



Mobility for All!

A GUIDE FOR BICYCLE EDUCATORS

All students deserve to feel welcome on a bicycle (or another mobility device)! Use this guidance to foster a bike safety learning environment that is **positive**, **inclusive**, and **encouraging** for everyone.

STUDENTS OF ALL ABILITIES

All abilities refers to the broad range of physical, mental, emotional, legal, and financial skills and/or needs students have. When we **welcome and incorporate students of all abilities** into learning about bicycle safety, all students can:

- **Learn** about how people get around safely using similar and different techniques,
- **Enjoy** each other's company while valuing each other's unique abilities, and
- **Observe** how adapted equipment accommodates various needs and allows all students to get around safely.

STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

Accommodating students of all abilities includes understanding and meeting the needs of students with cognitive, physical, or emotional **disabilities**. Students with physical disabilities, such as limited movement or vision, may need:



- An **adaptive bicycle** (such as a handcycle, low step bicycle, recumbent cycle, tricycle, tandem bicycle, etc.) or other equipment,
- A **support person** or student buddy, and/or
- **More space** to maneuver.

Work with adaptive PE teachers, occupational or physical therapists, and families to make activities more inclusive and accessible! When teaching the "ABC Quick Check", for example, demonstrate the activity on both a bicycle and adaptive bicycle.

INCLUSION OF CULTURAL DRESS

Cultural or religious dress can be an important part of a student's identity. **Some bicycles make wearing cultural dress and maintaining full leg coverage challenging**. Help your students with long cultural or religious dress participate fully:

- **Check in with parents** by describing the planned activities and that you wish to respect their cultural dress. Ask if they have ideas for you to best support their student's involvement.
- **Normalize the students' dress**, being careful not to shame them or tell them it is unsafe. Emphasize that we all wear or have different clothing styles, and the goal is to reduce the chance any of our clothing gets caught in our wheels, chain, or pedals.
- **Provide a step-through bicycle, rather than a step-over bicycle**, that limits how much a long garment rides up. Teach different ways of mounting a bicycle, such as tilting the bicycle to minimize clothing riding up when stepping through, or swinging one's leg over an upright bike.

Find more walking & biking safety tips, lesson plans, and activities at eastcentralsrts.org



THOUGHTFUL COMMUNICATION

Use these strategies when talking with students, parents and guardians, teachers, and others to make your activities accessible and inclusive of students with disabilities or those who may experience “othering:”

✓ TALK ABOUT IT TO NORMALIZE IT

Talking about disabilities and cultural dress in a thoughtful way can normalize the different ways people can be pedestrians or bicyclists. Rather than prescribing one way and then adding in “the alternative,” **emphasize that there are many different ways to do things.** When teaching bicycle safety, for example, remember to let students know that “there are many different types of bicycles for all types of people.”

✓ INTERVENE AGAINST HARASSMENT

Students with disabilities, students who wear cultural dress, students of color, and students from low-income families are more likely to experience hate and harassment from other students and adults.¹ **Intervene immediately when hearing or seeing any harassment.** First, check in with the student to see how they are feeling emotionally and physically. Then, make it clear to the harasser that their actions are not ok.

✓ USE PERSON-FIRST LANGUAGE

Use person-first language to talk about students who live with, have, or experience a disability. For example, say “students with a disability,” “a person without a disability,” “a child who is deaf or hard of hearing,” etc. **This strategy centers the student as a person first, who, secondary to their humanhood, may have a disability.** Consider asking a student how they self-identify, too, and use their terminology!

✓ BE CLEAR ABOUT PROVISIONS

Share an overview of the activity and **what support you will offer** with students, parents, and others involved. Ask about additional support a student may need to facilitate their learning. Providing this information helps students and families make the right choice for the student, which in turn, honors their autonomy.

Mobility for All

Not everyone has equal access to the resources, support, and infrastructure needed to safely and comfortably bike or walk to school. In addition to **people with disabilities, Black, Brown, and Indigenous people and low-income families** are more likely to depend on biking and walking to get around,² but are more likely to:

- Experience harassment and over-policing while walking or biking
- Live in communities with unsafe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure
- Be killed or injured while walking or biking

To help build communities where all of our students can safely walk, bike, and roll, start by learning about the historical context of current transportation inequities at saferoutespartnership.org/mobilityjustice.

¹ *Bullying of Minority Students: Getting the Facts*, Sonya Snyder Kaminski, Florida State University (<https://education.fsu.edu/blog/bullying-minority-students-getting-facts>). Based on *stopbully.gov* by the US Department of Health and Human Services.

² Berube A, Deakin E, Raphael S. *Socioeconomic Differences in Household Automobile Ownership Rates: Implications for Evacuation Policy*. Brookings Inst. 2006.

