

# ENCOURAGEMENT

## Safe Routes for All: Park n' Walks & In-School Activities

Use these techniques to include students in your Safe Routes to School activities who cannot walk or bike from home because of distance, safety concerns or a mobility impairment.

### ✓ Set Up a Park n' Walk Location

Park n' Walk sites are off campus places like libraries, parks or churches with enough space for kids and adults to congregate and for cars and buses to park or drop-off. A suggested distance for a Park n' Walk site is 1/4-1/2 mile away from school grounds. They enable participation from kids who cannot walk or bike from home and reduce traffic congestion near the school, creating a better walking and bicycling environment. Here's a way to do it:

- Choose a drop off site. Take into consideration the logistics, the students involved, length of walk and traffic patterns. Be sure to get approval from the person who owns or manages the site.
- Map out a safe route with the assistance of your SRTS Outreach Coordinator and walk it. This will give you a better sense of timing and where kids may need assistance.
- Recruit volunteers to serve as chaperones and help kids cross intersections. Reach out to local officials and law enforcement.
- Let parents know where to go and the route kids will take.
- Provide pedestrian safety education reminders before and during the walk.

### ✓ Organize a Walk at School Event

Organized walks at school are a great way to include kids of all ages and abilities! These events can take place before class, during the day, or after school. Examples of how SRTS School Partners create successful Walk at School Days:

- Promote students and teachers to walk laps with their classrooms around the school or at a school field. Individual classrooms make signs that represented their grade and event organizers play music to get participants revved up to walk!
- Encourage students who live too far to walk or bike to school or are mobility impaired to walk laps or perform other exercises to count towards participation in a Walk at School Day.



Students at Alice B. Beal School in Springfield participate in an organized Walk at School Day—students walk laps around their soccer field with their teachers and principal before school starts and all participants receive a healthy breakfast snack afterwards.

### Hold a Safety Assembly at Your School

Assemblies are a great way to educate students about pedestrian safety, personal safety, helmet use, bicycle readiness and more! Potential speakers include law enforcement, safety advocates, bike and pedestrian advocates, even students!

Consider including Safety Assemblies as a part of your SRTS activities.

### Questions?

Your SRTS Outreach Coordinator is here to help.

Massachusetts Safe Routes to School  
888-426-6688

[www.mass.gov/safe-routes-to-school](http://www.mass.gov/safe-routes-to-school)

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## MASSACHUSETTS Safe Routes to School

[MASS.GOV/SAFE-ROUTES-TO-SCHOOL](http://MASS.GOV/SAFE-ROUTES-TO-SCHOOL)

### ✓ Involve Your Special Education Professional

Seeking the support of your school's Special Education professionals can help you plan an event that is inclusive and fun for children with mobility impairments and developmental disabilities.

- Change the name of your event to Walk and Roll to School.
- Middle Schools can encourage students with impairments to participate in a PhotoVoice project. They will bring a unique perspective of the built environment's strengths and limitations.

### ✓ Walk Across America and Massachusetts

Walk Across America and Massachusetts is a great way to incorporate physical activity into the academic curriculum that is fun and allows all students to participate.

- Identify a classroom or school-wide Walk Captain who will decide when and where students will walk.
- Plan a route and a final destination! Will you walk along the Freedom Trail? To the Grand Canyon? To Washington D.C.?
- Track how far students have walked by providing them with large map so students can visualize their progress. Your SRTS Outreach Coordinator can help implement and provide SRTS Gear to support your Walk Across America and Massachusetts activities.

### ✓ Neighborhood Walk-About

Organized walks through nearby neighborhoods with safe routes are a great way to include kids who cannot walk or bike from home. These walks can take place before, during or after school, and even on weekends! Here's a way to do it:

- Map out a safe route with the assistance of your SRTS Outreach Coordinator and walk it. Consider kids abilities and how much time you have.
- Recruit volunteers and publicize details to the community.
- Reinforce safety messages before, during, and after the walk.



Students at Dallin Elementary in Arlington participate in a Safe Routes to School assembly and ribbon cutting.



The SRTS Program can supply schools with poster-size Walk Across America and Walk Across Massachusetts maps.

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