



SAFE ROUTES  
TO SCHOOLS  
MARIN COUNTY

# WALK and ROLL Wednesdays



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS GUIDEBOOK FOR SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

*This volunteer guide is designed to provide you with the tools needed to implement and publicize our Walk and Roll Wednesdays campaign at your school.*



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There are four primary travel modes:

- Walk
- Bike
- Carpool
- Bus

## SAFE ROUTES VOLUNTEER PARENTS & TEACHERS



### **Parent and teacher volunteers are our green travel ambassadors.**

Thank you for volunteering to serve as the Safe Routes to Schools team leaders and represent our program. Safe Routes to Schools is dedicated to changing the way this generation of children in Marin County travels to school. Our staff works closely with our volunteers to promote green travel as a lifelong habit. Our volunteers are instrumental in helping us to increase the numbers of walkers and bikers in Marin County.

Ideally, we suggest a co-leader position at every school, in which two Safe Routes volunteers “team up” to work creatively together and have fun promoting our program. This could be either two parents, or possibly you and a teacher at your school. You can also collaborate with your student leadership, green team, or other student organization.

# WALK AND ROLL WEDNESDAYS



## HOW TO GET STARTED

- ✓ *Get permission for Walk and Roll Wednesdays*
- ✓ *Set up a monthly Welcome Table*
- ✓ *Recruit a volunteer team*
- ✓ *Promote WEEKLY Walk and Roll Wednesdays*

**Your primary role as the Safe Routes to Schools leader at your school is to organize and make popular our “Walk and Roll Wednesdays.”**

On the first Wednesday of every month, you will set up a Welcome Table to greet students who bike, walk, carpool, or take the bus (if available). However, if Wednesday does not work for your school, then select another day.

Our program aspiration is to embed a regular weekly green travel day at every school in Marin County. The goal of the Safe Routes to Schools program is to create a safe walking and biking culture which nurtures green travel. Our mission is to make green travel a daily habit for this generation of children by encouraging them at a young age to use their feet to get places.

### **Publish Volunteer 2021–2022 Tabling Dates on Your School’s Master Calendar**

- **October 7 – International Walk to School Day**
- **December 2**
- **January 6**
- **Feb 2**
- **March 2**
- **April 13, 20, 27**
- **May 4**



## THE ABC'S OF ORGANIZING YOUR WELCOME TABLE

### a

Ask your Principal for permission to host Walk and Roll Wednesdays, and publish the dates on the school calendar. Send your Principal a brief e-mail before school starts, or set up a meeting with him/her if you would like to discuss highlights of this guide. Let your Principal know that you will need them to send an e-mail to all parents publicizing the school launch date of Walk and Roll Wednesdays in Marin County. Another person to contact right away is the PTA President to get support for Walk and Roll Wednesdays and funding for healthy snacks.

### b

Select a high visibility location to set up your monthly Welcome Table. How many entrances are there at your school? Might you need multiple tables if you are a large school? What is the most popular entrance for students as they arrive by foot or bike? You want the entire school to see you, so put some thought into the best location to greet walkers and bikers.

### c

Recruit a few volunteers to help you once a month (including your kids if they are interested) to staff your Welcome Table. You can also recruit your student leadership to help out. Build a volunteer base by recruiting through your school newsletter and parent events at your school.

Word of mouth is the best way to build your volunteer team. The individual ask gets the best results. Contact your school's PTA or Parent Club to recruit volunteers and to spread the word throughout the parent community about your Safe Routes to Schools program (see page 12, PTA). You can also put out a notice in your newsletter and have a signup sheet at key meetings like back to school night or PTA meetings. You can find these tools in the Appendix at the end of this guide.





# CHECKLIST FOR SETTING UP YOUR WELCOME TABLE



HERE THEY COME! You will need to arrive 45 minutes before school starts, once a month, to set up your Walk and Roll Welcome Table.

Be ready and have your table set up at least 30 minutes before the school bell rings for those children who arrive early. Your Welcome Table is also a place for early arrivers to socialize. Additionally, bring your children to assist you. Kids working at a Welcome Table are inspiring mini-ambassadors of the Safe Routes to Schools program.

## Checklist of what you will need to set up your monthly Welcome Table:

- ✓ A portable table and a few chairs, make arrangements in advance with the custodian
- ✓ Walk and Roll Wednesdays vinyl banner
- ✓ Tape to adhere the banner to the table
- ✓ Safety Bike Tips pamphlets
- ✓ Give-aways (We supply)
- ✓ Your school Principal (optional) – Principals are powerful role models for elementary school children. It would be beneficial if you can prompt your Principal to be present to welcome students once a month





## HOW TO GREET STUDENTS AT YOUR WELCOME TABLE

### SMILE!

As our Safe Routes to Schools representative, we need you to acknowledge students for their efforts to travel green to school when they arrive at your Welcome Table. Here are some examples of what you can say to help build a walking and biking culture at your school:

- *Great job riding your bike to school!*
- *How did you get to school today?  
Is there a friend you might want to invite next time?*
- *Keep walking to school every day!*
- *We are trying to get the entire school to travel green every Wednesday... keep it up every week!*



## SIMPLE MARKETING STEPS:

- W & R Posters in the Classroom
- Principal Eblast
- Newsletter Submissions
- Facebook
- Web Site
- Backpack mail
- PTA
- Announcements
- Assemblies
- Poster Art

# HOW TO MARKET OUR CAMPAIGN AT YOUR SCHOOL

## GREEN CAMPAIGNS GET FAMILIES THINKING ABOUT BIKING AND WALKING BY CONVEYING REASONS.

Promotion is critical in establishing a successful biking and walking culture at your school. A strong sense of school pride is created by students and their families who participate in a regular Walk and Roll Wednesday initiative. The school community effort feels good to everyone and becomes a contagious cultural force.

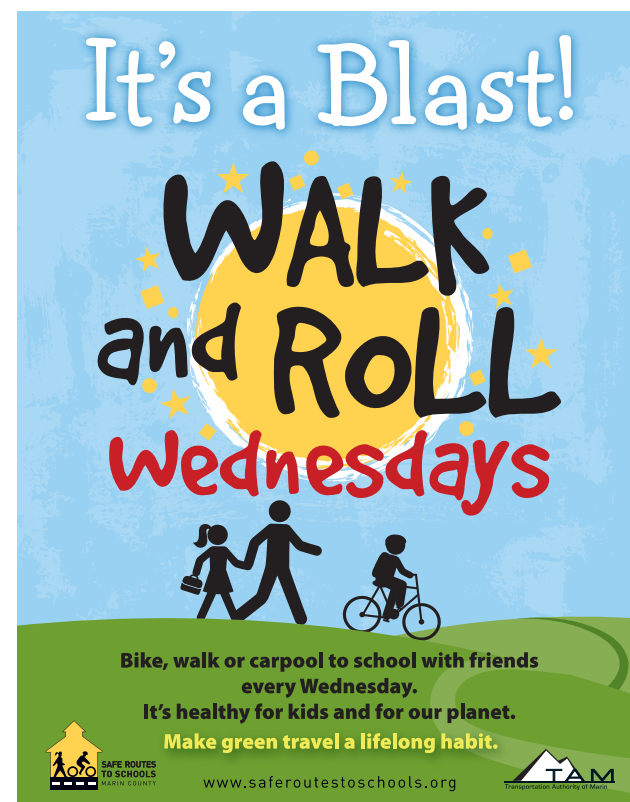
Below is a list of publicity strategies to successfully promote Walk and Roll Wednesdays.

Ask your school Principal and/or teachers to join you to greet students at the Welcome Table.

### #1 A POSTER IN EVERY CLASSROOM

Please hang our Walk and Roll Wednesdays posters in every classroom at your school in **early September**. There are three possible ways to do this:

- Ask your Principal to distribute the posters at a staff meeting, or attend yourself and use the staff meeting as an opportunity to let teachers know about the campaign.
- Deliver a poster to each teacher's inbox with a note.
- Go to every classroom and deliver the poster at recess time. Make a brief presentation to students reminding them to travel green every Wednesday.







## #2 PRINCIPAL E-MAIL TO ALL PARENTS

- Ask your Principal to blow the horn! Ask him/her to send an e-mail to parents encouraging families to to walk, bike or carpool to school once a week.
- Ask your Principal to include the file of our Walk and Roll Wednesdays logo.

### HERE IS SUGGESTED TEXT TO SEND IN THE FIRST SUBMISSION:

Our school is embracing the Marin County initiative by Safe Routes to Schools to encourage all families to walk, bike or carpool to school once a week. Our launch date is INSERT DATE. Volunteers will be out front at a Welcome Table handing out INSERT INCENTIVE ITEM to all students. If you live too far, drive part way and then walk.

Choose a safe route for your child to walk or bike. Plan a route with the fewest street crossings, and practice it with your child. Wear helmets, obey stop signs and and teach your child to bike in the same direction as traffic. Biking and walking to school is fun. It's also healthy for our children, and our planet.

We'll have a Welcome Table set up the first Wednesday of every month for students that arrive a green way to school. Continue walking and biking every Wednesdays. Let's all fill up the bike racks and sidewalks every Walk and Roll Wednesday. Green travel decreases school traffic congestion and creates healthy lifestyle habits.

- *Principal Green*, Sunshine Elementary School



Visit the Safe Routes website to download this logo and other Walk and Roll promotional materials:

[www.saferoutestoschools.org/download.html](http://www.saferoutestoschools.org/download.html)

### #3 SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

- ***WHO is your school newsletter editor?***
- ***WHAT is their e-mail address?***
- ***WHEN is the deadline?***

In addition to the principal announcement, continually promote Walk and Roll Wednesday in your school newsletter. Your first newsletter announcement will introduce the program. Here are two additional strategies for newsletter submissions that you can create to keep the green travel momentum rolling at your school throughout the year:

#### WRITE A SHORT STORY

- Is there a neighborhood that bikes together every Wednesday?
- Are there two buddies that walk together or a teacher that rides every day?
- Do you know of a parent that used to drive, but now walks with their child?

These are inspiring stories, which you can write about, to generate a biking and walking culture.

### PHOTO WITH A CAPTION

A picture is worth a thousand words. Find out if your school newsletter accepts photos. Take photos on Wednesdays, and obtain the student names in your best photo and submit it to the editor. Check with your principal to make sure that student has been cleared with a photo release. Photos of students walking, biking and carpooling are a great way to create a strong feeling at your school that everyone is traveling green every Wednesday! Lastly, write a creative photo caption with the photo.

**Here is an example:**



***JOIN THE MOVEMENT! Biking and walking to school (even partway) is a memory your child will never forget. Be part of the fun and help our school to fill up the bike racks! Biking is energizing and really fun once your child gets into the habit.***



## #4 FACEBOOK

- Does your school have a FaceBook page?

If the answer is yes, then you can apply the same submssion for your school newsletter to FaceBook. Post on FaceBook to promote the increasing number of walkers and bikers at your school.

## #5 SCHOOL WEBSITE

- Websites are a great way to educate parents about safe biking tips and local routes. If your school does not have a Safe Routes to Schools section, then we encourage you to work with us to create one on your website. Publicize our Walk and Roll Wednesday dates on your school's website, and customize it.

## #6 BACKPACK MAIL

- Does your school send home information to parents in their child's backpack?
- If yes, then include our Walk and Roll Wednesdays flyer! Many schools have gone all electronic for their communications. The tactic is the same - make sure that the flyer or a link to the web page is included on a regular basis.

## #7 PTA

- Is our Safe Routes to Schools volunteer position part of the PTA?
- The National PTA has endorsed our Safe Routes to Schools program. Work closely with your PTA President to publicize Walk and Roll Wednesdays in their e-mails and newsletters. Do you have a PTA budget for snacks for your Welcome table? Work together! Attend PTA meetings.

## #8 LOUD SPEAKER ANNOUNCEMENTS

- On Monday or Tuesday, use your school's loud speaker as a way to remind students to walk, bike or carpooool on Wednesday. You can also ask the teachers to announce a reminder every Tuesday in the classroom.



## #9 SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES

- Use an upcoming assembly to do a two-minute presentation about the importance of walking and biking to school. This presentation can include safety tips and/or environmental and health benefits of walking and biking. A staff person from Safe Routes to Schools might be able to assist you. Please contact Peggy Clark at Safe Routes to Schools at (415) 456-3469 ext. 102#. Assemblies are a great way to reach all students!



## #10 POSTER ART

- ***Does your school have a place to hang multiple posters?***
- Safe Routes to Schools offers a free, one-hour poster making session, which engages students to paint colorful posters promoting biking, walking and carpools. An art instructor will come to your school with all of the supplies to make 10 - 12 eye-catching posters to hang on fences. The posters can all be used at your staging area for Walk and Roll Wednesdays. You can also borrow our paints and poster making materials and organize a session yourself.
- The signs build awareness of the school's efforts to increase the number of walkers and bikers. The posters can also be used by walking neighborhood groups and special events, like International Walk and Roll to School Day.



## SIMPLE STEPS

- ✓ Establish neighborhood meet-up locations
- ✓ Recruit walk and bike leaders
- ✓ Publicize meet-up locations and times

## EXTRA: Going Above and Beyond

### ORGANIZING NEIGHBORHOODS

#### Creating meeting locations to walk and bike together

When families get to know who walks or bikes in their neighborhood, they will be able to form groups that can travel to school together on a regular basis. The first step in forming these relationships is establishing meet-up locations at strategic places that are walking and/or biking distance from the school. These locations not only serve those who live nearby but also allows those who live farther away an opportunity to park and walk the rest of the way to school. This reduces traffic within the immediate vicinity of the school, making it safer for everyone.



Choose locations on all sides of the school zones that easily serve the nearby neighborhoods. Make sure it has parking areas where parents can safely drop off their children. If there are private parking areas, be sure to ask permission from the owners to allow short term parking.

When publicizing your Walk and Roll Wednesdays, promote these meet-up locations and urge parents to walk or bike with their children. This also ensures enough supervision and safety for the children. You can post a screenshot of a Google Map showing meet-up locations, and include it with your publicity and on your school website.

Find parents who are already walking or biking with their children and ask them if they would be willing to allow other children to join them. As you develop your team for tabling, ask them for information on parents they know who might be willing to lead walking and biking groups. Ask your PTA to help you find your walk and bike leaders. Stress the minimum time commitment if they are already walking or biking. For safety, recruit enough parents according to the Walking School Bus & Bike Train suggestions on page 15.



## SAFETY TIPS

- Discuss and practice road safety and traffic rules.
- Make sure that parents do not leave their children alone while waiting for the group; the supervision of each child must be transferred to a responsible adult.
- Don't let children get too far ahead or behind.
- Encourage children to wear bright or fluorescent colors or reflector tape on their backpacks or jackets.
- Yellow vests or armbands help with visibility. You can get them for all participants or just for the adults.
- Bring along a wagon for books, musical instruments and projects.

## WALKING SCHOOL BUSES & BIKE TRAINS

### WALKING SCHOOL BUS

A Walking School Bus is a group of neighbors who walk to school picking up kids along the way or meeting at a set location. The rule of thumb is to have one adult for six children. Be sure a large group has an adult at the front and one at the rear as well.

### BIKE TRAIN

A Bike Train is a group of kids who bike together to or from school. If the group members are under age 12, there should be one adult for each four children, one in front and one in back. Young children biking to school should always be accompanied by an adult.

## BIKING TIPS

- Make sure that the bikes are in good working condition.
- Make sure that the bike fits the rider.
- Ideally have an adult at the front, one at the back and one in the middle.
- Every rider must wear a helmet, including the adults.
- One adult can pull a trailer with backpacks, instruments or projects.

## BEST PRACTICES

### Route Selection

Spend a weekend day walking or biking the route you will take to school. Time how long it takes. Note any safety concerns and be sure to establish how each will be handled. For instance, if there is no sidewalk on part of the routes, children will walk single file with adults in the front and the back. Report any safety concerns along your route to your Safe Routes to Schools committee.

### Bike Trains

Bike trains are only recommended for children who are proficient at riding—usually aged 8 or up although some children learn earlier than others. It is the parents' responsibility to assess their child's ability.

### Rainy Days

You may decide to walk rain or shine. If not, then plan in advance: In the event of a rainy day, what will the backup plan be in order to carpool all students to school? This may require some networking the evening before so parents know who the drivers are and where to meet.

## YOUR CONTACT TO ASSIST YOU IN IMPLEMENTING OUR PROGRAM



**COOPER MILEY**

**Volunteer Coordinator**  
*Safe Routes to Schools*

[cooper@marinbike.org](mailto:cooper@marinbike.org)

510-809-6196

Cooper is available to meet with parent volunteers anytime throughout the school year, as well as with your school's Principal and PTA President, if desired.

## PUBLICITY CONTACT

**Our Safe Routes to School volunteers are our green travel campaign managers.**

It's important to promote Walk and Roll to School Wednesdays on a consistent basis. If you need assistance in developing a customized plan for your school, then please contact us to set up a meeting.





## APPENDIX A:

### Newsletter submission to recruit parent volunteers

#### Join Our Friendly Team of Parents Dedicated to Increasing Foot Travel to School



Volunteer meeting for Walk and Roll Wednesdays: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Insert date and time ) \_\_\_\_\_  
in the school conference room.

Time commitment: Only 30-45 minutes a month.

We need parents to lace up their sneakers and join our new Safe Routes to Schools' team to encourage more walking, biking and carpooling at our school.

Our goal is to create a safe biking and walking culture by encouraging green travel every week through promoting "Walk and Roll Wednesdays". Beginning on (insert date), our school declares every Wednesday to be WALK AND ROLL WEDNESDAY and encourages maximum student participation. We hope to teach our children the lifelong lesson of using their feet to get places.

Please RSVP to \_\_\_\_\_ if you can attend our fun meeting.




# APPENDIX B:

## Volunteer

## Sign-Up Sheet

Another way to get volunteer help is to set-up a table on Back-To-School Night to promote Safe Routes to Schools and have a volunteer sign-up sheet. The sign-up sheet could also be provided to your PTA president to seek their assistance in recruiting other parents. On the following page is the Safe Routes to Schools’ volunteer sign-up sheet for you to use.



SAFE ROUTES  
TO SCHOOLS  
MARIN COUNTY

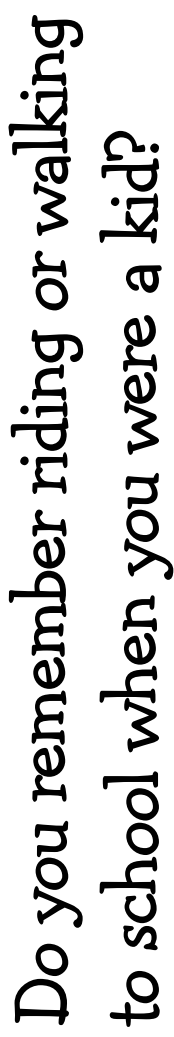
[www.saferoutestoschools.org](http://www.saferoutestoschools.org)

Do you remember riding or walking  
to school when you were a kid?

Please SIGN UP now to join our fun parent volunteer team and help change the way  
this generation of Marin County students travel to school.

YES! I would like to volunteer a 30 - 45 minutes a month to assist with Walk and Roll Wednesdays  
on behalf of Safe Routes to Schools.

Name	Email	Phone



YES! I would like to volunteer a 30 - 45 minutes a month to assist with Walk and Roll Wednesdays on behalf of Safe Routes to Schools.

[illegible]



Deb Hubsmith co-founder of Safe Routes to Schools, Marin County.



Safe Routes to Schools is a program of the Transportation Authority of Marin.