



## **Newsletter No. 24, July 2009**

Hello Safe Routes to School coordinators and friends! Here is what's new with Michigan's Safe Routes to School program this month:

### **2nd SRTS National Conference**

The last date to register for the 2nd National Safe Routes to School Conference in Portland, Oregon, is Friday, August 7. Four sessions at the National Conference will highlight Michigan's program including the Make Trax curriculum, evaluation, and urban and underserved communities. For more information or to register for the conference, visit [www.saferoutesconference.org/index.php](http://www.saferoutesconference.org/index.php). Also, please let our office know if you are attending the conference!

### **Make Trax™**

It's finally here! Michigan's middle school youth engagement curriculum called Make Trax will make its debut at the 2nd Safe Routes to School National Conference in Portland, Oregon in August. The Make Trax curriculum allows youth to use multiple pieces of technology including global positioning systems (GPS), geographic information systems (GIS), and mapping software to determine where barriers exist in their community that hinder safe walking and rolling to school. For more information and to get involved, contact Andrea Cawthray at (517) 908-3830 or by email at [acawthray@michiganfitness.org](mailto:acawthray@michiganfitness.org).

### **Safer Routes for Students in Flint**

Through funding from the federal Safe Routes to School program, Williams Elementary in Flint is making route improvements and will be introducing school-based education and encouragement activities. This includes sidewalk repairs, installing a bicycle rack, Walk to School days and a Walking School Bus. On July 1, families were invited to see the locations of improvements that will allow students to walk and bicycle to the elementary on safer paths. Congratulations to Williams Elementary in Flint!

### **Walk to School Day Materials**

Remember, Walk to School Day is Wednesday, October 7, 2009. All registered SR2S schools and those who registered to be included in the Walk to School Day event will be receiving a packet of materials in mid-September including stickers for elementary students, a certificate of participation for the school, a newsletter and a post-event response form.

Remember to fill out the post-event response form and return it by mail, fax or electronically on or before Monday, November 2, and your school will be included in the prize drawing! Last year, two schools received a complimentary version of Fit Bits!



Also, don't forget to let community members, media and other dignitaries know about your Walk to School Day event! Check out our website for the customizable press release and other materials at [www.saferoutesmichigan.org/w2sd\\_materials.htm](http://www.saferoutesmichigan.org/w2sd_materials.htm).

### School Bus Cuts

For those schools and communities dealing with cut backs on busing, you are encouraged to take a look at the materials the Safe Routes to School National Partnership Task Force developed. It includes national statistics, local examples, resources for schools on how to engage parents in SRTS in the wake of bus cuts, sample editorials, etc. Please feel free to share with affected local communities. To view these resources, visit <http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/local/112191#Bus%20Cuts>.

### Help your Children Take the Next Step

Build upon your Safe Routes to School efforts by using the Promoting Active Communities (PAC) program to examine how to increase opportunities for children to walk or bike to the library, park or ice cream shop. This program consists of a *free* online assessment tool designed to help community members evaluate local policies, programs, and environments and identify ways to promote and support walking and biking. The PAC also consists of an awards system that recognizes communities for using innovative strategies to design active living environments. Each community receives a personalized feedback report to enhance the local planning process. Anyone who wants to learn more and implement projects that will increase active living should visit the PAC Web site at [www.mihealthtools.org/communities](http://www.mihealthtools.org/communities).

Thanks, and please remember to call our office if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions!

Best wishes,

Andrea

