

BECOME A PARTNER How to enroll

Elementary and middle school communities who enroll as a partner with the Resource Center receive support from our staff to get their school-based Safe Routes to School program rolling. Organizations not directly part of a school community can support Safe Routes to School program activities by becoming a Friend of the program.

Take the first step to becoming a Partner by completing an enrollment form. Once we receive the form, one of our School Outreach Coordinators will contact you to complete the process. You'll be asked to determine the types of activities your school program will complete during the school year, packaged as 3 partnership level: Bronze, Silver and Gold. Enroll on-line at www.saferoutesga.org or call our hotline at 1-877-GDOT-W2S (1-877-436-8927).

Current Partner Schools

Bronze

Arcado Elementary School
C.T. Walker Traditional Magnet School
Chapel Hill Elementary School
Crabapple Crossing Elementary School
Summit Hill Elementary School

Silver

Kingsley Charter Elementary
Peoples Elementary School
Rising Starr Middle School
Timothy Road Elementary School

Gold

A. Brian Merry Elementary School
Barden Elementary School
Barrow Elementary School
Brookwood Elementary School
Burghard Elementary School
Chase Street Elementary School
Glennwood Academy
Knollwood Elementary School
Livsey Elementary School
Morningside Elementary School

Friends

Bibb County Board of Education
Bike! Walk! Northwest Georgia
DeKalb County Board of Health
Fayette County Government
Fayette County Schools
Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Safe Kids DeKalb
Safe Kids Georgia
Wilkinson County Board of Education
Wilkinson County Mayor's Office
Wilkinson County Sheriff's Office

FACTS

A generation ago, a majority of US children walked or biked to school.

From the Report of the National Safe Routes to School Task Force, July 2008:

- 30 years ago, 1 out of every 2 children walked or biked to school. Today, 1 out of every 8 children gets to school on their own two feet.
- As much as 21% of morning traffic consists of parents driving their children to school.
- The rate of obesity for today's children will likely contribute to a shorter lifespan than the lifespan for their parents.
- If 100 children from the same school walked or biked to school all year, they would generate 12,000 hours of physical activity AND keep nearly 35,000 pounds of pollutants out of the air.
- Based on a study by the EPA, air quality is measurably better around schools with more bicycling and walking.



WAYFINDING

A News Resource for the Georgia Safe Routes to School Resource Center

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WELCOME!

Welcome to the inaugural issue of Wayfinding, Georgia's Safe Routes to School Program newsletter! The Georgia Department of Transportation is very excited about the implementation of the SRTS program.

This special inaugural issue contains an overview of our Resource Center and its services, introductions to Resource Center staff, information to help you enroll as a partner with our SRTS Resource Center and information on the upcoming 2009 Walk to School Day on October 7th. Both the Resource Center and infrastructure funding program offer huge benefits for students, parents, and communities in Georgia.

We are pleased that you and students around the state have an interest in Georgia's Safe Routes program. We hope that this newsletter and our new Resource Center will help make walking and bicycling to school safer, healthier, and more enjoyable for years to come!

Regards,

Commissioner Vance C. Smith, Jr.
Georgia Department of Transportation

WHAT'S HAPPENING? calendar of events 2009

SEPTEMBER

September 17 • www.saferoutesga.org launches
September 29 • Resource Center Newsletter issued

OCTOBER

October 1 - 31 • Walk to School Month
October 7 • Resource Center Walk to School Day event
National Walk to School Day (Georgia-wide)

NOVEMBER

November 1 • Daylight savings time ends.
Turn clocks back one hour

FEATURES

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What's Happening



Georgia

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

RESOURCE CENTER OPEN FOR BUSINESS

On August 27, Georgia's Safe Routes to School Resource Center opened for business with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Chapel Hill Elementary School in Douglas County. Elaine Armster, GDOT's Special Projects Branch Chief called the SRTS Resource Center ribbon-cutting ceremony "the next major step in Georgia's SRTS Program as a place for school communities to receive assistance in creating effective, sustainable SRTS programs."

The event also marked the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Georgia Department of Transportation and Douglas County Commission for nearly \$500,000 to add new sidewalks, crosswalks and crossing signals near the school.

In closing the event, Elaine Armster reminded schools to participate in National Walk to School Day on October 7th. "Georgia schools have a great record of participating in this international event. With the new Resource Center, we expect to see more and more families learning about the benefits of walking and biking to school." Additionally, she encouraged schools to call the Resource Center hotline at 1-877-GDOT-W2S.

RESOURCE CENTER STAFF: Who to know

Georgia's Safe Routes to School Resource Center is staffed by a group of Georgians ready to help your school with its SRTS Program. Staff includes our Resource Center Manager, School Outreach Coordinators, and the four spokeskids, or student ambassadors, represented in our logo.

our staff

Sarah Knight, Resource Center Manager, walked to school in Pennsylvania and West Virginia during elementary and middle school. Sarah says she's lived in Georgia long enough to consider herself a native.

Andy Pittman, School Outreach Coordinator for Northeast Georgia, attended Mt. Bethel Elementary school in Marietta. Andy enjoys hiking, paddling, and especially fly fishing.

Alicia Hatcher, School Outreach Coordinator for Northwest Georgia, grew up in Calhoun. As a child, Alicia loved riding her bike. Today she enjoys running, hiking and playing tennis.

Abby Mattera, School Outreach Coordinator for Metro Atlanta, is a Connecticut native, who remembers walking to school regardless of the weather. Today, Abby enjoys hiking and paddling.

Patti Sistrunk, School Outreach Coordinator for Coastal Georgia, was born and raised in Augusta. She loves appreciating and creating art. Patti looks forward to Georgia football each fall.

Sandie Parker, School Outreach Coordinator for Central Georgia, hails from Homer. Sandie's favorite meal is breakfast because it energizes her for the rest of the day.



WALK TO SCHOOL DAY

Pssst! Walk to School Day is just around the corner -- October 7. If your school is already planning to celebrate the day, good job! If registering your school is still on your to do list, now's the time to cross it off the list. Go to www.walktoschool.org and sign up now!

The United States led the effort to establish Walk-to-School Day as an event that is held every October throughout the world. The first U.S. Walk-to-School Day event was held in Chicago in 1997 and quickly became an American tradition. In 2008, more than 6,500 schools in the United States participated in International Walk to School Day. Approximately 4 million people from 42 countries all over the world participated. Because of its popularity, the month of October is considered Walk to School Month.

There are lots of different ways that schools celebrate Walk to School Day; however one common denominator is that they all include walking or bicycling as part of the school day. Some schools organize walking school buses or bicycle trains from designated locations to school. Other schools hold a "walk around the school" activity so students who take the bus can participate. Often, schools use this day to kick-off walking programs such as "Walking or Biking Wednesdays", frequent walker or biker programs and neighborhood walking school buses.

Over 30 schools in Georgia have registered so far this year. According to GDOT Interim SRTS Coordinator Byron Rushing, schools in Decatur will kick-off the October 7 Walk to School day with a rally the evening before. Knight Elementary School in Lilburn, GA will use designated walking school bus or bike train stops for children and parents to meet and walk/bike to school together. Another event at Southeast Elementary School in Valdosta will include city and county leaders, parents and students, teachers and staff.

If your school has not yet planned its Walk to School Day event, register today at www.walktoschool.org. This site also has many ideas on how to begin, especially if you register your school.



Join the list of Georgia schools already registered in making Walk to School Day bigger than last year!

Register your school at <http://www.walktoschool.org/register/index.cfm> after registering click "Who's Walking" to see the list of other Georgia schools that are participating.



our spokeskids



Hi, my name is **Shelby Lynne**, but most people just call me Shelby. My family lives in Athens, the one in Georgia, not Greece. I just started the third grade, and I ride my bike to school every day, wearing my green helmet (my favorite color). My dad rides with me, and I make him wear his helmet, too!



Hi! My name is **Rosie**. I live in Atlanta now, but I used to live in Jasper before my mom got a new job. This year I'm in second grade. My mom and some of the other mothers in our neighborhood trade off walking with us to school - we call it a walking school bus. I can't ride a bike yet, but my dad says that I will learn how to ride when I'm in fourth grade.



Hey, I'm **Travis**, I live in Waycross. Kindergarten is really cool. Now that I'm at the big school, I get to walk to school with my brother Toby and my mom. Our mom works at the school office. Sometimes mom takes us to the park or lets us go play at our neighbors' house on our way home from school.



Hello, I'm **Sam** and I live in Savannah. I'm excited to be a fifth grader this year because we are the oldest kids at our school. We live a few blocks from the school and even though I use a wheelchair, I can get there on my own because there are sidewalks and ramps.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL 101

The main goals of the Safe Routes to School program are simple - to improve the safety of children who walk and bicycle to school, and where it is safe, to encourage more children and parents to walk and bicycle to school. These programs have an added benefit of being a great way for kids to become involved in improving their communities, while getting physical activity along the way.

Georgia's Safe Routes to School program supports school-based Safe Routes to School programs through partnerships with the Resource Center, and offers grants to local governments to improve the walking and bicycling conditions to schools. SRTS programs can involve a wide cross section of community stakeholders, including parents, students, school administrators and teachers, elected officials, business leaders, child health advocates, law enforcement personnel, and engineers, among others. Safe Routes to School programs should include some or all of activities that

- Make streets and intersections safer for walking and bicycling
- Encourage kids to walk and bike
- Teach kids and parents about safe ways to walk and bike
- Measure the number of kids who are walking and biking as a result of the program activities
- Respond to parent-raised concerns about safety and health
- Change driver, walker and bicyclist behavior as they travel together

These SRTS objectives are often thought of as a set of "5 Es"—education, encouragement, enforcement, engineering, and evaluation. Future issues of Wayfinding will focus on each of these Es and in turn, and will highlight successful strategies. Let us know if you have a successful story to share about the Safe Routes to School program at your school by calling our hotline at 1-877-GDOT-W2S [1-877-436-8927].