



Walk, Ride, and Roll Webinar Series

Let Them Lead: Engaging High School Students in Safe Routes Projects
Wednesday, May 10th, 2023

A group of five children are riding along a paved path. In the foreground, a boy in a red shirt and a bright yellow-green helmet sits on a black three-wheeled scooter. Next to him, a boy in a black t-shirt and a green helmet with a watermelon pattern stands on a silver scooter. To his right, a boy in a blue t-shirt and a helmet with a Union Jack pattern stands on a skateboard. In the background, another boy in a blue plaid shirt and a red helmet rides a scooter, and a girl in a grey shirt and a light blue helmet walks. The path is bordered by a low stone wall and lush green foliage on the left, and a chain-link fence and more trees on the right. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

MISSION

The mission of the Safe Routes Partnership is to advance safe walking and rolling to and from schools and in everyday life, improving the health and well-being of people of all races, income levels, and abilities, and building healthy, thriving communities for everyone.



TODAY'S PRESENTERS

Kori Johnson, Program and Engagement Manager
Safe Routes Partnership
Washington, D.C.

Say hi in the chat!

- *Name, location, connection to Safe Routes*

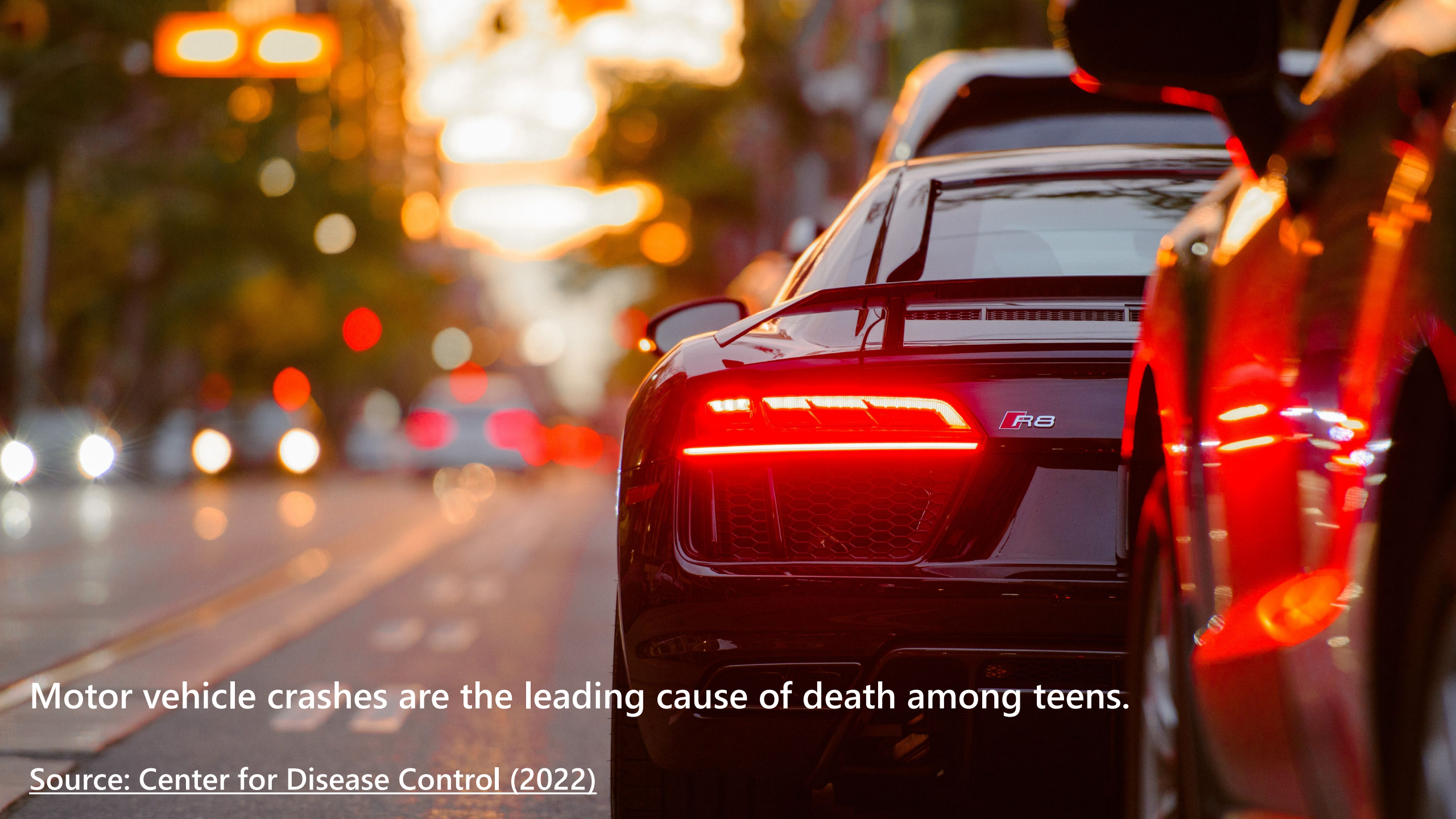
High school programs can look like...

- Student-led Walk and Roll to School Day
- Video PSA contest to encourage walking and rolling
- Air quality awareness campaign
- Vision Zero youth council
- Students on Safe Routes to School task force
- Students meeting with town council to advocate for sidewalk improvement project
- *Other ideas?*





Youth care about safe walking, riding, and rolling.



Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among teens.

Source: Center for Disease Control (2022)



Teens are getting their driver's license at lower rates than previous generations.

Source: The Washington Post (2023)

So what does this mean?

Increased interest in...

- Safe walking, biking, and scooting
- Public transit
- **Climate justice** recognizes the disproportionate impacts of climate change on low-income communities and communities of color around the world, the people and places least responsible for the problem.

[- University of California Center for Climate Justice](#)



So what does this mean?

More alternative transportation options...

- E-scooters
- E-bikes
- Skateboarding
- Roller skating and roller blading
- Ride-sharing





More options to connect and make an impact online.

So what does this mean?

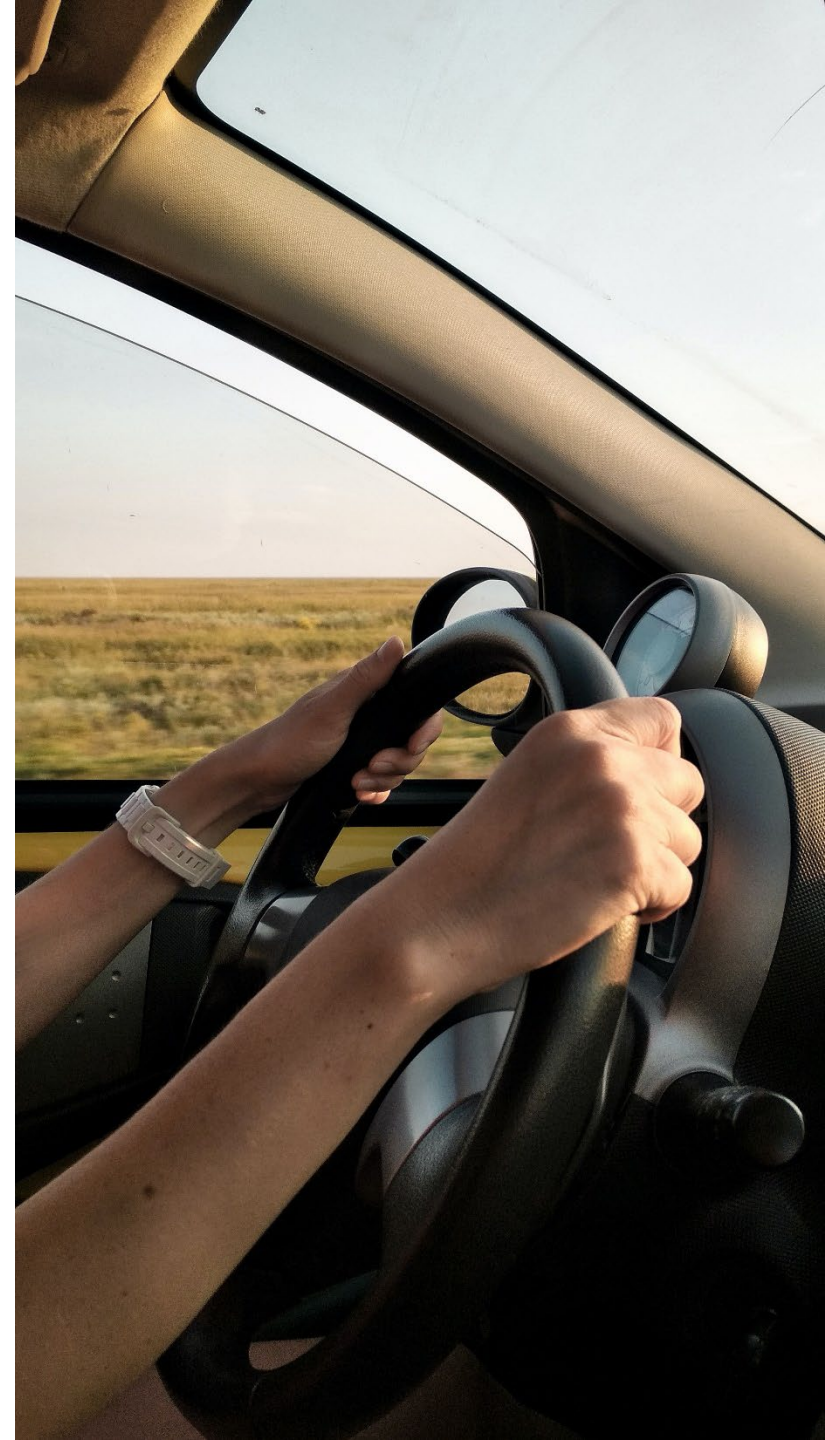
More opportunities to partner with youth

- Safe Routes to School
- Vision Zero
- Bike-ped advocacy
- Placemaking



Keep In Mind

- Some youth still want or need to drive
- Not all youth have access to transit
- Youth care about safe driving behaviors
- Young drivers care about people walking, riding, and rolling



Be honest about your ability and desire to work with high school students.

If not me, who?

- Dedicated high school program coordinator
- Youth serving organizations
- Sports teams
- School staff
- Libraries
- Parks and Recreation Department
- Social media





Get to know the school community.

Find a staff contact

- Teacher – P.E., Science, Digital Media, Health, Advisory
- Coach
- Club advisor
- Librarian



What are youth priorities? Ask them!

- Independence
- Traffic safety
- Personal safety
- School safety
- Climate justice
- Mental health
- *Chat: What other topics might be important to young people?*



How can you ask them?

- Tell them why you are asking
- Outreach tabling
- Survey or poll
- Comment board
- Talk to school staff
- Attend a student club meeting
- Social media



Use that information to...

- Align priorities
- Determine how you can help – Safe Routes to School can be part of a solution
 - Advice/Guidance
 - Program materials
 - Sharing information
 - Connecting teens with decision makers





Let youth lead.

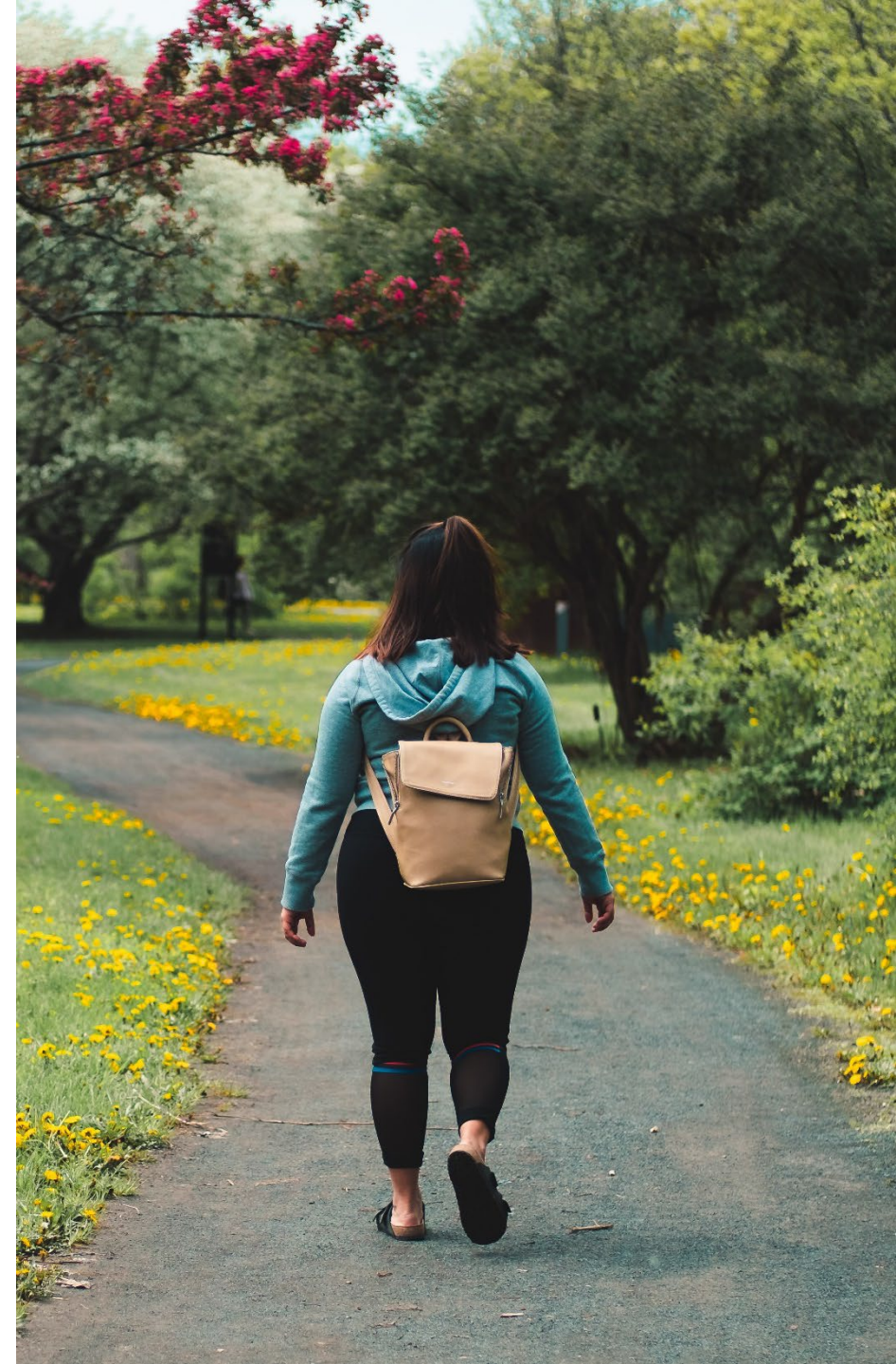
What does this look like?

- Playing an advisor or support role
- Youth directly implementing Safe Routes projects
- Youth are the Safe Routes champions
- Providing resources and materials
- Listening more



Atlanta Students Advocating for Pedestrians (ASAP)

- Student-led organization
- Advocates for infrastructure improvements
- Supports local Safe Routes to School projects
 - [Middle school tactical urbanism project](#)
- Engages elected officials and local leaders



Alameda County Safe Routes to School

- Over decade of high school programming
- Dedicated high school site coordinator
- Emphasis on transportation independence and climate justice

- [Reboot Your Commute](#)

- [Travel Training](#)

- [Youth Task Force](#)



Do you enjoy walking, biking or taking public transit? Are you concerned about how travel habits are contributing to climate change?

JOIN THE

YOUTH TASK FORCE!

- Be part of climate change solutions on your school campus
- Build community with students across Alameda County
- Organize active and shared transportation encouragement events

What's required of you?

- Attend quarterly task force meetings (currently virtual)
- Organize one or more Safe Routes events for your campus, such as International Walk and Roll to School Day, Creation for Transportation, or Bike to School Day

You'll receive community service hours for your time!

Submit an application at <https://tinyurl.com/youthtaskforce> or scan here:





National Organizations for Youth Safety (NYOS)

- Addresses health and safety
 - Road safety
 - Mobility justice
 - Personal safety
 - Mental health
- Teens and young adults
- Shifts conversation and power to youth
- Inclusive and diverse



Walking Wednesdays

High School students lead a walking school bus in Pryor Creek, Oklahoma.

Students received training from local experts, city staff, the school district, and Cherokee Nation.





Connect to what teens care about.

Climate Action Pathways for Schools (Porterville, CA)

- Lack of active transportation infrastructure
- Sustainability concerns – energy, waste, transportation
- Walk audits
- Surveys
- Community engagement



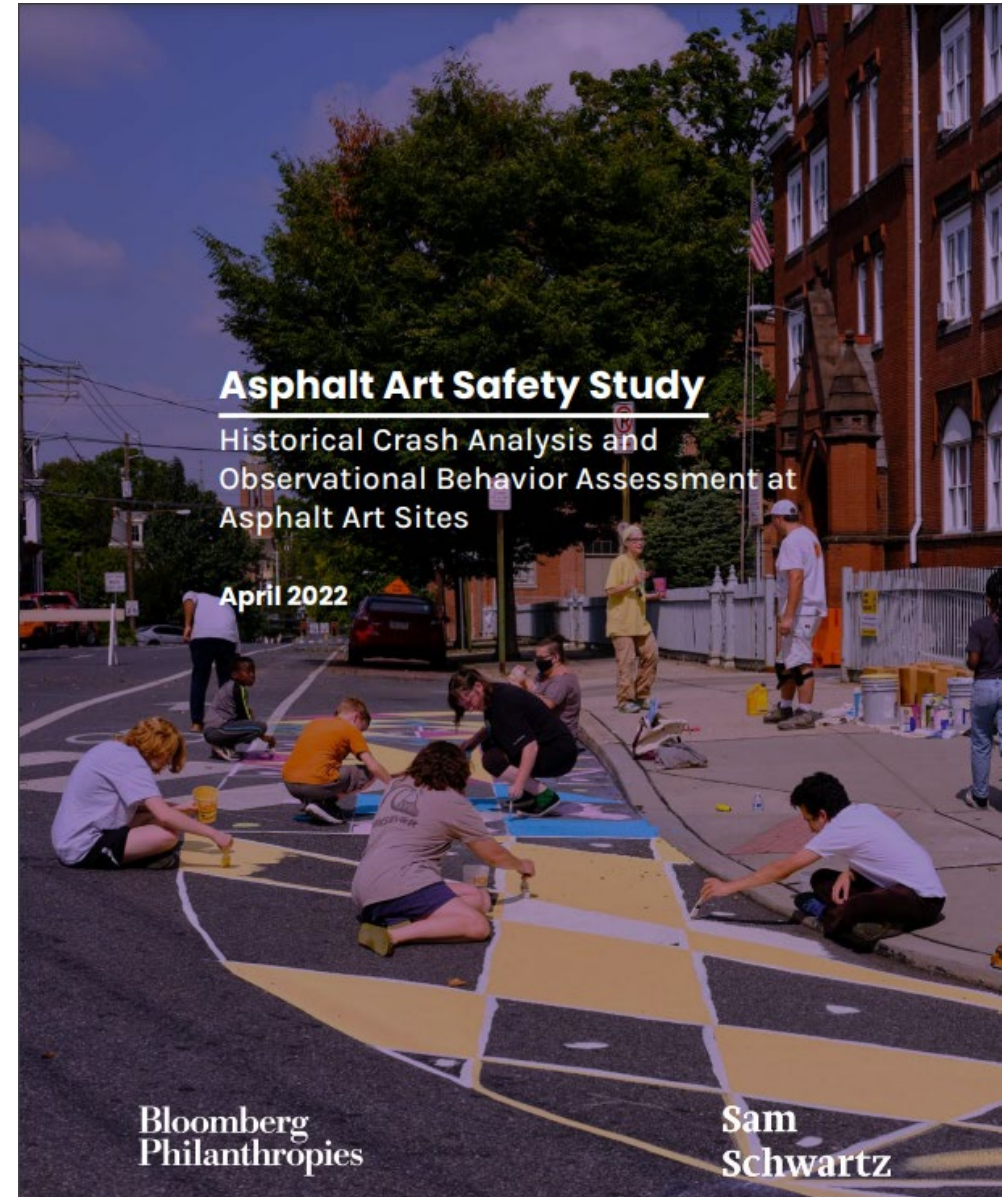
Rainbow Crosswalks

- [Ellsworth High School](#) – Maine
 - Gender & Sexuality Diversity Alliance project
 - City Council concerns about safety
 - Students, staff, and community members advocated for project
- [Weymouth High School](#) – Massachusetts
 - Human Rights Coalition project
 - Supported by school staff, Black Student Union, students, superintendent



Bloomberg Asphalt Art Initiative & Safety Study

- April 2022: [Asphalt Art Safety Study](#)
- Painted asphalt can offer protection
- Researched **17 sites with painted asphalt art**
- Historic Crash Analysis revealed **50% decrease in pedestrian involved crashes** and **17% decreased in total crashes**
- [Grant applications open through June 12!](#)



Massachusetts Safe Routes to School Pop-Up Guide

- Tips on costs and implementation
- On-school campus projects
- Near school campus projects
- Materials considerations
- Site considerations
- Project examples
- Links to additional resources

POP-UP PROJECTS FOR SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Low-Cost, Temporary Interventions to Promote Traffic Calming Around School Campuses, Address Arrival/Dismissal Safety Issues, and Encourage Walking and Biking to School



This guide explores how schools can use “pop-up” demonstration projects to improve safety on and around campus. These temporary activations, often referred to as tactical urbanism, can be used to promote walking and biking to, from, and around campus. You will find examples of local, national, and international projects, tips to support implementation efforts, and links to additional resources.

Teen Driver Programs

- Youth are multimodal
- Youth drivers care about their own safety
- Youth drivers care about the safety of people walking, biking, and rolling
- Partner with driver's education programs
- How can you incorporate active transportation?





Go digital.

Montgomery County Safe Routes to School (Montgomery County, MD)

- [Vision Zero Ambassadors program](#)
 - Education and engineering projects
 - Earn service learning hours
- [Heads Up, Phones Down video contest](#)
 - 30 second PSA to discourage distracted driving



Massachusetts Safe Routes to School

- Youth ambassador program
- Road safety video contest
- Car-Free Campus Day



Markham Public Library Trail Project (Ontario, Canada)

- Placemaking grant
- [Student designed app](#)
- Digitally animated trails with local and natural history
- Community-wide collaboration





Looking Ahead

Funding

- K – 12 federal funding for Safe Routes to School
- Explore other funding areas:
 - Climate justice
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Mental health
 - Technology



Partner with Out of School Programs

- [Local Ys](#)
- Libraries
- Sport teams
- Civic organizations
- Arts programs



Uplift Youth of Color

- Have own set of safety priorities
 - Road safety
 - Personal safety
 - Alternative enforcement methods
- Have lived experience and expertise to advance racial equity



Explore Micromobility

- Growing interest in skateboarding, scooters, electric bikes, skating
- Potential partnerships with Parks and Recreation
- Let teens create educational materials



Embrace Different Kinds of Movement

- Physical activity can include...
 - Dance
 - Yoga
 - Sports
 - Skating
- Movement is fun!



Keep an eye on climate.



New Resource!

- [Walking, Riding, and Rolling for a New Generation: How to Partner with Youth on Safe Routes Projects](#)
- Youth engagement strategies
- Examples of youth-led and youth-focused projects



Walking, Riding, and Rolling for a New Generation

HOW TO PARTNER WITH YOUTH ON SAFE ROUTES PROJECTS



Young people have long advocated for safe and accessible transportation. Their advocacy efforts usually begin at home. Teens might talk with their families about traveling independently as they get older. They ask permission to walk to school without adult supervision, ride transit alone, or get their driver's license. Sometimes it takes convincing to allow teens to change their travel habits, despite those habits being common rites of passage.

Talking with teens about their travel habits reveal two competing priorities: teens' desires to be independent and their parents and caregivers' desires to keep them safe. The good news is that it doesn't have to be either or. Teens should not have to sacrifice safety in order to be independent. In fact, teens care about being independent and being safe. Recent youth advocacy efforts have shown that teens can hold multiple priorities as they work to advance social change. Issues like [climate justice](#), LGBTQ+ rights, and mental health are impacting how teens live on a daily basis. Youth advocates recognize the intersectionality of these issues and craft their projects and campaigns accordingly. The movement to improve road safety for youth is no different.

Young people are interested in safe walking, biking, rolling, riding, and driving. They are developing their own traffic safety projects that expertly combine safety, independent travel, and other youth priorities. New ability to use federal funding for Safe Routes to School high school programs

can provide resources to support more youth-led safety projects. This guide offers strategies for how Safe Routes practitioners can champion youth-led safety projects like Safe Routes to School and advocacy campaigns. It also spotlights youth-led traffic safety projects from across the country.

Strategy: Let Teens Lead

Young people have their own unique skill sets and areas of expertise. One of them is being able to effectively communicate with their peers. Safe Routes practitioners who work with elementary and middle school students are often the ones implementing activities. But when you work with teens, it's best to let them lead. Not only will messages go over better if they come from someone their own age, but teens want the opportunity to lead their own projects. Here is how students and young adults in Atlanta, the Bay Area, and at a national organization are leading road safety efforts in their own communities.

ATLANTA STUDENTS ADVOCATING FOR PEDESTRIANS (ASAP)

High school students in Atlanta are working to make it safer for young people to walk and roll in their neighborhoods. Atlanta Students Advocating for Pedestrians (ASAP) was created in 2016 after the [death of a student at Grady High School](#). The student was struck and killed by a car while riding her bike through an intersection after school. The student was trying to navigate a four-way intersection with a number of blind spots. Her classmates sprung to action and created ASAP to raise awareness about bike and pedestrian safety and advocate for safer road design.

Contact Information

Kori Johnson, Program & Engagement Manager

kori@saferoutespartnership.org

www.saferoutespartnership.org



Facebook.com/saferoutespartnership



@saferoutesnow

