

MAY 2024

GUIDEBOOK



SAFETY | COMMUNITY | HEALTH | CHOICE

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table of contents

02	It's time to bike to school
03	A school champion
04	Steps to planning a Bike to School Day event
07	When walking or biking from home is not an option
08	Safety on the event day
09	"Rack em up" contest
10	Move towards lasting change
11	Tip sheets
13	Trivia
14	Sample communications
15	Activity sheets
21	Promotional materials

It's time to bike to school!



Walk to School Day and Bike to School Day are energizing events. It can remind adults and students alike of the simple joy of walking and bicycling to school. For many communities, these events lead to more walking and bicycling throughout the school year.

International Walk to School Day takes place every October during Pedestrian Safety Month and National Bike to School Day occurs in May as part of Bike Month. This year's National Bike to School Day is **May 8, 2024**.

While in May the focus is on bicycling, schools can choose to have a 'just bike' event or have a 'combination of walking, biking, and rolling' event. There's no one right way to do it. Walk and Bike to School Day events come in all shapes and sizes. Start small, or start big - the key is to find a good fit for your school community. Schools participate for a variety of reasons such as promoting physical activity, bringing attention to safety needs, building a sense of neighborhood and inspiring school spirit, and reducing traffic congestion around the school. Studies have shown that physical activity can positively impact academic achievement, student morning energy levels and attention, truancy and absenteeism, and can improve schools and their communities through social bonding and community building.

From your Regional WI Safe Routes to School team here at East Central, we thank you for promoting Bike to School Day May 2024!

Jennie, Kim and Kia

For More Information



eastcentralsrts.org

To find more educational and promotional materials for Bike to School Day, visit our website



Click on

Click on the **Events** tab then click on **Bike to School Day**



Scroll

At the bottom of the page you will find downloadable material including this guidebook

A school champion

Every Bike to School Day event is led by a **school champion** who steps forward to lead the initiative at their school, often with the support of others in their school community. A **school champion** can be a parent, teacher, administrator, community member, or even a student - the only requirement is being passionate about the benefits of active transportation in schools! A **school champion** should ensure they have spoken with their school's administration about registering their school for Bike to School Day before doing so.



A school champion's checklist.

- **Confirm** with school administration you have their support to host an event.
- **Register your school** with East Central WI Regional Safe Routes to School for a free toolkit of bike safety gear and incentives. Email Kim Dieck at kdieck@ecwrpc.org to let her know you will be hosting a Bike to School Day event.
Your school must fall within our seven county region in Wisconsin to be eligible for a toolkit - Shawano, Menominee, Waupaca, Outagamie, Calumet, Winnebago, and Fond du Lac counties.
- **Find your team** - Bike to School Day is often organized by an enthusiastic team of teachers, parents, administrators and students with support from other community partners like bike shops and grocery stores.
- **Determine a date** for your event. The National Bike to School Day is May 8, 2024 or you may choose a date that works better for your school community.
- **Spread the word** - make sure others in your school community know that your school is participating. Add event dates to the school calendars, and use the newsletter and social media templates included on page 20 to support your promotion efforts.
- **Plan Bike to School Day activities** - these can include bike safety instruction, school celebrations, or other creative ways to encourage cycling and active transportation at your school.
- **Connect** with other participating schools in our area by visiting the National Center for Safe Routes to School website at: walkbiketoschool.org. Choose the 'See who biked & rolled' tab then click on Wisconsin to see a list of schools. You may also wish to register your school on this site.
- **Watch** for an email from Kim Dieck to give a report on how your event went.

Steps to planning a Bike to School Day event

Many successful events begin with little time to spare. A smaller event could simply include the families that sometimes bike to school but make it a point to celebrate together on a special day. A larger event could invite others in the community to ride together and include an activity when the students arrive at school.

This section presents planning steps for a smaller event. If you have time to plan a more elaborate event, please allow yourself at least a month to plan.

Just as no two events are exactly the same, there is no right way to have an event. It is about making the event work for your school and community.



Day 1:

- Obtain the school principal's approval for a Bike to School Day event.
- Decide if the event will encourage bicycling or both bicycling and walking and how it will be organized. The easiest is for families to come from their own homes, with other families joining along the way. For schools that can ramp up quickly, another possibility is for students to meet and head to school as a group.
- Register and receive resources from your Regional WI Safe Routes to School program. Please contact Kim Dieck at kdieck@ecwrpc.org or (920) 886-6814 to sign up.
- To be included in the National Center for Safe Routes to School event count, register at walkbiketoschool.org.

Day 2:

- Invite students and parents to participate. Use school communication to let families know, and remind them, of the event. Sample communication, fliers and posters can be found starting on page 20.
- Think safety. Check with the school, the resources officer (if there is one), or the local police department to see if there are any special safety issues. If groups will be walking or biking, you may want to ask for police assistance with traffic along the route, possibly by accompanying the group or providing traffic control at any major crossings.

Include bicycle trivia and facts during announcements in the days leading up to the event. See page 13.





Days 3-5:

- Recruit volunteers to help distribute fliers and, if desired, to greet bicyclist (and/or walkers) on the big day.
- Create posters that will greet students when they arrive at school. Potential phrases include,
 - "Thanks for biking"
 - "It's Bike to School Day"
 - "We biked to school today"
 - "Park bikes here"
- Determine how you will distribute the incentives provided by East Central WI Safe Routes to School. Also determine if there are enough incentives or if you want to buy more.

If you anticipate more bicyclists than usual, make a plan for where the bicycles will be stored during the day.



Day 6:

- During morning and afternoon announcements, remind students to bicycle (and/or walk) to school tomorrow. Encourage them to do so with others such as parents and neighbors.
- At the end of the school day make sure everything is ready to go for the morning.
 - Bike to School Day banner is out with proper materials for hanging
 - Incentives are organized and system is in place for distributing
 - Set up of anything that can be set up the evening before the event

Day 7:

- Event day is here! As students arrive, ask them to contribute to a list like: Ways they got their parents to bike to school with them, Top 10 reasons to bike to school, or Top 10 things that need improvement to make biking to school easier and safer. Save the students lists to get ideas for actions that need to be taken in the coming months and ways to make next year's event better.
- If allowed by the school, take photos of riders and walkers. Once you have the school's permission, share your event photos on social media and please remember to tag Safe Routes to School - East Central WI.



Great ideas for your event

1. **Provide** a nutritious breakfast or snack. You may ask the PTO or another school organization for food donations.
2. **Incorporate** a biking theme into a physical education class.
3. **Wear** school colors while biking and **invite** the school mascot to bike to school also.
4. **Form** a bicycle train. See www.walkbiketoschool.org/keep-going/ongoing-activities.
5. **Ask** all participating students to sign a banner proclaiming "We biked to school today!"
6. **Greet** students with fun music as they arrive at school and wait to enter.
7. **Provide** parents with maps of suggested bicycling routes to school. Note where crosswalks, crossing guards, and bike lanes/sidewalks are.
8. **Host** a bike rodeo before the event to teach bike skills.
9. **Set** up a helmet fit check station before the event or ride.
10. **Ask** students to help plan the event. Members of student council, student safety patrol, and other leadership groups can provide good peer role modeling.
11. **Designate** an area for parents to "Park and Roll" so that children who live further away can participate. It will also reduce traffic congestion at school. Some schools will allow school busses to drop off students at a meeting point so that they can walk the remainder of the route too.
12. **Invite** local celebrities to bike to school with students. Consider asking the mayor, superintendent, law enforcement, firefighters, and high school sport teams. If inviting others, give enough advance notice for them to plan accordingly.

When walking or biking from home is not an option

Two main factors get in the way of walking or biking from home: Students live too far away and/or there is not a safe route leading to the school. If distance is an issue but there is a walk- or bike-friendly route leading to the school, then a remote meeting point can work well. If the school cannot be safely accessed on foot or bicycle then consider holding an event on the school campus. These events can bring visibility to the reasons why student cannot walk or bike from home and provide a venue to talk about the needed changes.

Walk and bike at school events

Recess, physical education, or even class time can be dedicated to walking or biking together. Students can use the school field or playground or, with a little planning, walk or bike around the school campus. Consider the following activities:

1. Walk or bike laps around the track or create a route around the school campus.
2. Have walkers and bikers sign a banner. See pages 21 & 22 for a flier and poster you may use.
3. Teach pedestrian or bicycle safety before, after, or as part of the event.
4. Invite media to the biking and talk about the benefits of active travel to school and why students currently cannot.



Events with remote meeting points

1. **Look** for a remote meeting point where families can meet and ride the remainder of the route together. Pick somewhere with a parking lot that does not get much use in the mornings, such as a shopping center or church. Get permission prior to the day.
2. **Invite** the media to the bike event and talk about the benefits of biking to school and why students currently cannot.

Safety on the event day and beyond

There's double benefit of the emphasis on safety. Skills that students learn as part of the event are carried with them whenever and wherever they walk or bike. Whether you're planning a specific event route, families are walking or biking from their homes or both, these guidelines can help. To find the safest route to school, look for:

1. Places to walk or bicycle

Choose sidewalks or paths that are separated from traffic where possible, even if that means the trip will take a little longer. If there are no sidewalks or paths, make sure there are adults available to bike with students.

- Check local regulations on where bikes are allowed to ride in your community. Bicyclists can ride on multi-use paths, but in some communities are not allowed on sidewalks.
- Bicyclists should ride in the same direction as traffic on the far right side when riding on the road.
- Parents should ride with their children and evaluate the route as well as their child's skills before deciding if it's okay to bicycle from home.

2. Places to cross

Minimize the number of street crossings. Avoid busy, high-speed or multi-lane roads, wherever possible. When available, cross at a location with an adult school crossing guard.

Dismounting and walking the bicycle across the street may be the best option, especially if there's a crossing guard available.

3. Pedestrian/bike-friendly drivers

Look for places where drivers are paying attention, yielding to pedestrians and cyclists and respecting speed limits.

4. Make a safety plan for the event

Before the event, talk to the principal and other members of the planning team to identify potential issues and how to address them. Potential safety concerns that may be mentioned include:

- **Get law enforcement involved.** Depending on the community, it might be possible to temporarily close streets or have law enforcement direct traffic and assist with crossing students. Law enforcement officers can also use what they know about nearby traffic condition to help design recommended walking and bicycling routes during event planning.
- If there are particular streets that should be avoided but alternate routes exists, **create and distribute maps** to show walking and bicycling routes using an online mapping tool.
- **Prepare participants with safety education.** Student pedestrians and bicyclists can benefit from education about safe skills before the event. Some organizers get help from law enforcement, others have enthusiastic teachers willing to integrate lessons into their classroom or PE time. Lesson plans are available at East Central WI Safe Routes to School.
- **Give parents what their families need to know** for safe walking and bicycling. See Tip Sheets on pages 11 & 12.
- **Notify drivers about the upcoming event** by using the school's changeable signage, through local community newsletters, fliers, yards signs and other communication channels. Remind drivers to slow down and yield to walkers and cyclists.

"Rack 'em up" contest!



Fill up those bike racks on Bike to School Day!

Take a picture of your full bike racks and send them to East Central WI Regional Safe Routes to School
kdieck@ecwrpc.org

We will draw 3 schools to receive a prize.

Have more bikes and scooters ridden to school than fit in the bike racks? Make sure to take a picture of those also and send our way.

Encourage

students to roll to school
and fill up those bike racks!



Move towards lasting change

Start small

Start small. Have a bike to school day once a month, or choose a month to bike once a week. The goal is to build awareness and increase participation. Promote at staff meetings, Parent Teacher Organization meetings, school announcements, and posters around the school.

Take time

Take time to find the routes with pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Look for signalized intersections, crosswalks, crossing guards, and high profile pedestrian crossing areas that include flashing lights or a refuge island between lanes of traffic. Reach out to [East Central WI Safe Routes to School](#) if you would like to publish a map calling these areas out.

Host

Host a Bike Rodeo. This is a fun and effective way to teach bike safety and encourage physical activity. A bike rodeo may offer bicycle safety inspections, talk about state laws, and give students a chance to practice their skills in various activity stations.

Organize

Organize a Bike Train. This is an organized group of students and adults who bike to school together. The Bike Train has a designated route and students and parents can join along the way.

Create

Create and maintain safety guidelines for adult led bike groups. Determine the adult to child ratio, ensure an adult is at the beginning and end of the biking group, and confirm students have basic travel safety knowledge.

Train

Train parent and community volunteers who can help chaperone the bike to school programs. Clearly outline their roles and responsibilities. Consider working with High School groups so older students can be the leaders and role models for the bike to school program.

Some communities require bikes to be registered. Learn where bikes can be registered in your community and share the information with families.



Simple steps for bicycle safety



Protect your head.

Always wear a helmet.

Be alert at all times.

Keep your eyes and ears on the road and on what is happening around you.

Act like a car.

Ride on the right side of the road, single file, and in a straight line. The more predictable you are, the safer your ride will be.

Only cross when traffic has stopped.

Look left, then right, then left again before crossing the street.

Plan a safe route and stick to it.

Plan to use trails, bike lanes, crosswalks, and lighted intersections when available. Share the plan with a parent or caregiver.

Obey all traffic signals and signs.

Bicycles must follow the rules of the road like other vehicles.

Use hand signals.



Fitting and adjusting a bicycle

Proper fit gives the rider greater control over the bike. Bikes come in different sizes so here is how to make sure you find one that fits you best!

- Straddle the bike and stand in front of the seat, over the top tube, with your feet flat on the ground.
- There should be 1-2 inches between you and the top tube for a road bike, and 3-4 inches if you have a mountain/hybrid bike.

Proper seat adjustment allows for a comfortable ride. While sitting on the seat you should have the following things happen:

- There should be a slight bend in your knee when your foot is on the pedal and it is pushed down all the way.
- The seat should be level; not angled up or down.

Handlebars can also be adjusted for a more comfortable ride.

- Handlebars should be the same width as your shoulders.
- While holding the handlebar grips, your elbows should be slightly bent.
- Keep your forearms and wrists in a straight line.
- The handlebar stem can be adjusted so it is higher for casual riders.

Helmet fitting



2 V 2

Put **2** fingers on your eyebrow, the top of your index finger should be touching the bottom of your helmet.

Adjust the plastic clip on the ear straps to make a **V** under your ear. Clip should rest right at the bottom of your ear.

With the chin strap buckled, you should be able to fit **2** fingers between your chin and the strap.

Do the ABC Quick Check before riding your bike.

A = AIR

Be sure your tires are properly inflated.

B = BRAKES

Check your brakes before riding.

C = CHAIN

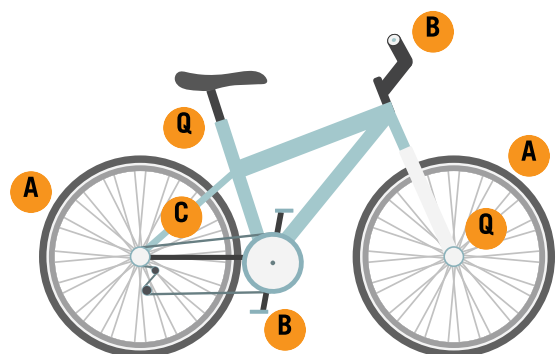
Be sure your chain is running smoothly.

QUICK = QUICK RELEASE

If your brake has quick releases, make sure they are secure.

CHECK = CHECK YOUR BIKE

Before you ride, make sure everything is working properly.



Biking-related trivia

Use these facts during school announcements as you remind students of Bike to School Day or other bike activities that are planned.

1. About how many bicycles are manufactured worldwide each year?

100 million

2. The average New York City bike commute to work or school takes about 35 minutes. Is this faster or slower than riding the subway?

Faster

3. How many bikes can fit in the same area as a single car?

15 bikes

4. The city of Copenhagen is the worlds most bicycle friendly capital. What percent of all trips to work or school are by bike?

49% - Almost half

5. On any given workday, how many people bicycle across the Queen Louise Bridge in Copenhagen?

40,000 people

Great resources to expand on the Copenhagen information.

Great article and pictures [HERE](#)

Fun Youtube video of commute over Queen Louis Bridge [HERE](#)

Fun Facts

The word 'bicycle' comes from the French word 'bicyclette'. Before this name, bicycles were known as 'velocipedes'.

Studies have proven that bicycling is great for your health. Data shows health to risk ratio is 77:1.

There are twice as many bicycles in the world than cars.

The longest tandem bicycle on record can seat 35 people and is 67 feet long.

25% of United States cyclist ride mountain bikes, making it the most popular types of bike in America. That is closely followed by hybrid bikes at 24%.

Sample Communications

Newsletter Content

SCHOOL NAME is celebrating Bike to School Day this year on DATE! We're encouraging students and families to use active transportation for their trips to school - walking, biking, scootering, skateboarding, and using mobility aids all help reduce congestion in our school neighborhood and help students arrive to school energized and ready to learn.

IF LOOKING FOR PARENT VOLUNTEERS, INCLUDE INFORMATION HERE.

LET PARENTS KNOW ANY OTHER DETAILS LIKE WHERE BIKES ARE BEING STORED DURING THE DAY, ANY INCENTIVES BEING PROVIDED, AND CONTESTS OCCURRING.

Social Media Content

- We have registered for Safe Routes to School Bike to School Day! We are joining schools across America in celebrating cycling and making our neighborhoods safer by reducing traffic. Try using active travel to Bike to School on DATE.
- Bike to School Day is tomorrow! Students are getting excited bike, walk or roll to school tomorrow.
- What does our school's bike rack look like on Bike to School Day? PHOTO OF BIKE PARKING
- Our celebration of Bike to School Day! INSERT PHOTO
- That's a wrap, Bike to School Day is complete! We had # OF RIDERS. If you enjoyed biking to school, we encourage you to try and continue to do so at least once a week.

Letter or Email to Parents

We are excited to let you know that our school is participating in Bike to School Day this year on DATE. This event encourages students and families to choose active modes of travel to get to and from school.

The benefits of active travel include reduced traffic in school areas, students arriving to school energized and ready to learn, and student participation in a sustainable activity. Active travel includes biking, walking, scootering, skateboarding, and using other mobility devices to get to school.

INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW STUDENTS CAN PARTICIPATE, AND INVITATIONS TO PARENTS TO GET INVOLVED IN ORGANIZING.

Safe Route

Name: _____

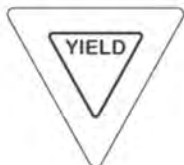
1. Mark with **ORANGE** the route you would take to Andy's house.
2. Look closely at your route. Did the route cross at crosswalks and use traffic signals as well as avoid railroad tracks and streets with higher speeds?
3. Plan a safer route to travel:
 - Walk along lower speed streets
 - Use a crosswalks at every intersection
 - Use traffic signals at intersections with higher speeds
 - Avoid the railroad track
 - Mark this route **GREEN**



Name: _____

Road Safety

Match the road safety signs to the description of the sign.



Watch for pedestrians who may be crossing ahead.

You can't bike here!

All traffic on this road is traveling in the same direction.

Stop, put one foot down and look all ways for traffic. Proceed when it is safe to do so.

Slow down! Wait for a safe gap in traffic before continuing.

A road with a special lane for bicycles.

A signal showing it is your turn to walk your bike across the road at the crosswalk.

The number shows how many miles per hour cars can legally go.

Name: _____

Become a Safe Biker

riding on trails and sidewalks

Wear a helmet

Stay on the trail while riding

Ride on the right side of the trail

Step off path when taking a break

You're a super safe biker!

Use your eyes, ears, and brain to stay alert!

Look all directions before crossing

- Bike on a trail and practice these safe habits.
- Color each habit you practiced.
- Practice all habits to earn a certificate.

Pass on left
Ring bell or say "on left" before passing a pedestrian

Stop at curb and wait for gap in traffic to cross



Name: _____

Become a Safe Biker

for riders age 10 and younger

Wear a helmet

Ride with an adult

Use your eyes, ears, and brain to stay alert!

Use safe speeds

Ride on the right. Pass on the left.

You're a super safe biker!

Use caution near pedestrians, they have the right of way

Make eye contact with drivers

Stop, look and listen before crossing the road

- Bike with an adult and practice these safe habits.
- Color each habit you practiced.
- Practice all habits to earn a certificate.



I Ride My

BIKE

SAFELY

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

DATE: _____ SIGNED: _____



I Spy Road Safety



Can you find:

- Pedestrian signal “Do Not Walk”
- Pedestrian signal “Walk”
- Playing a safe distance from the road
- Crossing guard

- Walking bike safely at crosswalk
- Waiting for crossing guard
- Car at a full stop
- Riding a scooter a safe distance from the intersection



BIKE to School Day



Join schools around the nation celebrating International Bike to School Day.

Bringing parents, children and community members together to experience the fun of biking to school together.





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