

Bike to School

Overview

Similar to [Walk to School](#) programs, Bike to School programs are a great way to help kids get the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day. A bike to school program is great for schools to promote active transportation along with a social opportunity for parents and students to connect outside of school hours and allow students to improve their bicycle safety skills. Programs frequently are structured to take into consideration the 5 E's of safe routes to school. The Five E's of Safe Routes to School include: Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement, and Evaluation.



- **Education** - to teach pedestrian and bicycle safety
- **Encouragement** - to promote active transportation through events, such as walk and bike to school days
- **Engineering** - to improve the built environment to be more conducive for walking and biking
- **Enforcement** - to improve safety through partnership with law enforcement
- **Evaluation** - to assess, plan and implement programs that will improve participation and safety

Take Action

- Organize a **Bike Train**. A bike train is an organized group of students and adults who bicycle to and from school together. The biking group makes designated stops to pick up more students on the way to school and home at the end of the day.
 - Bike trains can be organized as a formal or informal event. Just make sure everyone is safe and having fun being physically active! Determine routes for the bike train with input from school administrators, parents, and other stakeholders. Make sure routes have a safe place for students to bike.
 - Utilize components of [Walk to School](#) programs such as remote drop off or crossing the street programs as a part of your Bike program as well. You may even consider implementing a hybrid Walk and Bike to School program!
- Secure buy-in from your school's administration to implement the **Bikeology** curriculum at your school. Bikeology is an easy-to-use resource for teachers and recreation specialists to teach bicycle safety for students in grades 6th-12th. Pre-teens and teens are more likely to use a bike as a means of transportation. Help them be safe while biking!
 - The curriculum includes lessons and assessments for skills and knowledge along with a guide to share with parents to support bicycle safety, including assistance on selecting an appropriate bicycle and helmet for their child. See resources below for more information!
 - Bikes are vehicles that require responsibility. Stress the importance of bicycle safety education, and age-appropriate bicycle skills and the responsibilities of being a safe biker.
- Host a **Bike Rodeo** to conduct bicycle safety demonstrations to kickstart the launch of a Bike to School program.
 - Bike rodeos are a fun and effective way to teach bicycle safety and to encourage physical activity. Bike rodeos are typically one-day events that offer bicycle safety inspections, talks about state bike laws, policies and efforts, and give students a chance to practice their skills via activity stations in a safe and controlled environment.
 - Determine the best day and time for your school to host the bike rodeo. Bike rodeos are usually offered on Saturdays to accommodate

parents' schedules. However, a rodeo can also be hosted during the week or during a special, school day assembly.

- Determine the location and age-appropriate course structure. Typically, bike rodeos are held in a large parking lot that allows for drawn chalk lines to simulate streets, intersections, crosswalks, and stop signs.
- Consider your agenda for the day and discover ways you can engage local community members and volunteers. Your agenda could look something like this:
 - Welcome statement by the school administration, guest speakers, bike experts, and, if possible, police officers.
 - Opening sessions may include topics such as the importance of bike safety, state-specific laws and policies, bike inspections and repairs, and the necessary steps to finding the right helmet and bike.
 - Rotate through small group stations that cover topics such as starting and stopping, balancing on a bike, rules of the road, and courses to practice skills like sudden swerves, emergency stops, and hand signals.
 - Award participants with certifications of attendance. Maybe a helmet giveaway contest!

Social Emotional Health Highlights

Activities such as these help students explore...

Self-Awareness and Self-Management: Biking serves as a great opportunity for mindfulness and self-reflection. Not only does it get your blood flowing, but it also gets kids outside in nature which can serve as a refreshing environment to reflect on one's day and tool for better stress management

Relationship Skills: Forming a bike to school group can lead to social benefits which extend far beyond the obvious benefits of increased physical activity. Biking to school with a group of peers and parents provides opportunities for children to build relationships with neighbors and work together as a part of a team to make it home

safely. Think of bike to school movements as a social opportunity for both children and parents to talk about their day and share amongst one another.

Tips



Starting small is okay! Start doing Bike to School days once a month until you can build awareness and increase participation. Promote, promote, promote! Promote the program during Parent Teacher Association meetings, staff meetings, back-to-school packets, morning announcements and flyers around the school



Not sure when you should get started? Consider piloting or launching your Bike to School initiative during [National Bike to School Day](#). (May each year).



Create and maintain safety guidelines. For example: Determine adult per child ratio (The CDC recommendation is 1:3 for children under 10; 1:6 for children over 10), ensure adults are at the start and end of the biking group, and confirm that students have basic transportation safety knowledge.



Be mindful of students with mobility, medical, cognitive, sensory, and social – psychological needs. Schools should use their discretion when determining how to best support students participating in these programs.



Designate a Safe Routes to School champion in your school building to be responsible for overseeing the program. Encourage them to reach out to a Safe Routes to School partner in your state for resources, technical assistance and support. Be



Organize and train parent and community volunteers who can help chaperone the bike to school programs and events. Clearly outline their roles and responsibilities. You may also consider recruiting participation from older students to be leaders

prepared. Have extra supplies on hand in case of emergencies such as first aid kits. Consider providing brightly colored t-shirts or vests to parent and community volunteers so they can be seen and identified as Bike to School Ambassadors.

and role models for Bike to School programs, serving as crossing guards and participants.



Map the routes and drop off points for each program or event. Take time to find the quickest and safest route to ensure students are safe and on time for school. Create a flyer with route, drop-off locations, timeframes, and other important information to be sent home with students.



Develop a plan to ensure your students' bikes are safe and secure. Do you have an available space at your school? Turn it into a bike room! School staff or parents can monitor the room in the morning, lock it during the day and open the room after school. Install bike racks! Determine the best location for bike racks, the number of racks needed, and which types of racks would be best. Consider that some students may use scooters or skateboards and will also need storage.



Get help through donations and funding! [Apply for a school grant](#) to raise funds to purchase bike racks and implement bike programs. Identify and collaborate with local bike shops. They are the experts! Let them know about the program or event and ask for their support. They can help you organize the

can help you organize the logistics, identify equipment needs, determine safety rules to review, and help at events by planning a bike course or bike stations.

For more activities and ideas like this one, be sure to [sign up for our news and updates](#). And if you like what you see, please [donate to support our work](#) creating more ways to help build a healthier future for kids.

Additional Resources

[The National Center for Safe Routes to School serves](#)

[Walk and Bike to Schools](#)

[The National Center for Bicycle & Walking](#)

[Pedestrian & Bicycle Information Center](#)

[Funding options for bike rack \(USDOT\)](#)

[Bike Rack tip sheet](#)

[Tips on Organizing a Bike Train](#)

[Bike Train Guidelines and Templates \(](#)

[Bikeology curriculum Part 1 \(SHAPE America\)](#)

[Bikeology curriculum Part 2 \(SHAPE America\)](#)

[Bikeology guide for parents \(SHAPE America\)](#)

[Cornell University's An Organizers Guide to Bicycle Rodeos](#)

[Safe Kids Bike Rodeo Station Guide](#)

[Utah Department of Health Bicycle Rodeo](#)

Related Activities

Get Moving on Bike to School Day

Whether you have wheels or not, celebrate this exciting day with movement before, during and after school.

Walking Programs

Walking is an activity that is easy and accessible to most students, staff and parents and can be made into an engaging, interesting activity in many ways.

Walk to School

One great way to encourage students to get active before school is to create a walk-to-school program. Adult chaperones monitor active students as they make their way to school!

Celebrate Walk to School Day

International Walk to School Day is held each year in October. It's a great chance to get your school psyched about physical activity.