

# Safe Routes to School Walking School Bus Program

**Transportation Commission**

**July 27, 2022**

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MADISON DEPARTMENT



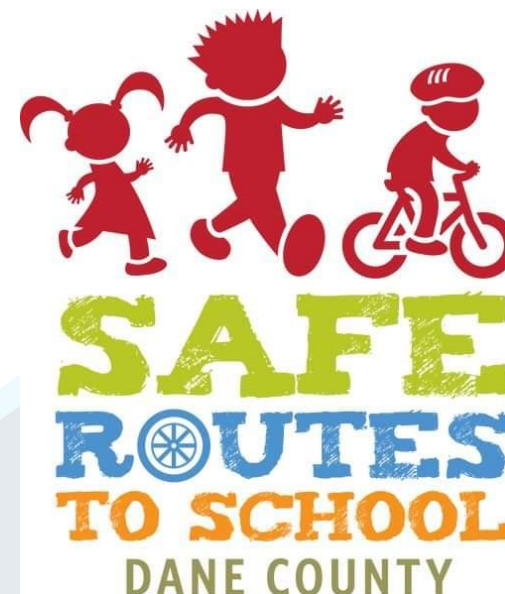
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# Understanding Safe Routes to School

- **Includes activities that encourage students to walk and bike to school by making it easier, safer and more fun.**
- **Focuses include engineering solutions, educational programming, encouragement activities, family and student engagement.**
- **Walking School Buses are often a part of a Safe Routes to School encouragement program.**

# Safe Routes to School Dane County

- **The Safe Routes to School project for Dane County is led by the Wisconsin Bike Fed**
- **In Madison this is in partnership with Madison Metropolitan School District, the City of Madison & other community organizations**



Safe Routes to School Dane County Logo with stylized graphics of kids walking & biking

# Understanding a Walking School Bus

- **Group(s) of students walking to school together.**
- **Supervised by parent and volunteer route leaders**
- **Routes and days vary at each school based on volunteer availability**
- **Walking school buses are not child care**

# Benefits of Walking School Buses

- **Provides reassurance for parents who are unable to walk their children to school that they will arrive safely and on time at school.**
- **Helps students arrive at school on time for breakfast**
- **Provides the benefit of physical activity before/after school**

# Other Benefits

- **Fun way to start/end the school day!**
- **Students who get physical activity before school are healthy, awake, alert and learn better.**
- **Youth learn about traffic safety and become more confident and independent.**
- **Less parents driving students to school to help reduce traffic near schools and improve air quality.**

# Walking School Bus Program

- **Managed by the Wisconsin Bike Fed**
- **In partnership with the Madison Metropolitan School District, the City of Madison & other community organizations**



Photo of a walking school bus on a rainy day with people carrying brightly colored umbrellas

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# Walking School Buses Madison

- Impacted by the pandemic and shift to virtual school
- Impacted by a change in management of the SRTS Program from the Healthy Kids Collaborative to Wisconsin Bike Fed
- Prior to pandemic each MMSD Community School had a Walking School Bus at least one morning per week
- Volunteers hard to recruit this last year



Photo of 2 children on the Leopold Walking School Bus holding signs and walking in the winter.



# Walking School Bus Volunteer Commitment

**Walk 1-2 days each week during the school year with children**

- More days if people are available

**Approximately 30-40 minutes of time each day you lead a Walking School Bus route**

- Stay on schedule so students arrive on time
- Routes are generally .4 – 1 mile in length

**Report concerns/issues to the SRTS Program Manager.**

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# Ways to be Involved

- **Be a route leader**
- **Recruit others you know to be a route leader**
- **Donate warm clothes (especially gloves & mittens) to support winter walking**
- **Donate healthy snacks or small prizes for event days (Walk & Roll to School Day, fall or spring celebrations)**
- **Be a “Roll” Model in your community by choosing active transportation**
- **Contact Caitlin for more information [Caitlin@wisconsinbikefed.org](mailto:Caitlin@wisconsinbikefed.org)**

# Walk or Wheel (WOW) Challenge Event

- **Each year in October to coincide with International Walk to School Day**
  - Walk to School Day - October 12, 2022
- **Schools receive incentives for participating**
- **Fun activities to encourage active transportation**



Graphic of 2021 Walk or Wheel Challenge Poster with info on when it happens, who can participate, and how to participate.

# Bike & Roll to School Day

**Upcoming: May 23, 2023**

**Provides encouragement to bike to school**

- Sample activities:
  - Daily announcements with bike facts leading up to event
  - Healthy snacks
  - Give away items like locks, lights, water bottles
  - Bike safety checks

**Organized bike trains (similar to WSB but by bike)**

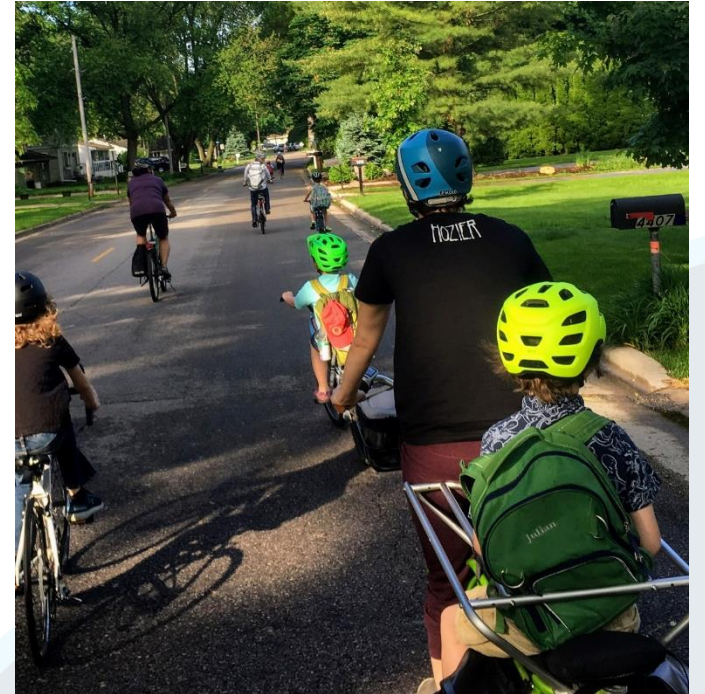


Photo of families biking to school for Bike & Roll to School Day including parents and kids on their own bikes and a cargo bike with a child on back

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# Other Safe Routes to School & Youth Education

- In school education
- Bike clubs after school or in collaboration with Community Centers
- Bike camp
- Assistance with holding Bike Rodeos
- Community Bike Rides
- Bike fix-it opportunities

## Adventure Bike Camp

August 22-26, 2022 9-4:30 pm  
@ Madison Bicycle Center  
202 S Pinckney St, Madison, WI

Learn to be a safe and independent cyclist while exploring parks, lakes, UW Arboretum, and other local spots by bike!



Scan QR code to register and learn more!



Open to rising 5th and 6th grade students who know how to ride a bike and are comfortable riding and being outside all day.

Graphic of 2022 Adventure Bike Camp flyer

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# Future Work: Safe Routes to School Planning

- **Applied for federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds to do SRTS Planning**
  - Overall SRTS framework, review of Hazardous Busing areas for improvements, individual school transportation safety planning
- **Planning would be a collaboration between the City, MMSD, Wisconsin Bike Fed**
- **Project selected for funding by Wisconsin DOT pending City Resolution of Support for application (Agenda Item #3)**

# Contacts

## Wisconsin Bicycle Federation

- Caitlin Hussey, Dane County Safe Routes to School Coordinator
  - [Caitlin@wisconsinbikefed.org](mailto:Caitlin@wisconsinbikefed.org)

## City of Madison

- Renee Callaway, Pedestrian Bicycle Administrator
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