



Transportation Professionals & Safe Routes to School

Talking Points

Transportation professionals play an important role in Safe Routes to School and it's important to reach out to them early in the process of building a program. While many transportation planners and engineers may be familiar with the program, some may not be. It's important to explain the purpose of Safe Routes to School, how the service organization can be an integral part of the effort, and what they will gain by participating. Here are some brief talking points for an initial conversation as well as some basic resources to share.

Introduce Yourself and the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP)

Whether your first contact is by phone, email or in person, it will be important to introduce yourself and give some background information. SHIP is a Minnesota Department of Health program that works with schools, businesses, faith groups, farmers and many others to create healthier communities across the state by expanding opportunities for active living, healthy eating and tobacco-free living.

Give an Overview of the Minnesota Safe Routes to School Program and its Benefits

Minnesota SRTS is an effort to improve walking and bicycling conditions for our youth and support active living for the whole community. The Minnesota Department of Transportation, SHIP, and many other partners across the state are working together to help schools and communities develop SRTS programs.

SRTS is more than just a program. A comprehensive SRTS strategy is where partners work together on education, engineering, enforcement, evaluation, encouragement and equity. An effective SRTS initiative can help create a healthier community for generations to come by instilling life-long physical activity habits.

Some of the many benefits of the program for participants and the community include:

- Kids and families are more active
- Students arrive ready to learn
- Communities become more connected and safer for all
- Reduced congestion and traffic at schools and on local streets

What can planners and engineers bring to the program?

- Technical expertise related to traffic safety, urban design and land use
- Knowledge of funding and implementation process for physical improvements

What can planners and engineers gain from the program?

- Increased understanding of transportation professionals' role in the community
- Safer streets and healthier neighborhoods
- Support for projects that promote non-motorized transportation

Resources

Program website: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/mnsaferoutes/>

Email updates and newsletters: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNDOT/subscriber/new>