ENCOURAGEMENT

Walking School Bus

A Walking School Bus is a fun, social, physically active, and environmentally friendly form of transportation! Amongst our SRTS partners, it is one of the most popular activities to get students motivated to walk and bike to and from school. Walking School Buses can include children who live close or farther away from school grounds, and can be modified for students with mobility impairments.

MASSACHUSETTS
Safe Routes to School
MASS.GOV/SAFE-ROUTES-TO-SCHOOL

A Walking School Bus (WSB) consists of a group of children that walk together accompanied by adults on a pre-determined route to or from school. Routes can originate from a particular neighborhood or a parking lot, park or church. They can operate daily, weekly or monthly.

Benefits of a Walking School Bus Program

1. Reduces congestion and improves air quality near schools.
2. Encourages healthy and safe pedestrian behaviors.
3. Supports higher academic performance and increased school attendance rates.
4. Adds time for physical activity in a child's day.

MA SRTS Walking School Bus Support

Your Massachusetts Safe Routes to School Outreach Coordinator will assist you in getting your Walking School Bus up and moving! They will provide:

1. A Walking School Bus Tool Kit & training for adults.
2. Pedestrian Safety Education training for students.
3. Customized maps of Walking School Bus routes.
4. Marketing materials to promote your Walking School Bus program, both in your school and community.
5. SRTS Gear for students, such as backpack lights, reflective arm bands, and bookmarks.





Students in the Everett Public School District created their own signs to let everyone know their Walking School Bus is on the move!

Case Study: Brightwood School Springfield, MA

A Walking School Bus is one of several strategies MA SRTS Partners have used to reduce chronic student absences.

At the Brightwood School in Springfield, students participating in the daily walking school bus have a higher attendance rate than children who do not participate.

In the 2010-2011 school year, one student had been absent a total of 22 days. The next year, the same student joined the Walking School Bus, and had a 100% attendance record for the entire year.

Questions?
Your SRTS Outreach Coordinator is here to help.

Massachusetts Safe Routes to School
888-426-6688
www.mass.gov/safe-routes-to-school

massDOT
Massachusetts Department of Transportation

ENCOURAGEMENT

Bicycle Trains

Bicycle Trains are a fun way for students to be physically active and practice bicycle safety skills. Bicycle Trains are adult supervised bicycle rides on a predetermined route to and from school.

Decide How to Organize Your Bicycle Train

- Bicycle Trains can be informal or formal.
- They can operate daily, weekly or monthly.
- They can include designated drop off and pick up sites to involve children that live further from the school.

Select a Safe Route

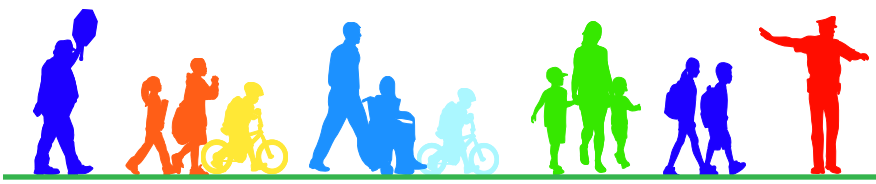
- Find a starting point with enough space for cyclists to gather and safe places to enter the roadway or path.
- Incorporate shared-use paths if possible. Otherwise, choose streets with minimal traffic and enough space for bicyclists riding single file.
- Consider skill and comfort level
- Select bicycle-friendly crossing locations and intersections with push button pedestrian signals that cyclists can easily reach.
- Determine how the bicycle train will enter and exit school grounds.
- Pick a route that avoids school traffic as much as possible.
- Test the route during arrival and dismissal times to make sure it works and is safe.
- Identify a safe place to store bikes at the school.

Provide Adult Supervision

- Bicycle Trains generally require more adult volunteers than other informal walking and biking activities. One adult for every three to six children is recommended.

Bike Safety Tips

- Practice bike safety skills on and off the road before joining.
- Massachusetts law requires all children 16 years old and younger to wear a bike helmet. All adult volunteers participating in the Bicycle Train should set a good example and wear a helmet.
- All riders should wear brightly colored or reflective clothing.
- Make sure shoe laces are tied, pant legs are tucked in, and bicycle equipment is checked before heading out.



MASSACHUSETTS
Safe Routes to School
MASS.GOV/SAFE-ROUTES-TO-SCHOOL



Fall River, Massachusetts has a very active bicycling community and formed the Fall River Bicycle Committee. Students from Tansey Elementary participate in a Bicycle Train as part of Fall River's National Bike to School Day activities.

Massachusetts Safe Routes to School Rules of the Road

- Ride on the street moving in the same direction as traffic or shared-use paths. Riding on sidewalks is permitted on a case by case basis depending on your town.
- Ride single file, leaving space between bicyclists in case of a sudden stop. Do not pass.
- Ride on the right side of the street, generally about an arm's length from the curb.
- Use hand signals to show you are turning, slowing, or stopping.
- At major intersections, where there is a traffic light or a crossing guard, get off the bike and walk it across the street.

Questions?
Your SRTS Outreach Coordinator is here to help.

Massachusetts Safe Routes to School
888-426-6688
www.mass.gov/safe-routes-to-school