surveys that can document safety concerns along a child's walk or bicycle ride to school. Youth can also be provided with cameras so they can photograph or videotape hazards and write up results. Youth, school and/or community leaders can then present information to the Parent Teacher Association/Organization, school officials, the local public works department, or city leaders.

Walkability and Bikeability surveys are available online at www.CAactivecommunities.org/w2s-resources/walkability-checklists/ and www.bicyclinginfo.org/pdf/bikeability_checklist.pdf.

A primary focus of SRTS programs is to make roadways safer for children walking and bicycling to school.

By working collaboratively, the community can identify hazards in school zones and provide solutions that make it safer for children.

Learn more about youth-led projects to document hazards and transform their walk to school at: http://info.kaiserpermanente.org/communitybenefit/html/our_work/global/our_work_3_b_photovoice.html.

Step 2: Develop Partnerships for Simple, Low-Cost Solutions

Problems identified during a walkability or bikeability survey may require simple, low-cost fixes, that school districts or the city/county may have maintenance funds to address. Connect with both school facilities departments and the local public works department. Invite them to observe school pick-up and drop-off to get a first hand feel for traffic dangers and discuss the results of the walkability/bikeability survey. By working together, schools and city/county engineers can determine which

solutions are the best fit for the particular location.

Since larger infrastructure improvements take time, first work together to identify low-cost solutions that can be accomplished through city/county capital improvement projects or operating budgets. Also encourage the school district or public works department to add the schools infrastructure needs to their “to do” list.

Learn more at www.casaferoutestoschool.org/safe-routes-to-school-basics/find-funding/.

Sign up to receive the latest funding opportunities from Caltrans at www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/sub.htm.

Find additional funding at www.CAsaferoutestoschool.org/safe-routes-to-school-basics/find-funding/.

Step 3: Apply for Regional, State and Federal Funding

Larger and more complex roadway infrastructure concerns will likely need grant funding to fix. Building on Step 2, the public works department can identify regional, state, or federal funding that may be a good match for the required changes.

Areas to consider as potential sources of funding include: school districts’ operating budgets, local transportation agencies’ capitol improvement projects or operating budgets, and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), which offers a variety of programs for funding local infrastructure improvements.

Read the full *Crosswalk* issue brief and supplemental tip sheets online at www.CAsaferoutestoschool.org.



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