



ACTIVITY GUIDE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

City of Bloomington
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INTRODUCTION

About

This activity guide is part of the City of Bloomington's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. It provides schools with optional activities, events, programs, and projects that encourage students to walk, bike, roll, and ride the bus safely. These ideas can be used independently or alongside the Safe Routes to School curriculum and planning process to help create safer, healthier, and more active school communities.

Simple Ways to Promote SRTS

Schools can support Safe Routes to School without hosting a large event. Small actions can help families learn about transportation options and encourage safe walking, biking, rolling, transit use, and carpooling.

Simple promotion ideas include:

- Add active transportation resources to the school handbook including walking school bus and bike bus information
- Include Safe Routes to School materials in packets for new students
- Share caregiver guides with families
- Promote walk, bike, and roll events in newsletters and social media
- Host a pre-school-year walk
- Encourage a monthly Walk and Roll Day
- Use Safe Routes to School books for classroom read-alouds
- Implement the SRTS curriculum one week each year

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Safe Routes to School
City of Bloomington



Short SRTS Classroom Activities

Safe Routes Curriculum

The City of Bloomington [Safe Routes to School Curriculum](#) was developed for elementary students in the Bloomington community. It is organized into three grade bands (K-2, 3-4, and 5-6) and is designed to be revisited as students progress through elementary school.

The curriculum includes five lessons, each featuring discussion questions, a presentation, a book suggestion, and optional activities to reinforce the lesson. Each presentation is designed to be delivered in less than 30 minutes, with additional time for a book and/or activity. Little to no prep is needed for the lesson, and little to no materials are required. Its goal is to empower students with the knowledge and skills to navigate their world more safely and confidently. The curriculum is part of a broader program that includes infrastructure improvements, events, communication efforts, and planning initiatives.

Designed to be short and flexible, the curriculum aims to fit within existing busy schedules. Educators are encouraged to use the components that are most helpful, adapt them to their needs, and make changes as necessary.

Transportation of the Future

Students illustrate a future way of traveling to school. It may be realistic, imaginative, or a combination of both. Encourage students to think about safety, health, accessibility, the environment, and fun.

My Favorite Place

Students draw a favorite place in their neighborhood and show how they would get there. They can add people, landmarks, transportation choices, signs, sidewalks, bus stops, bike routes, trees, and anything that makes the trip enjoyable.

Before and After Street

Students fold a sheet of paper in half. On one side, they draw a street with a transportation problem. On the other side, they draw the same street after it has been improved.



Transportation Comic Strip

Students create a three- or four-panel comic showing a character traveling to school or another destination. The character may encounter a transportation challenge and find a solution.

Design Your Dream Street

Students draw a street where people of all ages and abilities can walk, bike, roll, ride the bus, and travel safely. Encourage students to include destinations, sidewalks, crossings, bike facilities, bus stops, trees, lighting, public art, places to rest, and safe speeds.

What I Bring to the Table

A leadership warm-up that opens any project unit and helps students see themselves as contributors to neighborhood safety. Each student fills a paper plate with words, drawings, and cut-out images representing the strengths they bring to the group (qualities like curious, brave, observant, kind, artistic, or athletic). Students present their plates to the class and place them together on a shared table, building a visual reminder that the work ahead depends on everyone's contributions. Teachers can return to the plates throughout the unit when assigning roles or forming teams.

Mind Map of My Neighborhood

A from-memory drawing activity that surfaces what students actually notice and value about their neighborhood before they go out and observe it formally. Each student draws their own map on a large sheet of paper using whatever scale and perspective they choose, including their home, their school, places they like, and places that feel unsafe. The class then shares maps and builds a chart of the most popular landmarks and the most common trouble spots. The maps become a baseline that can be compared to a real walking audit later.

Interviewing Locals

A research activity that teaches students to gather information directly from people in their community. Students develop a short list of questions about a local transportation issue, then interview a family member, neighbor, crossing guard, bus driver, shop owner, or older relative. They practice etiquette (introducing themselves, saying thank you) and decide how to capture what they hear (notes, recording, or a checklist). Quotes and themes are brought back and combined into the larger project.



SWOT Analysis

A structured way to organize observations from a site visit into four categories on a single large chart: Strengths (what is working, the assets and hidden gems), Weaknesses (what is broken, missing, or dangerous), Opportunities (what could be added or improved), and Threats (what might get in the way of change like speeding drivers, weather, lack of funding). The class works in teams using sticky notes, then steps back to discuss patterns. The completed chart guides the rest of the project.

Telling the Story Poster

A team synthesis activity in which each group creates a large poster that tells the story of a site. The poster combines a hand-drawn or printed map, photos, observation notes, interview quotes, drawings, and the team's interpretation of what they found. Posters include a title, landmarks, what people are doing, places students like and don't like, and any patterns the team noticed. Each team presents their poster to the rest of the class.

Bubble Diagram Brainstorm

A team brainstorming method that follows research and inspiration. Students generate as many ideas as possible on sticky notes with no criticism allowed, every idea goes on the table. Notes are then grouped by theme and arranged on a large sheet into a bubble diagram, with the strongest ideas in larger bubbles and supporting ideas branching off. The result is a visual map of the team's thinking that becomes the basis for proposals.

Poster Campaign

A communications activity in which students translate their findings into public-service posters aimed at a real audience (younger students, families, drivers, or the wider community). Teams review examples of strong public-service campaigns, draft rough versions on scratch paper, and produce final posters using markers, magazine cutouts, or simple digital tools. Finished posters are displayed in the school hallway, sent home, or shared with the city.



Draw Your Safe Route

Ask students to draw a route between two destinations (their home to school, to a friend's house, or any other combination that they think is important). Ask students to draw their route and highlight unsafe parts. This is an opportunity to discuss safer options, or specific strategies to stay safer at that obstacle.

Color the Crosswalk Design

Ask students to design a crosswalk, using a theme or just their imagination. Crosswalk art is used around the country and internationally to highlight local culture and make crosswalks more noticeable to improve safety.

Art in Walking and Biking Spaces

Work with the City to create student artwork in areas connected to walking, biking, and rolling. Schools may be able to use City-provided paint and guidance to add semi-permanent art near bike racks, sidewalks, pathways, school entrances, or other transportation spaces. Student artwork can celebrate active transportation, improve wayfinding, create a welcoming school environment, and encourage walking, biking, and rolling.

Design Your Own Traffic Garden

Traffic gardens help students practice transportation skills in a safe, low-stress environment. Using sidewalk chalk, cones, and simple signs, schools can create temporary streets, intersections, crosswalks, bike lanes, and destinations on a playground or paved area.

Students can practice walking, biking, rolling, crossing streets, following signs, and navigating common transportation situations while having fun.

For guidance on creating a simple traffic garden, see page 33 of the [Idaho Safe Routes to School Guide](#).



Neighborhood Survey: What Do Kids Want?

NEIGHBOURHOOD SURVEY

WHAT DO KIDS WANT!

I think the best place in my neighbourhood is: _____

The worst place in my neighbourhood is: _____

My favourite place in my community is: _____

My least favourite place in my community is: _____

If I were Mayor, the first thing I would do to make my community a better place for young people is:

The three most important problems facing my community are:

Are there any things you would change in your neighbourhood? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered yes, list the three most important and the changes you would make:

What things in your neighbourhood should stay as they are? Why?



Neighborhood Scavenger Hunt

This resource from the American Planning Association (APA) helps students explore their neighborhood through 20 prompts. The resource is available on the APA [website](https://www.americanplanning.org/neighborhood-scavenger-hunt/).



**NEIGHBORHOOD
SCAVENGER HUNT**

How much do you really know about the place where you live?

Every community is special and has a story to tell. This scavenger hunt gives you fun ways to begin exploring the different pieces that make-up your community. By putting these pieces together, you might even learn some of your town's secrets!

Each item asks you to do something or find something in your town. There are many different ways to get the stuff and information you need. Some of the things asked for are specific, like restaurant menus, interviews, crayon rubbings, or pictures, (that means photographs or your own drawings).

With others, you can be as creative as you like. For example, you might use a receipt or get a signature.

Click on any item below. You will be taken to a page that you can print out and take with you. Choose as many as you would like. You may find special instructions on the page. Each page is designed so you put them all together to create a special book about your community. You can also create a book cover that sums up your town in pictures and words.

1. [Find a map of your town or state that shows the location of your community.](#)
2. [Search for 10 leaves from 10 different trees found in your community.](#)
3. [Explore the buildings in your community by creating crayon rubbings of the different building materials found in your neighborhood.](#)
4. [Visit the local bakery or donut shop and get a bag or napkin that shows you stopped in for a treat.](#)
5. [Draw pictures of four different animals you have seen from the windows of your home.](#)
6. [Collect a flyer or a sign for a community event. Or print a notice from the web.](#)
7. [Visit one of the ethnic restaurants in your community and grab a menu to share.](#)
8. [Draw a picture or find something that shows your community's main industry.](#)
9. [Find a trinket from a place where people go to have fun.](#)
10. [Uncover where your community's water comes from, and then illustrate the source.](#)
11. [Seek out public transportation take a picture of the transit card, ticket, or scanning machine used to ride.](#)
12. [Sketch a picture of a community park or playground and your favorite part of it.](#)
13. [Interview someone that has just moved to town or a member of your community. Find out what they like the most.](#)
14. [Find four buildings in your community that have all been built in different years. Draw pictures of each. Or take a picture of each, print it, and put them on this page.](#)
15. [Make a crayon rubbing, or an illustration of a decorative element found on one of these buildings or any building in your community.](#)
16. [Listen to the sounds of your community and make a list of the loudest and quietest things in your town.](#)
17. [Research the history of your community by locating a historic marker and make a crayon rubbing of the sign, or write a sentence about why it is historical.](#)
18. [Look for something that shows what your town is known for. It might be a historic event, museum, or famous work of art. It may even be an interesting building, past leader, tourist attraction, or sports stadium.](#)
19. [Assemble a checklist some of the things in your town. How many schools or restaurants does your town have? How many public buildings, churches, or places of worship?](#)



SRTS Writing Prompts

Grades K–2

- My favorite way to travel is ____ because ____.
- On my way to school, I see ____.
- A safe street has ____.
- I would like to walk or bike to ____.
- The bus can take people to ____.
- One thing that makes a trip fun is ____.
- Draw and write about an adventure you could have while walking.
- If I could add one thing to my street, I would add ____.

Grades 3–4

- Describe your ideal trip to school.
- What makes a street feel safe and welcoming?
- Write instructions for safely crossing a street.
- Imagine that you are a bus driver. Where will your route go?
- What would you change about a street near your home or school?
- Explain why streets should work for people walking, biking, rolling, riding the bus, and driving.
- Write a story about a group of friends traveling somewhere without a car.
- Describe a place in your neighborhood where you like to walk, bike, or play.

Grades 5–6

- Imagine two versions of your neighborhood: one designed mostly for cars and one designed for people. How would they feel different?
- Write a letter to the mayor proposing one transportation improvement.
- Describe a transportation problem near your school and propose a solution.
- How does the way people travel affect health, air quality, and the community?
- What does transportation independence mean to you?
- Imagine Bloomington 20 years from now. How do students get to school?
- Write a postcard from the future describing a safer and more welcoming street.
- What makes a route feel comfortable, safe, and enjoyable?
- Why should students have a voice in how streets and neighborhoods are designed?



Crafts and Activities

Paper Loop Bus

Materials

- 1 sheet of yellow construction paper
- 1 sheet of black construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue stick

Directions

Step 1: Make the Bus Body

- Place the yellow paper so it is long and fold into a cylinder. Overlap the edges slightly and glue them together.

Step 2: Cut Out the Windows/Doors

- From the black paper, cut out:
 - 4–6 small rectangles for windows
 - 1 larger rectangle for the bus door
 - 2 circles for the wheels

Step 3: Build Your Bus

- Glue the windows around the outside of the yellow cylinder.
- Glue the door near the front of the bus.
- Glue the wheels near the bottom on opposite sides of the bus.

Step 4: Decorate

- Decorate the bus!



Box City (K-5)

Box City is a common urban planning and engineering educational tool, with a wide range of lesson plans from different organizations. At its simplest, Box City encourages students to build elements of a city (buildings, roads, transportation) from cardboard. Students are encouraged to work together to address the city's needs with the types of buildings they build, where they place them in the city, and how to connect them with transportation.

- [Center for Understanding the Built Environment \(Cube\) CUBE CITY](#)
- [A Kid's Guide to Building Great Communities](#)

Create a City

Create a City offered through Arizona State is a simpler alternative to Box City in which students copy and paste land uses onto a map. Students will work in cooperative groups to design an ideal city—one which is convenient for humans, preserves the environment, and maintains a quality of life for both animals and humans. Students will not only design a city, but they will write an explanation of how geography was used to improve the quality of life in the planning of an environment

- [Create a City](#)



SRTS Games

Safe Routes Story Dice

Students roll picture dice or select cards showing a transportation mode, destination, character, and challenge.

Example:

- Mode: bike/car/walk/bus/rickshaw/plane/wheelchair/skate/scooter/dragon/etc.
- Destination: library/school/restaurant/park/practice/etc.
- Character: student/teacher/parent/frog/turtle/robot/etc.
- Challenge: missing sidewalk/fast cars/snow/rain/etc.

Plays

1. Draw the Journey Map (Can also ask students to fix/address the challenge)
2. Act it Out where students physically act out the story
3. Students swap stories, partner must add or address one element

Traffic Light Freeze

A movement game built on Red Light, Green Light. Call out "green light" (go), "yellow light" (slow down/look), or "red light" (stop and check both ways). Can add "walk signal" and "flashing hand" for crosswalk-specific practice. Signs to print are available under the [curriculum page](#).

Guess the Mode

Charades with a transportation twist. One student acts out a mode of travel or a safety behavior (looking both ways, signaling a turn, waiting for the bus) while classmates guess.

Neighborhood Exploration Games

Ongoing outdoor or neighborhood based exploration games that encourage students to explore their neighborhood and community.

- [RECESS](#)
- [Pokemon Go](#)
- [Geocaching](#)
- [American Planning Association Neighborhood Scavenger Hunt](#)



Classroom Active Education

Walking Field Trip

A short supervised neighborhood walk where students practice crossings, signals, awareness, and group travel behavior in a real environment.

Walking Tours

Guided walking tours of a neighborhood or attraction. Along the way, students can learn pedestrian safety skills, how to navigate intersections, and how to be aware of their surroundings. Walking tours combine physical activity, place-based learning, and safety education in one experience.

Walk, Bike, and Transit Field Trips

Field trips that incorporate walking, biking, or transit as part of the journey to the destination. These trips teach real-world travel skills students use to reach school and other destinations. Walk and bike field trips can include route planning, safety discussions, and reflection activities afterward. The City of Bloomington can help lead bike field trips in conjunction with a classroom lesson.

SCHOOL-WIDE PROGRAMS

Safe Routes to School
City of Bloomington



Active Travel Programs

School Pool Carpool Program

A program that matches families interested in carpooling to school based on location, schedules, and grade levels. Schoolpool matching can be facilitated through online sign-ups and platforms such as [GoKid](#) and [My School Carpool](#).

“If you drop off and pick up your kids every day, there are thousands of other parents out there just like you. Pairing up with just one other family would mean half as many trips to school. Imagine what else you could do with all that extra time! Start or join a Kid Carpool near you.”

Buddy-up Program

A program that pairs students who live near each other to walk or bike to school together. Having a “buddy” can make both parents and students feel more comfortable. Most buddy-up programs are managed informally, though the program can be scaled up through a matching signup sheet with interested students’ nearest intersection and grade level. All matching should be coordinated by schools or caregivers in accordance with district policies

Stop and Walk Program (Drive to 5, Park and Stride, Walk-a-Block)

Many parents and caregivers must drive their children to school because of far distances, mobility challenges, and/or other barriers. For these families, a stop and walk program can still give parents, students, and schools many of the same benefits as active transportation.

In a stop and walk program, families drop students off several blocks away from school at designated locations, allowing students to walk the final portion of the trip. This reduces congestion and air pollution near school entrances while providing students with daily physical activity. The goal is to park about a five-minute walk away from the school. Some programs are more formal (official agreements with parking locations, signage at parking locations, maps, etc.) and others are more informal (notice and encouragement).

**Attendance Radar**

Many parents are concerned that having students walk and bike does not confirm when the student arrives. Options for addressing this include attendance tracking tools such as [ClassDojo](#) and [Attendance Radar](#).

Punch Cards & Mileage Clubs

Programs where students track walking, biking, or transit trips using [punch cards](#) or mileage logs. Programs can be designed for individual students or entire classrooms. Students often earn rewards for themselves or their classroom after hitting certain milestones.



School-Wide Active Education

Traffic gardens

Traffic gardens are miniature road environments with signs, intersections, and crosswalks for students to navigate. They allow students to learn traffic rules, signage, and decision making in a safe environment or practice biking, scooter, or skateboard skills.

Bike rodeos

Skills courses designed to teach students fundamental bike handling techniques in a safe, controlled environment. Students typically practice balance, braking, turning, signaling, and obstacle avoidance around cones in a paved area such as a parking lot but students can also be led on practice trips on real trails and low-traffic streets. The City of Bloomington Parks and Rec Department typically hosts bike rodeos with third grade students.

Family Biking and Transit Workshops

Active Routes to School is focused on building children's transportation skills as they grow. Parents play the most important role in teaching children these skills but many parents themselves are unfamiliar with biking, transit, and other transportation opportunities. Family biking and transit workshops can help caretakers learn or re-learn these skills.



Event Ideas

Active Routes Treasure Hunt

A school-wide or classroom-based activity where students follow designated walking or biking routes to find clues to a puzzle, landmarks, or temporary markers like sidewalk games or educational content. This encourages exploration of routes to school while making active travel fun for students.

Assemblies and Speakers

Invite guest speakers to present age-appropriate topics related to transportation and mobility. Topics can range from pedestrian and bike safety to distracted driving, lessons from first responders, or stories from people in the field such as planners and engineers.

Chalk and Walk

Students use chalk to create artwork or games, along popular routes to school.

Student/Parent Training Day

A hands-on event where students and parents meet at a designated location and practice walking or biking to school together. Training days can include route walk-throughs, safety tips, crossing practice, and discussions about expectations. This helps families feel comfortable supporting active travel.

Kidical Mass

Based on the adult "Critical Mass", Kidical Mass is a movement organizing safe, family-friendly bicycle rides for children to promote independent mobility and advocate for better cycling infrastructure, often under the motto "Space for the next generation". These rides are typically short, held on public roads, and open to all ages.

Book Clubs

Develop a book club around urbanism topics that could be relevant to students wanting to learn more about transportation topics, environmental topics, and careers in civil engineering, urban planning, and real estate. For recommended titles, see the Safe Routes to School library book list.



Monthly or Weekly Walk & Roll Days

Beyond major walk and bike events, some schools may want to introduce weekly or monthly events to encourage students to walk and bike to school.

Weekly

- Move It Mondays
- Travel Together Tuesdays
- Walk and Roll Wednesdays
- Trailblazer Thursdays
- Footpower Fridays

Monthly

- January: New Year New Routes
- February: Love Your Route
- March: March Into School
- April: Bloom & Zoom
- May: Move It May
- June: Sunshine Strides
- July: Stars & Strides
- August: Back-to-School Boots
- September: Step Into School
- October: Walktober
- November: Gobble & Go
- December: Jingle Bell Walk



School-Wide Activities and Encouragement

Art Contests

Art contests give students the opportunity to create safety-themed artwork and word-art while learning about transportation safety. Designs can be displayed as banners, posters, yard signs, or street installations as part of a community-wide safety campaign. In Hertfordshire, England, student artwork was transformed into “gateway” signs that alert drivers when entering school zones, reinforcing student voice and visibility.

Essay Contests

Essay and creative writing contests give students an opportunity to address how transportation affects their lives and their community.

Student Clubs

Clubs focused on urbanism, transportation, or active travel provide a space for students interested in future careers in planning, engineering, architecture, or real estate. Activities could include:

- Guest speakers
- Design challenges
- Field trips via different transportation methods (walk, bus, bike)
- Peer education on transportation safety
- Attendance at public meetings to represent youth perspectives
- Career pathway spotlights
- [Better Block](#) quick build construction projects
- Curriculum completion (ULI Urban Plan, bike repair course, etc.)

Postcards from the Future

Invite participants to imagine themselves in the space you want to improve, ten years into the future. Using a blank postcard, have them write a brief message to someone of their choice (such as a friend, family member, or City Councilor) describing what it's like to be there. Encourage them to include details about what they see, hear, smell, and feel. When finished, display the postcards so other participants and passersby can read them.

Board and Poster Engagement

Install interactive boards or posters where students can write, draw, vote, or respond to prompts about transportation and safety. These low-cost tools can engage students in urban planning and engineering topics for the school or the larger community.



Anti-Idling Campaigns

Idling vehicles [contribute to air pollution](#) and emit air toxins, which are pollutants known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health effects. Monitoring at schools has shown elevated levels of benzene, formaldehyde, acetaldehyde and other air toxics during the afternoon hour coinciding with parents picking up their children. Children's lungs are still developing, and when they are exposed to elevated levels of these pollutants, children have an increased risk of developing asthma, respiratory problems and other adverse health effects. Limiting a vehicle's idling time can dramatically reduce these pollutants and children's exposure to them.

Student Leadership

Student Government Engagement

Opportunities for students to participate in real planning or engineering projects, such as reviewing street designs, providing feedback on school-area improvements, or working with student councils on transportation issues. This hands-on civic engagement helps students understand how decisions are made and how they can influence their community.

Engage students in street design using tools like Streetmix or age-appropriate scaled models. Students provide feedback on lane widths, crossings, bike lanes, and public space, ensuring designs reflect the needs of young users.

Volunteer Programs

Dot-to-Dot Program

A volunteer-based program where parents or community members stand at designated corners along school routes during arrival and dismissal times. Volunteers provide supervision, visibility, and assistance, helping students travel safely and confidently.

Crossing Guard Volunteer programs

Programs that recruit and train volunteers to serve as crossing guards. Components may include workshops, a crossing guard handbook, and ongoing support. Volunteer crossing guards increase safety while fostering community involvement.

Teacher Committees and Parent Groups

Committees or working groups that support active routes to school efforts through planning, coordination, and advocacy. These groups can support events, lead bike buses and walking school buses, or recruit for bike bus and walking school buses.

Campus Improvements

Safe Routes to School
City of Bloomington



Infrastructure, Street Design & Placemaking

Street Murals and Asphalt Art

Asphalt art puts design directly onto streets, intersections, crosswalks. This art can highlight the neighborhood, the school zone, or other community markers and is often made with the help of students, parents, and neighbors. Asphalt art can be combined with other low-cost safety strategies, such as bollards, to increase safety impacts.

School streets

Programs temporarily or permanently restrict through traffic near schools during arrival and dismissal while maintaining access for residents, emergency services, and approved school vehicles

Tactical urbanism projects

Tactical Urbanism is defined as “small-scale, low-cost and temporary demonstration projects” such as bollards, removable speed humps, and painted projects. Students can help in designing and building tactical urbanism projects as a way of learning about street design, safety, and public engagement.



Sidewalk play stations

Install playful elements along sidewalks such as hopscotch, balance beams, or interactive art to make walking routes more fun for children.

Art and Activation

Use art installations, performances, or interactive elements to activate streets and public spaces near schools. Many designs can be made cheaply using stencils.

Yard Signs

Install yard signs along school routes with messages such as “20 is Plenty,” “Safe Routes to School,” or “Bike Bus Route.” Students can design the signs or standard signs can be created.

Poster Contests

Students can design posters, which can be blown up and printed as part of the school’s safe routes to school campaign.

Public Art and Placemaking

Placemaking is a mix of art and urban planning to build a sense of place and sense of community. One method of placemaking is the use of art (i.e. murals, sidewalk art, signage as art) and practical items (lighting, benches, etc) into functional art. This can improve neighborhood identity and create more joyful, engaging experiences for students.

Walking Storybook

A Storybook Trail is an active and educational activity that places the pages from a children’s story along a walking path or trail. This project can be either created through technology (linking QR codes to a website), informally (often laminated pages from regularly purchased books on stakes in the ground) or created more permanently through metal exhibit panels/kiosks. Storybooks can also be in audio-format through QR codes to a website or push-button audio interpretation.

Temporary Installations

Exhibit Development

Create (or have students create) an exhibit or mini-museum focused on transportation history, transportation safety, planning history, active routes to school programs, or other topics. Exhibits can be built for students or by students. Exhibits could be housed at city hall or potentially other locations.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Safe Routes to School
City of Bloomington



SRTS Activity Kits

The City of Bloomington may provide activity kits to help schools lead Safe Routes to School activities. Kits are intended to be easy to use and may include books, activity instructions, craft supplies, stickers, worksheets, and other materials.

Availability may vary based on funding, inventory, and staff capacity.

Safe Routes Kit

The Basic Kit supports simple classroom activities, story-based lessons, writing prompts, art activities, and small group games.

Possible materials:

- Safe Routes to School books
- Walk. Bike. Bloom. stickers
- Demonstration helmet
- Activity books
- Neighborhood scavenger hunt materials
- Postcard from the Future materials



Chalk Your Walk Kit

The Chalk Your Walk Kit supports outdoor art, movement games, and temporary sidewalk activities.

Possible materials:

- Jumbo sidewalk chalk
- Transportation stencils

Possible activities:

- **Transportation Hopscotch:** Create a hopscotch course using transportation modes, street signs, or crossing steps. Students may be asked to stop, look left-right-left, show a bike hand signal, or name a safe transportation choice before moving forward.
- **Crosswalk Challenge:** Draw a street and crosswalk. Students practice stopping at the edge, checking every direction, watching for turning vehicles, and crossing when clear.
- **Walk. Bike. Bloom. Art:** Students create flowers, transportation symbols, welcoming messages, or street art celebrating walking, biking, rolling, and public transit.
- **Design a Better Street:** Students draw a street and add improvements such as sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, bus stops, trees, benches, lighting, or slower-speed features.



Visibility Detective Kit

The Visibility Detective Kit helps students compare colors, lights, and reflective materials. The goal is to help students understand how visibility works while reinforcing that safer streets, good lighting, lower speeds, and safe crossings also help protect people.

Possible materials:

- Flashlights
- Reflective materials
- Brightly colored fabric samples
- Dark fabric samples
- Bike light
- Reflective tape

Possible activities:

- Predict and Sort: Students sort materials into “easier to see” and “harder to see” groups. After testing the materials, they compare the results with their predictions.



Mapping, Route Planning & Wayfinding

Wayfinding Activities

Hands-on activities where students learn to read maps, identify landmarks, and understand wayfinding. Lessons can include creating maps, identifying safe crossings, and understanding signage and route choices.

- [PBS: Which Way?](#) (Grades K-3)
- ESRI [GIS with Kids](#) (Grades K-3)
- [National Geographic Map Skills for Students](#) (Grades 4-8)
- [ESRI GeoProjects: Project-Based Learning for Classrooms](#) (Grades 4-12)
 - What is the walkability or pedestrian friendliness of your community?
 - One, Two, Tree: Map your community's trees - even while indoors
 - Mappy Halloween! A frightful exploration of toponymy
- [Esri Basic Map Skills](#) (Grades 5-12)
 - Using scales
 - Measure distance, area, and elevation
 - Managing map layers and data
- [ESRI Classroom activities](#) (Grades 6-12)
 - Includes Mapping Lessons For Computer Science, Earth Science, Environmental Science, Government, Geography, Human Geography, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), US History, and World history

Student Travel Plans

Students develop personal travel plans that outline how they get to school, identify potential hazards, and explore alternative routes or modes. These plans promote independence, safety awareness, and problem-solving.

Safe Routes Mapping

Create maps that highlight preferred walking and biking routes to school while identifying dangerous intersections or gaps in infrastructure. Deficiency maps can be used to show areas of risk and support planning and advocacy for improvements.

Student Led Walk Audits

Students walk with staff to complete walk audits locating risks along their routes and opportunities that could improve their experience.



Educational and Activity Ideas

E-Learning:

[Active Transportation Academy | Ohio Department of Transportation](#)

The Active Transportation Academy (ATA) is a resource for building capacity and expertise on active transportation topics; educating practitioners, decision makers, and partners; and helping your community reach its active transportation goals. The ATA provides trainings, workshops, e-Learning courses, and online resources on a variety of topics related to walking and biking.



SRTS Book Library

There are many books available that relate directly to safely navigating transportation. There are also books that relate to safe routes to school more broadly including overall transportation, safety, urban design, and civic engagement. The City of Bloomington makes many of these books available for schools to either keep or borrow through the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Library.

For a longer list of books, see the City of Bloomington [Safe Routes to School library](#).

For the aligned curriculum, see the [Safe Routes curriculum page](#).

Curriculum Books (Donated)

The Safe Routes to School library includes books donated to the school as part of the Safe Routes to School Curriculum, along with a collection of books available to borrow. This ensures that core titles can be reused each year as the curriculum continues, and allows schools across the City share the same books rather than each classroom purchasing copies they may only use once.

Grades K-2 Donated Books

- ***When I Cross the Street*** by Dorothy Chlad
This book teaches children to stop at the curb, look left-right-left, and listen for traffic. It emphasizes crossing only when clear, using crosswalks, making eye contact with drivers, and wearing bright clothing at night.
- ***Watch Out! On the Road*** by Claire Llewellyn
This book teaches road safety, covering topics like being a safe pedestrian, cyclist, and passenger in a car, with simple text and cartoon illustrations to help young readers understand dangers like busy roads, crossing streets, and staying visible at night.
- ***The Car That Wanted to be a Bike*** by Lior Steinberg
This book follows a car named Johnny who dreams of becoming a bicycle as his family's lifestyle shifts towards cycling, exploring themes of urban mobility, sustainability, and finding new purpose.
- ***Maisy Drives the Bus*** by Lucy Cousins
A simple, cheerful picture book following Maisy as she picks up passengers and drops them at their destinations.
- ***OK GO!*** by Carin Berger
This picture book encourages kids to walk, bike, and recycle their way to a greener world. A gatefold reveals a parade of characters in such environmentally friendly activities as planting trees, roller-skating, and stopping to smell the flowers.



Grades 3-4 Donated Books

- ***City Streets Are for People*** by Andrea Curtis

This fun, accessible and ultimately hopeful book explores sustainable transportation around the globe, including electric vehicles, public transit, bicycles, walking and more. It invites us to conjure up a city of the future, where these modes are all used together to create a place that is sustainable, healthy, accessible and safe.

- ***Parker the Planner*** by Madeline Peck

Planning a city is a big project, but Parker is up for the challenge. He has all kinds of ideas about how to create a place that will benefit everyone. Part of a STEAM career-themed picture book series, Parker the Planner shows kids they can help create change in their own communities. Like Parker, they can use their passion and ideas to make the world a better place. Perfect for encouraging critical and creative thinking! Spatial analysis and critical thinking skills in K-12 students better prepare them for success, especially in science, engineering, and mathematics.

- ***Major Taylor: World Cycling Champion*** by Charles R. Smith

One hundred years ago, one of the most popular spectator sports was bicycle racing, and the man to beat was Marshall “Major” Taylor, who set records in his teens and won his first world championship by age twenty. The first African American world champion in cycling and the second Black athlete to win a world championship in any sport, Major Taylor faced down challenge after challenge, not least the grueling Six-Day Race, a test of speed, strength, and endurance. With energy, heart, and pounding verse, Charles R. Smith Jr. evokes the excitement of the crowd at Madison Square Garden as Major powered through exhaustion, hallucinations, and racist abuse from fellow riders, who tried to crash his bike throughout the competition.

- ***All Aboard for the Bobo Road*** by Stephen Davies

All aboard for the Bobo Road! Fatima and Galo load the luggage while their dad Big Ali drives the bus. Help count bikes, sacks of rice, melons and even goats and chickens as the bus travels past Gurunsi houses, the hippo lake, waterfalls and jungle, all the way to Bobo. With the authentic setting in Burkina Faso drawn from the author’s own experience, this is a wonderfully fun introduction for small children to an amazing culture.

- ***Our Green City*** by Tanya Lloyd Kyi

In this green city, neighbors take care of all living things: people, plants and animals, too! Many people choose a bicycle, scooter or their own two feet to get where they need to go. A family collects the rain to water their garden, while solar panels capture the energy from the sun; pipes gather heat from underground, and a windmill turns to power the community. Residents keep hens and hives in their yards, and care for flower beds that feed bees, birds and butterflies. Here, people all work together to make the city green. Can we do the same where we live?



Grades 5-6 Donated Books

- **Look Both Ways** by Jason Reynolds

A collection of ten interconnected short stories about middle schoolers walking home from school, each focusing on a different city block and its inhabitants. The book explores themes like friendship, bullying, family struggles, and identity through the characters' realistic and often humorous, poignant, and powerful experiences as they navigate the "in-between" moments of their lives. The stories are linked by shared characters and a mythical flying school bus, offering a look at the hidden lives and struggles within a single community.

- **The Playground Problem** by Ryan Lanclos & Matt Artz

Emma and David find a chain and padlock across the local playground entrance. Where can they play? With help from neighbor Kayla and her dog Blazer, Emma and David set out to find a new place to play. But how will they know where a good location is? Kayla shows them how they can use basic mapping, distance, direction, spatial pattern analysis, and overlay skills to find the perfect location. And just when they do, they encounter more obstacles—all of them have to work together quickly to solve their playground problem!

- **Go Fly a Bike! The Ultimate Book of Bicycle Fun, Freedom, and Science** by Bill Haduch

A funny and comprehensive guide, Go fly a Bike! is crammed with everything a rider wants to know about his or her favorite sport. From how bikes work to the coolest BMX stunts, from crucial safety information to a step-by-step guide for planning the perfect bike hike, this expertly organized book has something for all readers, whether their interest lies in history, trivia, physics, extreme sports, or just a quick spin around the block.

- **City Streets Are for People** by Andrea Curtis

Congested city streets are noisy and thick with cars and trucks, while pedestrians and cyclists are squeezed to the dangerous edges—but does it have to be this way? Imagine a city where we aren't stuck in cars, where clean air makes it easier to breathe, and where transit is easy to access—and on time. Imagine a city where streets are for people! This fun, accessible and ultimately hopeful book explores sustainable transportation around the globe, including electric vehicles, public transit, bicycles, walking and more. It invites us to conjure up a city of the future, where these modes are all used together to create a place that is sustainable, healthy, accessible and safe.



- ***The Sunshine Project*** by Uma Krishnaswami

Anil loves karate, his friends and the solar power project he has been championing in his community. He doesn't love having to speak up — as his karate sensei says, best fight, no fight. Still, Anil wishes his classmate Mohan would stop picking on him. Then Anil learns where the city is planning to build a new solar panel factory. More sustainable energy is good news — but this factory will threaten plant and animal species and force the village people who live on the land to move. Maybe staying quiet isn't an option anymore.



Get Support for SRTS

The City of Bloomington encourages all schools to participate in Safe Routes to School activities. Schools may choose to participate in annual events, use classroom curriculum, start walking school buses or bike buses, share information with families, or implement other activities that encourage safe walking, biking, rolling, and transit use.

Each year, the City partners with one school to develop a customized Safe Routes to School Plan. This Planning Year School receives enhanced support and resources to help develop, implement, and sustain a Safe Routes to School program.

All Bloomington schools may participate as Partner Schools. Partner Schools have access to Safe Routes to School resources, event materials, curriculum, technical assistance, and other tools that support safe walking, biking, rolling, and transit use for students.

Connect with Us

Safe Routes to School is an initiative through the City of Bloomington Planning and Transportation Department. You can email the department at planning@bloomington.in.gov or call at 812-349-3423. To stay informed about the City's planning work, visit the City's website at Bloomington.in.gov/planning