Safe Routes to School

- Bev Brody
- Pacific Global Health Conference
- October 9, 2012
WHAT IS SRTS?

- Safe Routes to School is a national and international movement to create safe, convenient, and fun opportunities for children to walk and bike to and from schools.

- Designed to reverse the decline in children walking and bicycling to schools.
FEWER CHILDREN ARE WALKING AND BICYCLING TODAY

Walk and Bike
- 1969, 48% (88% within 1 mile)
- 2009, 13% (38% within 1 mile)
MORE PARENTS ARE DRIVING

Parents driving their children to school can account for 20%-25% of morning rush hour traffic.

(Parisi Associates; Melbourne Department of Infrastructure)
THE CONSEQUENCES OF THIS...
...INSTEAD OF THIS CAN BE ALARMING.
HEALTH CONSEQUENCES

Today’s children may be the first generation to have a shorter life expectancy than their parents!
BENEFITS TO HEALTH

- Students who walk 1 mile to and from school get two-thirds of recommended levels of physical activity.

- Children who walk to school are more physically active throughout the day.

- Physically active children tend to have better academic achievement, enhanced concentration, better classroom behavior.
THE FIVE “E’S” OF A SRTS PROGRAM

- Evaluation
- Education
- Encouragement
- Engineering
- Enforcement
EVALUATION

What are the barriers to walking/bicycling?
Is the program making a difference?
EDUCATION

- Teach pedestrian and cycle safety skills classes.
- Create games that are fun for kids to learn.
- Include parents, neighbors and other community members.
ENCOURAGEMENT

- Hold events like Walk and Bike to School Days
- Organize Walking School Buses and Bike Trains
- Create Contests
- Emphasize the fun of walking and bicycling
Engineering solutions involve physical changes to the environment that create safer accommodations for pedestrians and/or cyclists.

**Short Term:**
- Signage
- Striping
- Visibility

**Long Term:**
- Sidewalks and Paths
- Intersections
- Speed Control
ENFORCEMENT

- Develop Crossing Guard Policies
- Create Traffic Safety Campaigns (Radio)
- Neighborhood Watch
- “Smart Signs” or Active Speed Monitors
SRTS IS MORE THAN WALK TO SCHOOL DAY!
HOW TO GET THERE…

1. Educate the school community on SRTS
   i. Attend principals meetings
   ii. Attend PTSA meetings
   iii. Attend Neighborhood Association meetings

2. Identify a champion

3. Form a task force
   i. 4 – 6 committed parents, grandparents, caregivers
   ii. School administrator (teachers)
   iii. Allied support: other school leaders, community groups, school staff
OTHER IMPORTANT PARTNERS

- Local government (City, County): Mayor, Council members, State/County Representatives
- Local law enforcement
- Local Public Works Department
- Department of Education
3 IMPORTANT ITEMS TO CONSIDER

- Administration support
- High density of students living within one mile from the school
- Evidence of a somewhat safe built environment
HAVE A KICK OFF EVENT (W2SD)
I. BRING THE RIGHT PEOPLE TOGETHER
2. IDENTIFY A ROUTE
3. HAVE A GIVEAWAY

Win this Bike! Walk to School!
4. CREATE A FLYER AND PROMOTE!

Promote through:
- Flyers
- School Calendar
- Email Blasts
- School Announcements
- Social Media
- Radio and Newspaper
5. **INVITE ELECTED AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS**

Use event as educational tool for stakeholders
6. GET MEDIA COVERAGE

‘Walking School Bus’ in spotlight at island schools, state Legislature

KILAUEA — The Walking School Bus engaged students around the island on Wednesday, one day before the state Legislature will consider a bill to fund and expand the model Safe Routes to School program.

“We’ve got people doing all sorts of things at every site,” said Rev Brody, island coordinator for the Get Fit Kaua‘i initiative.

Derek Kawakami, our state representative, is walking with the kids at Kapa‘a Elementary School, and Bill Arakaki, the Kaua‘i Area Complex superintendent, is at Kalalau School,” Brody said. “In addition, the students at Kalalau School will be greeted by the school band playing for them when they arrive.”

The state House of Representatives today will consider House Bill 2626, which calls for a surcharge of $10 ($20 if in a school zone) for all moving violations. The surcharge would go into public works to fund Safe Routes to School.

On Kaua‘i, the program’s Walking School Bus takes place every fourth Wednesday of the month.

Marshall Anthony, a Kilauea Elementary School fifth-grade student, said it was fun walking with a big crowd on Wednesday, and he had an opportunity to win a bike.

The Walking School Bus, which ended at Kilauea School was one of several taking place around the island in conjunction with the Safe Routes to School Walk to School Day set aside for the fourth Wednesday of each month.

“What is exciting about Kilauea is they have a new route which was generated by the students,” Brody said.

“Other route which took students along the Kilauea Lighthouse Road was just too long and there was too much traffic, said Mayor Bernard Carvalho Jr., who joined the walk.

A police officer who accompanied the group and helped with traffic control said the new route is much shorter and follows the route used in the event of a school-wide evacuation.

The difference is the students arrive at school rather than exit the school.

“This was the students’ idea,” Brody said. “They came up with the idea after the first Walking School Bus
A QUICK LOOK AT KAUAI’S SRTS PROGRAM
IN CLOSING ...LESSONS WE’VE LEARNED

1. It must be sustainable
   - Don’t be too grandiose aside from the initial kickoff event

2. Safe Routes to School must be INTERNALLY driven
   - Make sure the champion finds the interested parents

You Can Do It!!!
QUESTIONS?

Thank You!

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