

Hopping on the Bike
Train:

A Guide to Get your Bike Train Rolling



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Acknowledgements

This guide was created by WALKSacramento’s Safe Routes to School team. WALKSacramento is a nonprofit planning and advocacy organization that improves quality of life and health equity through community-centered policy and systems change in land use, transportation, and community development. WALKSacramento is a leading organizer of Safe Routes to School programs throughout the 6-county Sacramento region.

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Introduction

About the Guide

“Hopping on the Bike Train: A Guide to Get Your Bike Train Rolling” is a comprehensive manual with step-by-step instructions, case studies, and resources designed for K-12 school staff who are interested in establishing a Bike Train at their school.¹ There is no “one” or “right” way to run a Bike Train program and thus, this guide is not meant to be prescriptive, and instead, seeks to offer support and suggestions for planning and implementation.

Companion Resources

Check out the companion resource “Lace Up Your Shoes: A Guide to Get Your Walking School Bus Moving” to learn more about how to get a Walking School Bus program started at your school. The difference between Walking School Buses and Bike Trains and what potential hybrid programs can look like are outlined in the FAQs section below.

A Note on COVID-19

Nearly every aspect of life as we know it, including learning, socializing, and staying active, has been impacted by COVID-19 and we may continue to see its effects for years to come. With many schools beginning to return to in-person learning or exploring hybrid models, this guide includes tips and guidelines for rolling out a Bike Train program smoothly and safely. As schools navigate transportation budget cuts, Bike Trains can help fill those gaps and offer safe alternatives for parents who are concerned about allowing their children to ride the bus.

Contact Info

Contact WALKSacramento with any questions, comments, or program support needs at contact@walksacramento.org or at (916) 446 – 9255.

¹ This guide has been adapted from the Safe Routes to School National Partnership’s “The Wheels on the Bike Go Round and Round: How to Get a Bike Train Rolling at Your School.” You can access the toolkit here: <https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/resources/toolkit/bike-train-toolkit>

Bike Trains: FAQs and Benefits

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What are Bike Trains?

A Bike Train is an organized group of children and adults who cycle to and/or from school along established routes. Bike Trains provide students who may live beyond walking distance from school a safe and fun way to get to school.

What about other kinds of wheels?

Despite their name, Bike Trains do not have to be exclusive to bicycles only. You may decide to encourage other types of wheels, such as scooters, skateboards, and wheelchairs.

What ages are Bike Trains appropriate for?

Bike Trains are typically catered towards upper elementary and middle schoolers (4th – 8th grade); however, it is more than possible to welcome younger and older students—you might just need to adjust the level of support. For instance, high schoolers may not need adult supervision and can instead organize student-led biking groups. Older students can also get involved by volunteering to be Bike Train Leaders for younger children. Skip to “Engaging High School Students” under Step 3 (p. 13) for more ideas.

What is the difference between Bike Trains and Walking School Buses?

A Walking School Bus (WSB) is very similar to a Bike Train. WSBs are organized groups of children and adults who walk to or from school together along established routes. Like Bike Trains, WSBs can also vary from suggested routes to formal programs with designated stops and schedules. Some schools may offer both programs separately or they may have hybrid programs where children who are biking or rolling are welcomed to join the WSB. WSBs require slightly less planning, so you might choose to start out with a WSB to test and establish the concept and then eventually roll out a Bike Train.

Are Bike Trains COVID-19 Safe?

Given strict adherence to safety protocols and precautions, Bike Trains can be a safer alternative to traditional bussing due to increased ventilation and distance between children. Guidelines for how to keep students and volunteers safe and healthy are outlined in “COVID-19 Protocols and Safety Tips” under Step 3 (p. 10).



Figure 1: The bike racks are full after a successful bike train at Bridgeway Island Elementary in West Sacramento!

What are some benefits of Bike Trains?

Bike trains offer many benefits for students, families, and the community alike.

Physical Activity

Cycling is a more vigorous activity than walking, providing greater health benefits, including better heart health, cholesterol, and glucose metabolism.² Bike Trains also promote regular exercise, which can support immune health and improve respiratory function—critical benefits during COVID-19—and build long-term healthy habits.³ According to a national longitudinal health study conducted in 2008, children who bicycle are 48% less likely to become overweight as adults.⁴

Safety

In addition to improved health outcomes, Bike Trains also build students' knowledge and confidence related to road safety, skills that are critical at younger ages when walking and biking *and* at older ages when many students begin driving.

Educational

Health benefits associated with regular cycling, including improved focus and sleep quality, can lead to positive educational outcomes as well.⁵ When kids get to school by bike, they arrive alert and ready to learn. Bike Trains can also reduce absenteeism and tardiness because students get excited about arriving on time to meet the Bike Train.

Social and Emotional

COVID-19 has been extremely disruptive, isolating, and stressful for everyone, and children especially. Bike Trains promote regular exercise and provide a safe and fun way for students to interact with their peers, both of which have been shown to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression so that kids can focus on what's really important: learning and having fun.⁶



Figure 2: It's all girl power for the Bridgeway Island Bike Club!

Environmental

Families can reduce carbon emissions—and save money—by opting for Bike Trains. Bike Trains reduce the amount of traffic and congestion around schools, which can improve air quality and students'

² ["Bicycle Trains, Cycling, and Physical Activity: A Pilot Cluster RCT"](#) (American Journal of Preventative Medicine); [U.S. Bicycling Participation Benchmarking Study Report](#)" (Breakaway Research Group)

³ ["Cycling keeps your immune system young, study finds"](#) (The Guardian); ["How Cycling Affects Your Lungs"](#) (CyclePlan)

⁴ ["Adolescent Physical Activities as Predictors of Young Adult Weight"](#) (JAMA Pediatrics)

⁵ ["Exercise and Insomnia"](#) (Sleep Foundation); ["Benefits of Biking – Help Kids Focus!"](#) (AllKidsBike)

⁶ ["Exercise Benefits Children Physically and Mentally"](#) (Healthline)

health. Air pollution can cause asthma and other respiratory issues, especially for young lungs, which has become one of the leading causes of school absenteeism.⁷

Supporting Lower-Income Families

The wonderful and numerous benefits of Bike Trains should be accessible by any student who is interested in participating. However, bicycles and bicycle maintenance can be cost-prohibitive for some families. If this is a challenge at your school, you might consider ways to reduce financial barriers by contacting local bike shops to see if they can donate any bikes or helmets or host a tune-up event. You can also reach out to WALKSacramento to discuss opportunities for helmet distributions, tune-up events and purchasing low-cost bikes.

How to Get Started

Now that you are familiar with what Bike Trains are and the benefits they can provide, it's time to dive into how you can get one started and, most importantly, how you can keep it going. We have broken down the process into five steps, complete with additional resources at the end of each section, to help you get rolling. Feel free to use the sample timeline below to help your planning team stay on track as you move through the process.

1. Lay Down the Tracks: Identifying Key Stakeholders and Generating Support
2. Set Your Schedule: Determining the Timing of Your Bike Train
3. Assemble Your Train: Recruitment, Training, and Planning Your Route
4. Leave the Station: Kicking Off Your Bike Train and Expecting the Unexpected
5. Keep Pedaling: Sustaining the Momentum

Sample Timeline

Task	Timeline	By Whom
Begin Bike Train discussions	2 months prior	Parents, School Staff
Identify a meeting location	1 month prior	Parents, School Staff
Set a date and recurring schedule	1 month prior	Parents, School Staff
Recruit and train volunteers	2-3 weeks prior	Parents, School Staff
Create a flyer with route map, date, and time	2 weeks prior	Parents, School Staff
Host a Bike Train event	Day of Event	Parents, School Staff
Thank volunteers. Assess what worked and what didn't to prepare for the next Bike Train event.	1-3 days after	Parents, School Staff

⁷ "[Asthma](#)" (Center for Disease Control)

Step 1: Lay Down the Tracks

Identifying Key Stakeholders and Generating Support

Planning Ahead

Set your Bike Train up for success by beginning the planning process early. There is no exact science, but we recommend starting to plan roughly two months in advance of your ideal start date. Not sure when you might want to start your train? May is Bike Month can be a great opportunity to roll your Bike Train into any existing cycling-related activities happening at your school or in your community.

Identifying Key Stakeholders and Assembling Your Bike Train Team

Once you set your target date, it's time to identify and recruit key stakeholders who will be critical to ensuring your Bike Train program gets up and running smoothly. You will want to select a Team Captain to be the main point person for the program. The Team Captain should be someone who has direct ties to the school, such as a teacher or principal. Other key stakeholders who you might want to consider including in your Bike Train Team are Parent Teacher Associations/Organizations (PTAs and PTOs), neighborhood associations, local bicycle shops, clubs, or organizations, city and county law enforcement, student groups (i.e. student council or safety patrol), and health and transportation departments. Use the sample worksheet below to help guide you as you think through who you want to recruit for your Bike Train Team.

My Bike Train Team

WALKSacramento SRTS Coordinator (Optional): _____

Team Captain: _____

School Staff Representative: _____

Parent Representative: _____

Student Representative: _____

Community/Enforcement Representative: _____

Cycling Organization Representative: _____

Other: _____

RECRUITMENT AND PLANNING RESOURCES

- ▶ [Bike Train Planning Worksheet](#) (Safe Routes Partnership)
- ▶ [Bike Train Information Flyer](#) (Safe Routes Partnership)

Step 2: Set Your Schedule

Determining the Timing of Your Bike Train

Now that you have recruited and trained students and volunteers and finalized your route, it's time to start hammering out the nuts and bolts of your Bike Train Program. There are a few key questions you should consider as a group:

How formal will your Bike Train be?

Your Bike Train can be as casual or formal as you like. It could start more casual (i.e. suggesting a route and schedule that parents and students can follow on their own) and eventually become more formalized (i.e. student registration, a formalized route, and schedule, etc.). The advantages and limitations of both approaches are summarized in the table below:

Informal		Formal	
Advantages	Limitations	Advantages	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less planning involved• Reduces barriers or “extra steps” to participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More difficult to track program participation and growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Easier to track program participation and growth• Increases accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More planning involved• Potentially discourages participation by formalizing registration process• Less flexible

Figure 3: Advantages and Limitations of Informal and Formal Bike Train Programs

How often will your Bike Train operate?

The frequency of your program may depend on how formal or casual you want your Bike Train to be. In any case, you will want to assess the capacity of your Bike Train Team to determine the group's ability to run the program on a daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly, or annual basis.

What times will your bike train be available?

Your Bike Train could operate in the mornings, after school, or both. Factors you might want to consider include:

- ▶ ONLY MORNINGS: How will students get home?
- ▶ ONLY AFTERNOONS: How might after-school programs and parent availability impact students' and volunteer's availability?
- ▶ BOTH: Depending on the formality of your program, will you have the same volunteers operate the morning and afternoon shifts or will you have separate AM and PM teams?

How many routes will your Bike Train have?

The number of routes your Bike Train will have depends on your Bike Train Team's capacity and how formal your program is. You could have several suggested routes or you could have fewer established routes with set schedules, volunteers, and student participants. Either way, starting with one route can help your Team test out the concept, work out any kinks, and gauge interest and support.

Will your Bike Train have an age restriction?

As mentioned above, Bike Trains are typically targeted at students between 4th and 8th grade, but they can be a great fit for students of any age. You may want to begin your Bike Train with older students and then open it up to younger students once the program is more established.

Step 3: Assemble Your Train

Recruitment, Training, and Planning Your Route

Recruiting and Training Volunteers

With your Team assembled, you are ready to start promoting your program! In this section, you will learn how to:

- ▶ Recruit and train students and volunteers
- ▶ Identify and plan your Bike Train route(s)

Keep in mind that the following steps may not follow a linear process, or in the order they appear below. You know your school community best and will be able to determine the order of operations that makes the most sense for you.

How many volunteers are needed?

According to guidelines set by the National Safe Routes Partnership and the Center for Disease Control, each Bike Train should have at least two Bike Train Leaders (one at the front, one at the back), with a maximum of six students for every two adults, or a Student-to-Leader ratio of 6:2.⁸ For younger grade levels (Kindergarten – 1st), a ratio of 2:3 is recommended. You will want to recruit as many volunteers as you can to prepare for inevitable absences and turnover. Check out the “Volunteer and Liability Resources” section below (p. 11) for some sample materials to help you with recruitment.

Who can be a Bike Train Leader?

Bike Train Leaders are adults in the community who volunteer to lead Bike Trains. Depending on the structure of your program, Leaders can also help with implementation and promotion. Most programs begin with sourcing their volunteers from staff and parents at their school, however, local high schools’ bicycling groups, community service organizations, bike shops, and retirees are also potential volunteer reserves.

A Qualified Bike Train Leader:

- ▶ Possesses bicycle skills (i.e. comfortable riding, basic maintenance skills are a plus) and traffic safety knowledge
- ▶ Has access to a working bicycle and safety equipment (i.e. helmet)
- ▶ Works well with children (i.e. patient, authoritative)

⁸ For more information on CDC guidelines: <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/the-walking-school-bus-a-downloadable-guide>; For more information on Bike Trains: <https://walksacramento.sharepoint.com/sites/WestSacramentoSRTS2.0/Shared%20Documents/Project%20Files/3.2%20Establish%20walking%20school%20busses%20and%20bike%20clubs/Resources/SRTS%20Biketrain%20Toolkit.pdf>

Onboarding and Training Bike Train Leaders

It is up to you how you choose to vet your volunteers. Your school may already have protocols in place for bringing on volunteers, such as background checks, fingerprinting, etc. In any case, having a Bike Train Leader Agreement and Code of Conduct can help ensure accountability and clearly lay out expectations. See the “Volunteer and Liability Resources” section below (p. 11) for sample agreements.

Once you have your volunteers confirmed, we recommend hosting a training (sometime during the month before your target start date) to verify their cycling skills and review the structure and procedures for leading Bike Trains. Contact your local Safe Routes to School or walking/biking organization if you would like help facilitating the training. If you are in the Sacramento area, you can contact WALKSacramento. A basic training should cover the following elements:

- ▶ An introduction to Bike Trains and their benefits
- ▶ A program overview (i.e. dates, structure, etc.)
- ▶ Leader information (traffic safety information, expectations, protocols, logistics)
- ▶ Optional: Ride through one of the potential Bike Train routes

A sample training agenda has been provided in the “Volunteer and Liability Resources” section below.

COVID-19 Protocols and Safety Tips

Your volunteer training should also include COVID-19 protocols and tips to ensure all volunteers and students stay safe and healthy. The following precautionary measures are based on CDC guidelines and best practices from SRTS programs across the country, however, your school may have its own procedures already in place.

- ▶ Leaders and students wear CDC-approved face masks.⁹
- ▶ Leaders and students will ride single file and stay six feet apart (or the equivalent of one adult bicycle plus one wheel) at all times.
- ▶ Maintain small group sizes (refer to “How many volunteers are needed?” above).
- ▶ Leaders and students must stay home when they are sick and may return to the Bike Train after 72 hours with no symptoms or follow their local school district’s health and safety protocols.
- ▶ No sharing of materials between students and leaders.
- ▶ Students and leaders use hand sanitizer before entering the Bike Train.

Materials

Bike train programs do not require a lot of gear to get started. However, here is a list of key materials, you may want to consider:

- ▶ Orange or yellow safety vests for volunteers
- ▶ Stop or slow paddles or flags for your bike
- ▶ Bike Train poster or signs (these can be handmade!)
- ▶ Multi-tool and fix a flat pocket kits

A Quick Note on Liability

Like with anything concerning the safety and wellbeing of children, you, or your volunteers, may have some apprehensions regarding liability. Fortunately, the risk of liability is small due to considerable protections under federal law for volunteers in most states. Liability risk can be further minimized by

⁹ ["Your Guide to Masks"](#) (Center for Disease Control)

properly training Bike Train Leaders and putting procedures in place to promote the safety of students, such as the steps and procedures outlined in this guide. More information on liability can be found in the resources section below.

VOLUNTEER AND LIABILITY RESOURCES

- ▶ [Request for Bike Train Leaders](#) (Safe Routes Partnership)
- ▶ [Bike Train Leader Information and Signup Form](#) (Safe Routes Partnership)
- ▶ [Bike Train Leader Agreement and Code of Conduct](#) (Safe Routes Partnership)
- ▶ [Bike Train Training Agenda](#) (Safe Routes Partnership)
- ▶ [Safe Routes to School: Minimizing Your Liability Risk in California](#) (ChangeLab Solutions)

Identifying and Planning Your Bike Train Route(s)

Where your routes are, how many you have, and their length depends on several factors outlined below. Discuss each question/consideration below with your Team to help you draft some initial route ideas and get you closer to creating your official Bike Route Map. However, before you begin your discussion, it is important to re-assess the group's (including volunteers') capacity before deciding how many routes you would like to have and how structured you want your Bike Train(s) to be.

Where do students live and how long should the route(s) be?

If you have access to student address data, you can use it to make rough estimates for where students are located (and how many) within biking distance in school. If you do not have access to address data, you can work with your school administration to identify locations and routes that might work well. When determining the distance routes should be, keep in mind older elementary school students and middle school students (4th – 8th) can bike about 2 miles at a standard pace and younger elementary students (Kindergarten – 3rd) can bike about a half-mile to a mile at a standard pace. Thus, your target age group will determine the length of your route.

Testing and Timing Your Route(s)

Team members and potential volunteers should test ride the selected route(s) during school commute hours to get a better sense of traffic volume, availability of cyclist infrastructure (i.e. bike lanes), and other conditions that could affect the comfort and safety of students. Inviting students on the ride, especially students with special needs and students with disabilities is also a good idea so you can gauge their experience and perspective.

As you test your route(s), you will want to pay close attention to timing so that you can create a schedule for your Bike Train(s). Be sure to factor in cycling speeds relative to age and ability, as well as other factors, such as inclement weather, that could affect timing.

Identifying Stops

Stops are optional. You may have a Bike Train that operates similar to a remote drop-off where there is one initial meeting point and a direct route to school. Or, you may have an initial meeting point with

stops along the way, similar to how a school bus operates. If you have a more formal program, you may have Bike Train Leaders check registered students off at each stop as they join the train.

Creating a Map

Create a map with the route(s), stops (if applicable), and pick-up/drop-off times for each stop or meeting location (see example flyer on the right). You can use the map to help promote the program as well by including a description of the Bike Train Program and its benefits, student expectations, contact information, and any registration information. You may also want to create translated versions of the map with any other primary languages that are spoken by students and parents at your school.

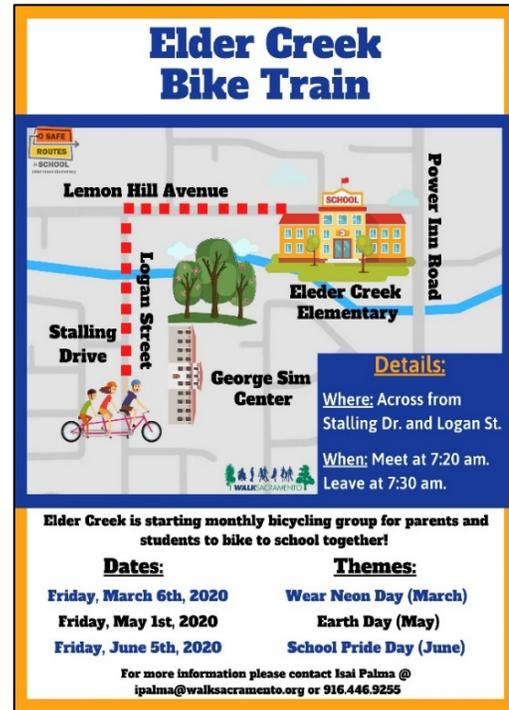


Figure 4: Example of a Bike Train Route

PLANNING YOUR ROUTE RESOURCES

- ▶ [Walk and Bicycle Audit Guide](#) (WALKSacramento)
- ▶ [Guide to Creating Walking Route Maps for Safe Routes to School](#) (Safe Routes Partnership)
- ▶ [Sample Bike Train Stop Schedule](#) (Safe Routes Partnership)

Recruiting Students

How you structure student participation is up to you. Student participation could range from promoting your map among families to requiring students to register. No matter how you envision your Bike Train, the steps below will help guide you through the process of recruiting students.

Promotion Avenues and Strategies

When recruiting students, you will of course want to reach students directly, but getting parents on board is equally important.

- ▶ Tips for reaching students: morning announcements, in-class presentations, bike rodeos, and other encouragement activities
- ▶ Tips for reaching parents: social media, newsletters, PTAs or PTOs, take-home packets, and emails

Registering Students

If you opt for a more formal program, you might consider creating a registration process. Registration can help promote accountability, track progress, and establish expectations. Even if you are opting for a more informal approach to your Bike Train, you may still want to create a simple interest form to keep for future reference.

Registered students should be provided with a take-home packet that includes the final route map and pick-up/drop-off schedule, and student and family expectations.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT RESOURCES

- ▶ [Bike Train Student Consent and Registration Form](#) (Safe Routes Partnership)
- ▶ [Bike Train Student Expectations](#) (Safe Routes Partnership; p. 13)
- ▶ [Bike Train Family Expectations](#) (Safe Routes Partnership)
- ▶ [Involving Students with Disabilities in SRTS](#) (Pedestrian & Bicycle Information Center)

Student Assessment and Training

To ensure students have the necessary skills and safety knowledge to participate in your Bike Train, you will want to provide some type of skills assessment or training. Please note this step is catered more towards formal Bike Trains. If you are opting for a more informal Bike Train program where students are biking independently along suggested routes, an assessment is not necessary. However, you still might want to include safety tips and information along with your map and promotional materials.

Your assessments and trainings can be as simple as a quick skills and equipment check and informal safety conversation between Bike Train Leaders and students on the first day of the Train *and/or* it can be an in-depth class, such as a Bike Rodeo.

Bike rodeos or bike skills clinics are fun bicycling education events that typically involve helmet fittings, traffic safety games, skits, and more. They can also easily be tied into physical education classes or after-school programs. While bike rodeos require a little more planning, they provide the opportunity to reach more students and get them excited

about your Bike Train. Contact WALKSacramento for help planning or facilitating your Bike Rodeo. More resources are included in the “Student Assessment and Training Resources” section on the next page.

Engaging High School Students

High school students likely do not require the same level of supervision and support as elementary and middle school students. Thus, your team might tap into a bicycling club, student government, or other student groups to help them get a student-led Bike Train going. Kick off the program with a bike audit workshop where students can get trained in conducting bike audits and help identify potential routes. Find more information on bike audits in the “Planning Your Route Resources” section above (p. 12).

CASE STUDY: Stonegate Elementary Bike Rodeo (West Sacramento, CA)

In May 2018, WALKSacramento hosted a bike rodeo in coordination with Stonegate Elementary PTO. PTO volunteers organized food trucks, additional health vendors. WALKSacramento and Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates provided helmets, a bike tune-up station for adults and kids, and a skills course. At the end of the rodeo, a community ride was held along the Clarksburg Branch Line Trail for families. Even the Mayor joined in the fun!



Figure 5: Students participate in bike drills at the Stonegate Elementary

STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND TRAINING RESOURCES

- [Bike Train Student Safety Cards](#) (Safe Routes Partnership)
- [Tips & Resources](#) (League of American Bicyclists)
- [Bike Rodeo Kit Quick Guide](#) (California Department of Health)

Step 4: Leave the Station

Kicking Off Your Bike Train and Expecting the Unexpected

Congratulations! You are officially ready to get rolling. To build excitement for your program and start with a bang, you will want to host some type of event, such as Bike to School Day. Contact WALKSacramento for tips and ideas for planning the event and coordinating fun competitions or challenges. We recommend promoting the event at least two weeks in advance using a variety of promotional strategies (i.e. email blasts, Facebook events, flyers, etc.).

It's Up to Students to...

- Look both ways before crossing
- Walk on sidewalks
- Make sure drivers see you before you cross
- Obey pedestrian signals

It's Up to Parents to...

- Use extra caution when children are near roadways
- Be alert near school zones
- Not stop in or block visibility of crosswalks
- Not pass cars stopped for pedestrians

Depende de los estudiantes...

- Mirar a ambos lados antes de cruzar las calles
- Caminar sobre las banquetas o andenes
- Asegurarse de que los conductores los vean antes de cruzar las calles
- Obedecer las señales de peatones

Depende de los padres...

- Tener más precaución cuando hayan niños cerca de los caminos o calzadas
- Estar alerta cerca de las áreas escolares
- No detenerse dentro de los cruces de calles o bloquear la visibilidad en los cruces de calles
- No sobrepasar a los vehículos que se detienen para dejar pasar a los peatones

For More Information Contact:
Alicia Brown, abrown@walksacramento.org

**WILL C. WOOD MIDDLE
WALK & ROLL TO SCHOOL DAY IS MAY 3
DIA DE CAMINAR Y BICICLETA A ESCUELA 3 DE MAYO**

THE FIRST PERIOD CLASS WITH THE MOST STUDENTS WHO WALK, BIKE, SCOOT, SKATE, ETC TO SCHOOL WILL WIN A CLASS PRIZE!

★ Check in at the front of the school on Lemon Hill Ave or at the back of the school on Ortega St.
Revisar en el frente de la escuela en Lemon Hill Ave o en la parte de atrás de la escuela de Ortega St.

Bring Your Bike, Skateboard, Scooter, or Your Own Two Feet!

Where/Dónde: Capitol City Seventh-Day Adventist Church (5701 Lemon Hill Ave, Sacramento, CA 95824)
When/Cuándo: Meet at 7:40 am. Leave at 7:50 am.

Legend | Leyenda

- 👤 Group meeting location / Lugar de reunión
- ➡ Group route / Ruta
- ⊗ Cross with caution / Cruzar con precaución
- ★ Check-in station / Estación de registrar

Figure 6: Example Walk & Roll to School Day Flyer from Will C. Wood Middle School

Expecting the Unexpected

In the event of...

Leader Absences

Be sure to establish backup procedures, such as setting up a phone call chain or having substitute volunteers on call, to step in when needed.

Inclement Weather

Given Sacramento’s temperate climate, inclement weather typically entails rain, heat, or smoke from wildfires. Use your best judgment to keep students and leaders safe during these periods, which may include temporarily suspending the Bike Train.

Student Injury or Equipment Malfunction

If a student has to stay back or slow down due to injury or equipment malfunction (i.e. a flat tire), create a plan ahead of time with your Leaders. This may entail having one Leader stay and the other Leader continuing with the rest of the group or it may entail a parent coming to pick the child up. Create a plan that works best for you and your Leaders.

Varying Ages and Abilities

If you have student participants with a range of ages and abilities, consider splitting the Bike Train into groups or creating routes with different lengths so that students can ride at similar speeds. The closer together the Train is (with the exception of the COVID-19 guidelines outlined in Step 3), the easier it is for Leaders to supervise and keep everyone safe.

Other Potential Challenges

Consider discussing plans and procedures for addressing the following likely challenges:

- ▶ Not enough Leaders
- ▶ Students ignoring safety rules
- ▶ More (or unregistered) students show up to participate

Step 5: Keep Pedaling

Sustaining the Momentum

Now that you’ve got your Bike Train up and running, here are a few fun ideas to sustain the momentum:

Overhead Announcement

The overhead announcement should be delivered a few days before the event date. The announcement can be done by school staff, a parent volunteer, or students. Sample language:

*“Good afternoon students,
Our monthly Bike train will be tomorrow morning! Join us **[insert bike train location and meeting details]**. Bring a family member or a friend! Every student who bikes, rolls, or scoots with us will receive a prize. Remember to wear your helmet”*

Frequent Walk, Roll, and Bike Club Punch Cards

The template provided includes cards sized 3 inches by 4 inches. Here is how to use the punch card template:

1. Edit the template to suit your needs
2. Print the cards
3. Laminate the cards
4. Use a hole punch to punch a hole on the blue dot circle

5. Use a string or chain to make the card into a backpack key chain
6. Distribute to Students

○ Frequent Walk, Roll, and Bike Club Punch Card



Name: _____

Teacher: _____

○ Frequent Walk, Roll, and Bike Club Punch Card



Name: _____

Teacher: _____

○ Frequent Walk, Roll, and Bike Club Punch Card



Name: _____

Teacher: _____

○ Frequent Walk, Roll, and Bike Club Punch Card



Name: _____

Teacher: _____

○ Frequent Walk, Roll, and Bike Club Punch Card



Name: _____

Teacher: _____

○ Frequent Walk, Roll, and Bike Club Punch Card



Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Themed Rides & Group P(RIDE)

Spice up your rides by organizing Bike Train “spirit days” where students dress up given various themes (i.e. neon, school colors, etc.). If you have multiple Bike Trains, you can instill Bike Train pride by collaborating with Leaders and students to create a team name, mascot, etc. You could even hold competitions between Trains!

Bike Train Leader Appreciation

Bike Train Leader Appreciation can work to both build connections between students and their Leaders and promote Leader retention by recognizing their time and efforts. Possible appreciation activities include:

- ▶ Thank-you cards
- ▶ Taking photos of students with their favorite leaders and posting them on school social media and on school websites.
- ▶ Certificates of appreciation
- ▶ MVP awards
- ▶ Paper plate awards
- ▶ Gift cards and stipends

Leader and Student Evaluations/Comment Cards

Distribute surveys and comment forms to leaders, students, and families to see how the Bike Train is going for them and if they have any ideas on how to improve it, especially if your Bike Train occurs on a more regular basis (i.e. daily, weekly, monthly). Evaluation and adjustment is the key to any sustainable program.

- ▶ [Bike Train Leader Comment Form](#) (Safe Routes Partnership)
- ▶ [Bike Train Student Survey](#) (Safe Routes Partnership)
- ▶ [Bike Train Family Survey](#) (Safe Routes Partnership)

May is Bike Month National Bike to School Day

Bike to School Day is the biking equivalent of Walk to School Day and generates excitement and a sense of celebration for the end of the school year. Bike to School Day does not have to focus only on bikes, and students should be encouraged to walk or take other forms of active transportation such as scootering or skateboarding. Similar to Walk to School Day, students can meet adult volunteers at a specified drop-off location and walk or bike together to school. School staff, parents, and community members can greet students when they arrive at school and hand out prizes. This event is a great opportunity to partner with local law enforcement and other community groups who may be able to provide helmets or conduct helmet fittings.

National Bike to School Day is usually held on the second Wednesday of May. You can hold your event at any time or choose to hold it on National Bike to School Day to be part of the broader national movement.

- ▶ [Build Your Own Bike to School Day](#) (WALKSacramento)

Sample Email and All Call Announcement Language for Bike to School Day

Automated Calls

Deliver this message two and three days before your walk/bike event.

“Hello, parents,

Dust off your walking shoes and your bicycles and ride with your children to school on [INSERT DATE]. Participating students will receive a prize when they arrive at school. See you out there [DATE] morning and remember safety first! Bikers, scooters, and skaters must wear a helmet.”

Overhead Announcement

Deliver the message at the end of the day, one and two days before your walk/bike event.

“Good afternoon students, Walk, ride, scoot, or skate to school this [INSERT DATE] and receive a prize! Make your ride to school a fun one! Remember safety first! Bikers, scooters, and skaters must wear a helmet!”

School Website Message

Post the message beginning one week before your walk/bike event.

“WALK, BIKE, SCOOT, OR SKATE! Students who walk, ride, or roll to school on [INSERT DATE] will receive a prize when they get to school. Join the fun and help your children make the healthy choice to get to and from school.”

School or Parent Teacher Group Facebook Message

Send to the office staff or PTO/A president and instruct them to post the message two days before your walk/bike event.

“Walk, ride or roll to school on [INSERT DATE]! Participating students will receive goodies in the morning when they arrive at school. Happy walking, riding, and rolling!”

Parent Teacher Group Email

Send to the PTO/A president and instruct them to send the email two days before your walk/bike event.

“Hello, parents,

Dust off your walking shoes and your bicycles and walk or ride with your children to school on [INSERT DATE]. Participating students will receive a prize when they arrive at school. See you out there [DATE] morning and remember safety first! Bikers, scooters, and skaters must wear a helmet. If you would like to help volunteer on future walk and ride days, please contact [SRTS COORDINATOR] for more information. Happy walking and riding!”