

# Toledo Safe Routes to School Bike to School Day Toolkit



Updated February 2016



## What's Inside:

What is Bike to School Day?.....	2
Why Bike?.....	2
Bike to School Day Checklist.....	3-5
Parent Volunteer Letter Template.....	6
Business Donation Letter Template.....	7
<u>Activity Worksheets:</u>	
Bicycle Safety Basics.....	8
Safety Shapes.....	9
Bike Collage Instructions.....	10
Bike Collage Template.....	11
“Bike and Walk to School is Cool” Song.....	12

## What is Bike to School Day?

- Part of a month-long celebration, this event encourages students to bike to school by teaching them the health and environmental benefits that physical activity has.
- National Bike to School Day provides an opportunity for schools across the country to join together to celebrate and to build off of the energy of National Bike Month, held in May every year.
- The first-ever National Bike to School Day took place on May 9, 2012 where almost 1,000 local events in 49 states joined together to encourage children to safely bicycle or walk to school.

## Why Bike?

- **It's fun!**
  - Walking and bicycling bring a sense of joy and independence.
- **Increases Educational Performance**
  - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that physical activity greatly increases school achievement through many academic behaviors. These include self-esteem, memory, mood, concentration, creativity, verbal skills and problem- solving abilities. An active start to the day will allow children to arrive to school more alert and ready to learn!
  - Education doesn't have to start inside the school gate; children can learn about their neighborhood and become more self- reliant.
- **Builds Healthier Habits**
  - Walking and bicycling to school enables children to incorporate the regular physical activity they need each day while also forming healthy habits that can last a lifetime.
  - Regular physical activity helps children build strong bones, muscles and joints, and it decreases the risk of obesity.
- **Creates a Cleaner Environment**
  - Replacing car trips to school with walking or bicycling can reduce congestion and air-polluting emissions.
- **Promotes Safety**
  - Children and adults need to learn safe walking and bicycling skills.
- **Benefits the Community**
  - Bicycling reduces traffic congestion, boosting a sense of community, and improving neighborhood connections.

## Bike to School Day Checklist

### May \_\_\_, 201\_\_



#### 1. Identify the Bike to School Day Champion

- Who will be planning the event? (i.e., principal, vice principal, teacher, school nurse, social worker, PTO, parent volunteer.)

#### 2. Register your event

- Register for your event at:  
<http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/>
- When you register, your school will be entered to win 10 bikes and 20 helmets! Check out the link below!  
<http://walkbiketoschool.org/helmets-on-heads-bike-share-giveaway> - Register by April 15<sup>th</sup> to be included in the first of 5 drawings during through April and May.

#### 3. Determine the type of event

- Example#1: Remote starting point
  - A nearby church, library, police station, fire station, park. Participants meet at a central location and bike to school from there.
- Example #2: Bike Train Event
  - Students and families are encouraged to meet in their neighborhood to participate in a bike ride to school.
  - Encourage parents to bicycle with their children to school on Bike to School Day. You may want to especially target parents who ride on a regular basis and encourage them to invite other students in the neighborhood to join them.
- Example #3: School as starting point
  - Students, along with volunteers and principal, bike to a specific location together (field trip to park, police/fire station, library, church, etc.).
- Regardless of which type of event you decide to have, ALWAYS make safety of priority. **Encourage helmet use by all students, parents, and volunteers.**

#### 4. Recruit parents & volunteers

- Volunteers can help with event preparation and on the event date itself.
  - How to recruit: PTO meetings, via email or on the listserv groups who regularly volunteer for student activities. Remember to take advantage of your local school and community newsletters.
  - Who to recruit: You can find volunteers at your school, senior centers, the health department, college/high schools and fitness centers.

### 5. Make arrangements with the food service department

- Provide the children who participate with a bagged breakfast or snack
  - Try to choose healthy options and always consider possible food allergies. Apples, carrots or raisins are just a few examples of easy, tasty and healthy snacks!

### 6. Finalize event plans

- Decide what students and families will do when they arrive at the school.
  - Are students supposed to report to their classroom? Are students meeting outside together? Are they meeting in one central location in the building? Where will helmets and bicycles be stored?
  - How will student's bikes be differentiated? Labeled bike tags with the student and teacher's names are helpful when finding bikes at the end of the event or school day!
- Notify your school community resource officer or other local law enforcement with details of the event: date, time, location, and specific routes.
  - If the event requires temporary road closing, make sure to contact police officials to block off designated area during event.

### 7. Promote the event

- One to two weeks before event:* Post an announcement in the school and community newsletter and include in daily school announcements.
- 1 week before the event:* Send home fliers that outline event logistics. Include safety reminders such as “wear bright coloring” and “wear a helmet”.
- Several days before the event:* hold an assembly to talk about the event and possibly bring in a police officer or other professional to talk about bike safety. Send home educational materials for parents to review with their children. Utilize the –“**Safe Out the Door**” **All Ohio Show Choir video to share at pep rally** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPMcEBIqVWo>
- Send home flyers and permission slips with children to see how many children will be attending event
- Have the school do an All Call a couple days before event
- Get the teachers involved by doing fun classroom activities:
  - Art/Computer Class: create artwork promoting Bike to School Day (See Page 10-11)
  - Math: Keep logs of biking times; calculate speeds and distances.
  - English: Write press release and/or public service announcements to promote event. Write essays or keep a diary about your experiences when riding.
  - History: Study historical locations in your community by walking/biking to them
  - Geography: Drawing safe biking routes near their home or school.
  - P.E./Gym: Teach students the proper bike signaling and safety techniques for riding (See Page 8)
  - Music: Learn “Walk and Bike to School Is Cool” song (See Page 12)

### 8. Provide Incentives

- Certificate at end of year school assembly
- Dress Down Day
- Hat Day
- Pajama Day
- PTO provide a special event
- Lunch with principal
- Breakfast picnic with sack lunch provided

### 9. Make your event fun!

- Invite your learning community high school mascot or wear school colors while walking or biking
- Take disposable cameras on the route and document what you see
- Carry colorful balloons during event
- Hold a pep rally
- Decorate the school's bike rack
- Have students map a walking or bicycling route from their home to school
- Play music with lyrics about walking or bicycling to school (See Page 12)

### 10. Important Links

- Bike to School Day flyer
  - <http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/get-set/build-excitement/fliers-and-banners>
- Tip Sheets
  - <http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/keep-going/pedestrian-safety>
  - <http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/keep-going/bike-safety>
- Volunteer Letter- Page 5
- Donation Letter – Page 6

### 11. Other Resources

- <http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/ready>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPMcEBIqVWo> – “Safe Out the Door” All Ohio Show Choir video to share at pep rally.
- <http://www.nhtsa.gov/Bicycles>

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(Date)

Dear (School Name) Families:

We are looking for parent volunteers!

(School Name) is participating in the Toledo Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. The SRTS program is committed to encouraging students to walk and bike to school in an effort to increase physical activity, promote a healthier lifestyle, decrease the amount of traffic and pollution near schools, and prepare students to be safety smart whether they are walking to school or in their own neighborhoods.

We are looking for parent volunteers to help with Bike to School Day on \_\_\_\_\_.(date) Volunteers can help by riding along with their child and students to and from school, greeting the students as they arrive to school, assist with serving of breakfast or a snack, and/or making sure that bicycle helmets are properly fitted. Please contact \_\_\_\_\_(your name) at \_\_\_\_\_(phone number) or email at \_\_\_\_\_(email address) if you are able to help with this event.

Thank you!

Sincerely

(Name)  
(School Name)

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Manager's Name  
Name of business  
Street address  
City, State zip

Date

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ (Manager's name):

This year, \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of school) Elementary School will be hosting a Bike to School Day on \_\_\_\_\_. (Date of the event) We are seeking donations of the following items for those who participate in Bike to School Day. Below are some examples of healthy ideas!

- Non-sugar drinks: water, non-fat or 1% low-fat milk or unsweetened tea
- Snacks: apples, bananas, carrots, pretzels, whole-grain crackers, cheese sticks or yogurt
- Small prizes: pencils, stickers, reusable water bottles, bike reflectors, etc.

We are promoting this event at our school to bring awareness to the community that walking and biking is a good way for students and members of the community to increase physical activity, which leads to a healthier lifestyle. We would greatly appreciate your support, and would like to request a donation from you. We are seeking \_\_\_\_\_. (Item you are requesting for donation)

In exchange for your donation, your business will receive:

- ✓ Recognition throughout the community
- ✓ Publicity on our event welcome table to our entire school population
- ✓ Recognition in our school newspaper
- ✓ A tax-deductible donation receipt

Thank you in advance for supporting the health and happiness of your community. I will call you next week to answer any questions you have about this request. You may also contact me at \_\_\_\_\_ (your phone number) or \_\_\_\_\_ (your email address).

Sincerely,

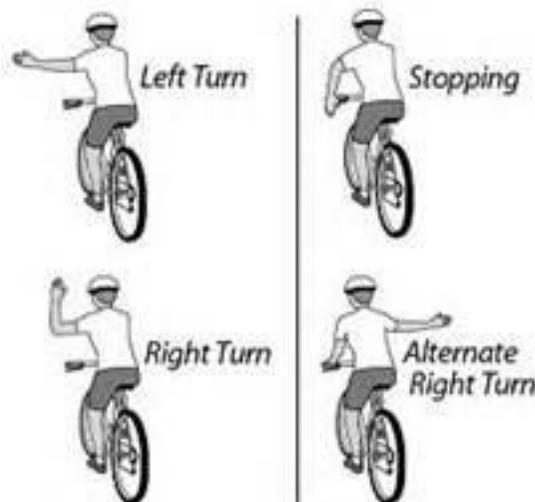


## Bicycle Safety Basics

Being safe is very important when riding your bike. When you're riding in an area where there are cars, there is always the danger of an accident. Knowing the rules of bicycle safety can keep you from getting hurt!

### 3 steps to staying safe on your bike:

- 1. Always wear a helmet:** Make sure your helmet is on properly. Helmets should never tip too far back or too far forward. The helmet straps should form a "V" shape around each ear.
- 2. Be visible to drivers:** Use reflectors so drivers can see you at night! Also, try not to bike alone...2 bikes are easier to see than one!
- 3. Ride smart:** Drivers should always know what you're going to do next. Do not make any sudden changes in your course and use hand signals to show your next move. Below are 3 hand signals to use when biking.



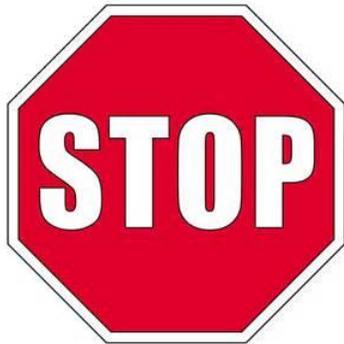
**Now that you know some smart biking tips, be sure to use them to stay safe next time you're on your bike!**



## Safety Shapes Worksheet

**Instructions:** Listen carefully to your teacher's directions about what to do for each picture.

1. Count the sides on the stop sign. Write (or say) that number next to the stop sign.
2. Draw a square around the picture of a crosswalk warning sign.
3. Draw a line under the bike helmet.
4. Color in the middle circle of the stoplight.
5. Draw a triangle above the bike.
6. Circle the crossing guard.





## Bike Collage Instructions

Display students colored bike pictures across the school to serve as a visual reminder to students, parents, staff and the entire school community that your school is committed to getting more students and families using alternative means of transportation to get to school.

To show support of Bike to School Day/Week, complete the display before or during the event. On the following page, a template is provided for students to color in. On the blank line, the student can write their name in as well. However, if each child wants to draw their own picture, that works too! Then, display student's work throughout the school in a visible area. This could be either outside of their classrooms, down the hallways, in the main entrance or even in the cafeteria.



I,



# Walk & Bike to School Is Cool

(Played to the tune of One Direction's song What Makes You Beautiful)

Lyrics by Jason Gubuan

Let's ride our bikes  
Let's take a hike  
You're working out when you walk  
through the door  
Don't need no car  
To go that far  
Walking that way up to school can be  
really cool

Everyone else at the school can see it  
Everyone else but you

Riding your bike out to school can be  
really fun  
Or you can walk with your friends and get  
lots of sun  
And when you go cross the street just  
look left and right  
Did you know  
Oh oh  
Walk and bike to school is cool

If only you can look left and right  
You'll understand why I want you to cross  
safely  
And if you ride on your bike put a helmet  
on  
So you're safe  
Oh oh  
Walk and bike to school is cool  
Oh oh  
Walk and bike to school is cool

So c-come on  
Get on your bike  
To play it safe I'll make sure to have a  
helmet on  
Let's cross the street

Let's use our feet  
And walk across when the light flashes  
To go,  
oh-oh

Everyone else at the school can see it  
Everyone else but you

Riding your bike  
out to school can be really fun  
Or you can walk with your friends and get  
lots of sun  
And when you go cross the street just  
look left and right  
Did you know  
Oh oh

Walk and bike to school is cool

If only you can look left and right  
You'll understand why I  
want you to cross safely  
And if you ride on your bike put a helmet  
on  
So you're safe  
Oh oh  
Walk and bike to school is cool  
Oh oh  
Walk and bike to school is cool

[Bridge]  
Nana Nana Nana Nana