There was a time when the sight of children walking and bicycling to school was a familiar scene in communities across California. In fact, in 1969 approximately 50 percent of children walked or bicycled to school. Today, fewer than 15 percent of children do and rates of childhood obesity and overweight are overwhelming.\(^1\)\(^2\)

Concerns about traffic safety are often cited as one of the main reasons children do not walk or bicycle to school.\(^3\) And for good reason, as in 2010 alone, over 21,000 California school children were sent to an emergency department and over 1,500 were hospitalized due to pedestrian or bicycle injuries.\(^4\)

Creating safe opportunities for walking and bicycling is critical to improving the safety of young pedestrians and bicyclists and to reducing overweight and obesity among California’s youth. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs are key to reversing these trends. SRTS programs increase the number of children who safely walk and bicycle to school through education and encouragement programs, enhanced enforcement, engineering improvements, and strong program evaluation.

**PROGRAM SUMMARY**

The City of Davis is permeated by a network of bike lanes and trails that help facilitate bicycling to school. The City teaches and encourages children to use these bicycle facilities through a robust school district-wide Non-Infrastructure program that includes an annual Bike to School Day.

The City’s 2012 Bike to School Day included three Bicycle Rodeos and the Loopalooza, each of which had bicycle helmet-fittings and bicycle-maintenance checks, and took students through a skills-based course designed to test and improve bicycle safety handling skills. In addition, eight elementary schools and three junior high schools participated in Bike to School Day, with a significant increase in student participation.

- **71%** increase in elementary school students participating in Bike to School Day from 2010 to 2012
- **21%** increase in junior high school students participating in Bike to School Day from 2010 to 2012
- **9** new vehicle speed feedback signs installed in school zones throughout the city
- **2,500** safety lights and reflectors distributed to K-8 students
- **6,500** students benefitted from having the Safe Routes to School program at their school
Implementing Agency
City of Davis Department of Public Works

Location
Davis, Yolo County
Caltrans District 3
CA Assembly District 8
CA Senate District 5

Funding
Caltrans SRTS Non-Infrastructure – Cycles 1 and 3

Participating Schools
Birch Lane Elementary, Cesar Chavez Elementary, Korematsu Elementary, MME Elementary, North Davis Elementary, Patwin Elementary, Pioneer Elementary, Willett Elementary, Emerson Junior High, Harper Junior High, Holmes Junior High
25 percent of students in participating schools are eligible for the Free and Reduced Price Meals Program

Contact
Rachel Hartsough, Street Smarts Coordinator
City of Davis Department of Public Works
rhartsough@cityofdavis.org
(530) 757-5640
www.cityofdavis.org

did schools participated in Bike to School Day activities that included Do-It-Yourself reflective sticker making activities, helmet decorating and bicycle rack decorating contests, and other safety, education, and encouragement activities.

The City also recently implemented a scan and notify system at four schools. The system provides electronic counts of children bicycling to school and enables students to track miles bicycled and estimated calories burned. The system also tracks CO2 emissions saved as well as gallons and cost of gasoline saved. The electronic barcode scanning system also notifies parents/caregivers when a child scans in at the school site.

PROGRAM SUCCESSES

• Addition of nine new solar-powered, data capturing speed boards (vehicle speed feedback signs) installed in school zones throughout Davis.

• Seven Bicycle Rodeos at five elementary schools provided on-bicycle safety and skills-based training for students.

• Two-thousand five hundred safety lights and reflectors distributed to K-8 school children.

• Large “Slow Down” banners hung in school zones throughout the district.

• Increased participation in Bike Month and Bike to School Day activities over the past two years. All elementary and junior high schools in the school district participated in 2012. Bicycling to school on Bike to School Day increased by 71 percent among elementary school students and 21 percent among junior high school students from 2010 to 2012.

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