

Active and Safe Routes to School – Getting Started!

Do you experience any of the following at your school?

- Traffic congestion at pick up and drop off
- Students/families jaywalking
- Concerns with students travelling alone
- Distracted drivers, pedestrians and wheelers
- Limited parking
- Illegal driver behaviors (double parking, parking in crosswalks, U-turns in crosswalks, etc.)
- Cars idling in the pick-up/drop-off zone

These are common barriers that hinder walking and biking to school while making school sites less safe for everyone. You can start to mitigate these issues while supporting students and families in using active travel for their school journey by using a School Travel Planning approach. School Travel Planning has the following 6 basic components:

1. Project set up

Set yourself up for success by taking the time to identify those who have an interest in or who would benefit from active travel to school (stakeholders), as well as those in your school community that are willing to participate and support the process (champions). These can include active parents, teachers and administrators, community groups, neighboring schools, the local school board, and community resource officers.

2. Baseline data collection

The best way to understand how and why people travel the way they do is to ask them! You won't know if any changes you make are working if you don't know where you are starting from. Baseline data helps you gather a snapshot of the unique challenges your school faces, which will better inform you as to how to address them. Base line data can include things like surveys of parents and students as well as a listing of existing conditions (missing signs, icy sidewalks, etc.) that influence how students travel to school.

3. Action planning

School Action Plans are living documents created to address the unique needs of each school. As your school's needs change and evolve, so does too does the Action Plan. The best Action Plans are designed in collaboration with various community stakeholders including the local school board and municipality.

4. Implementation

Implement your plan and try out your ideas! Don't get discouraged if things don't take off right away. Asking people to change their travel behavior takes time and patience. Have fun with the process!

5. Follow up data collection

You won't know how far you've come unless you measure what you've done! Keeping track of how people continue to travel over time will help you to know if your interventions are working, and/or if you need to try something else.

The Active and Safe Routes to School Program follows the Canadian standard [School Travel Planning Toolkit](#). This toolkit includes [step-by-step instructions](#) to support you in implementing School Travel Planning in your school community.

Not ready to commit to a full program just yet? Visit Calgary.ca/activeschools to see what other YYC schools are doing and find easy ideas to try now.

Comprehensive School Health- Infused School Travel Planning



Social and Physical Environment

- Walking and Wheeling Buddies program
- Walking School Bus program
- Bicycle, scooter, skateboard storage
- School crosswalks
- Student loading zones

Teaching and Learning

- Professional Learning Opportunities for staff
- Active school travel education
- Pedestrian and cycle safety education
- Air quality monitoring and education
- Student mentorship opportunities

Policy

- Idle-free bylaws
- School wellness policy
- Walking field trip policy
- Walk Zone limits

Partnerships and Services

- AMA Safety Patrol
- School parent council
- Police services/Bylaw
- Community associations
- Municipal traffic engineers