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*The Alameda County Safe Routes to Schools Program is a program of the Alameda County Transportation Commission ([alamedactc.org](http://alamedactc.org)) and is funded with Alameda County's local sales tax Measure B, regional, state and federal funds.*



A GUIDE TO SETTING UP ONGOING

# Walk and Roll to School Days





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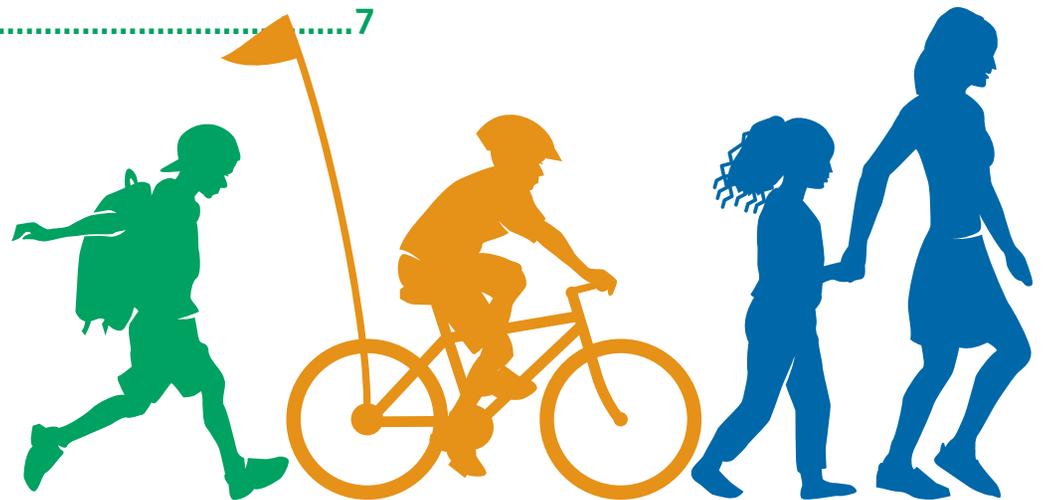
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# Event Description

## What are Ongoing Walk and Roll to School Days?

**Ongoing Walk and Roll to School Days** are regularly-scheduled events to encourage students, parents, and the school community to get to school by using active (walking, biking, skating, etc.) or shared (bus, transit, carpooling) transportation.

Ongoing Walk and Roll to School Days keep the active and shared transportation momentum going between larger, countywide events such as October's International Walk and Roll to School Day or February's Golden Sneaker Contest.

These events can be celebrated at any interval that makes sense for a school, such as weekly or monthly. Organizers of the events, such as school champions, parents or teachers, should choose a consistent day of the week to hold a Walk and Roll to School Day. By regularly scheduling Walk and Roll to School Days (for example, every first Friday or third Wednesday), schools continually reinforce safe walking and biking behaviors throughout the school year. Holding these events are also a fun way to celebrate your school's community spirit.

Whether you're new to ongoing Walk and Roll to School Days or these are a long-standing tradition at your school, the Alameda County Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S) Program has many tools available to help make your events a success. Depending on your resources and the amount of time you have to

plan, you may choose to hold an event that is simple or elaborate. Starting with a simple event will help you learn who the school's key players are, start momentum for future events, and inspire a student to walk, bike, or scooter regularly.

The purpose of this toolkit is to help you organize and implement fun and successful Ongoing Walk and Roll to School Days. Keep reading for details and helpful planning tips!



## Why should my school celebrate and encourage walking and rolling to school?

Encouraging active and shared transportation – such as walking, biking, and carpooling – can have long-lasting, positive benefits for your school. Walk and Roll to School Days can promote **safe ways for students to walk and roll to schools** and **ease traffic congestion around your school**.

In one generation, the number of kids walking and bicycling to school has dropped from **71 percent to 18 percent**. This decrease has impacts on multiple parts of our community:

- » **Safety.** Concerns about safety are the top reason that parents do not let their kids walk or bike to school. Ongoing events increase the visibility of walking and biking in a community, which increases safety, and teaches students and their families about safe behaviors when walking and biking to school.
- » **Environment.** Transportation is responsible for nearly 40 percent of the Bay Area’s greenhouse gas emissions. Walking and biking reduces the number of vehicles on the road and, in turn, decreases emissions.
- » **Student Health.** Seventy-five percent of California students are not able to pass basic fitness standards. Walking and biking to school is an easy way to incorporate fitness into a student’s daily routine.
- » **Congestion.** Travel to school accounts for approximately 21 percent of all morning traffic. Getting out of your car keeps you out of traffic and alleviates congestion for others.

### Walking School Buses and Bike Trains make great ongoing events!

A **Walking School Bus** is a group of families living in the same neighborhood who form a walking group to take children in their area to and/or from school. Parents or “drivers” take turns walking along a set route to and from school, picking up children from designated “bus stops” along the way. Parents can determine route schedules that work for them. Walking School Buses are best suited for elementary school students.

Adults share the responsibility of getting the kids to school safely, which saves time for everyone, and the kids get exercise that helps them focus in school. The walk to school is a chance for parents to share, teach and talk with your kids without the stress of honking horns and backed-up traffic. It’s a chance for parents to meet their children’s friends, their parents, get to know the neighborhood, and teach their kids to be street smart and safe.

Like walking school buses, **Bike Trains** are groups of parents and kids who ride together from the same neighborhood along a designated route. Best suited for children in upper elementary and middle school grades, bike trains are led by adults—one at the front and one at the rear of the train—that accompany students as they bike to and from school. From one or two friends or families biking together, to a route with multiple “stations” where more riders join in, bike trains can be a great way to instill a love of bicycling while developing life-long safety skills.



# Event Promotion and Timeline

Your event can be customized to the needs and characteristics of your school, and the event can be as large or small as you would like and can also grow over time.

More planning resources, flyer templates, and printable materials can be found in the Resources section at [alamedacountysr2s.org/our-services/plan-an-event/ongoing-walk-roll-to-school-days/](https://alamedacountysr2s.org/our-services/plan-an-event/ongoing-walk-roll-to-school-days/).



## Quick Tips

Here are some tips to make your Walk and Roll to School Day a success:

- Pick a day to hold your event, and be consistent with the day of week that you hold your event
- Choose a consistent location to hold your event to greet walkers and bikers as they arrive to school
- Promote in your school's newsletter, bulletin board, marquee, classroom flyer, parent letter, morning announcement, etc.
- Use the SR2S monthly themes or activities ([alamedacountysr2s.org/our-services/plan-an-event/ongoing-walk-roll-to-school-days/](https://alamedacountysr2s.org/our-services/plan-an-event/ongoing-walk-roll-to-school-days/)) and offer occasional giveaways as encouragement
- Recruit other parent volunteers to help out the morning of your event and/or reach out to your School Site Council or PTA

## Suggested Timeline for a Successful Walk and Roll to School Day

Depending on your school community, organizing a successful event can take as little as one week! Here are the steps you can take to organize a Walk and Roll to School Day event at your school.

### Day 1: Choose an event, date, and location, and seek principal's approval.

1. If necessary, obtain the school principal's approval for your event.
2. Decide on an ongoing event that makes sense for your school and will encourage the most participation. Ideas for ongoing events include Walk and Roll to School Day, Bike to School Day, Hike to School Day, Walking Wednesdays, Fitness Fridays, or Scoot to School Day. School spirit days or Coffee with the Principal mornings are great to align with your Walk and Roll Day. More ideas for monthly themes and activities can be found at [alamedacountysr2s.org/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/](https://alamedacountysr2s.org/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/)
3. Decide the location of the event. Choose an entrance used by walkers and bicyclists for the activity so students will likely pass by.

### Day 2: Advertise the event

A big part of having a successful Walk and Roll to School Day is promotion. Your students and parents need to know about the event in order to participate,

and we have sample text and posters for you to use in promoting the event at [alamedacountysr2s.org/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/](https://alamedacountysr2s.org/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/).

### Days 3-5: Recruit adult volunteers

1. Recruit volunteers to help with event promotion and the morning of the event. Depending on the type of event, you usually need one to two adults. Volunteers are crucial to creating and sustaining a successful Walk and Roll to School Day event. Bring a volunteer sign-up sheet with you to all of your Walk and Roll to School Day events to help recruit and keep track of parents that are interested in helping in the future. A downloadable Volunteer Sign Up Form can be found on the "Walk and Roll to School Day" webpage: [alamedacountysr2s.org/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/](https://alamedacountysr2s.org/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/).
2. Reach out to school staff (custodian or front office staff) if you want a table at your event. Make sure you know where to get a table and any other necessary supplies that morning.

### Day 6: Remind everyone

Make final announcements to remind families about the event. This could include announcements over the loudspeaker and auto-call or emails to parents.

### Additional ideas for spreading the word about the event include:

- Send flyers or letters home
- Send an email out via the school email list, if available
- With students, make banners to hang up at your school, or signs to carry on day of event
- Put up posters in highly visible areas (like the front office or cafeteria)
- Include event info in the School Newsletter
- Post info on school website or social media, such as Facebook and/or Instagram pages
- Post event on school marquee, if available
- Call parents, use school phone tree, or use school automated phone system
- Make announcements over the loudspeaker
- Ask parents, teachers, and staff to help promote the event; notify teachers via staff announcements

For sample promotional materials, visit the SR2S Program's Online Resource Center at [alamedacountysr2s.org/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/](https://alamedacountysr2s.org/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/).

**Day of the event! Hurray! Event day is here! Here are some ways to make your Walk and Roll Day a success - choose what works for you and your school.**

1. Organize a greeting table to welcome students as they arrive at school. Consider tracking how many kids walk, bike, scoot, carpool, bus, or drive to school on the big day. Students may participate by placing a sticker dot on “mode” chart to indicate how they got to school. This chart can be used over time to show participation growth and encourage more participation. A sample mode chart can be found at [alamedacountysr2s.org/our-services/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/](https://alamedacountysr2s.org/our-services/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/).
2. Create a festive environment with music, decorations, sidewalk chalk, etc.
3. Take pictures and share them on the SR2S Program’s Facebook page: [facebook.com/saferoutestoschool](https://facebook.com/saferoutestoschool).  
*Note: If taking photos of students, you will need to have their parents sign photo waiver forms, unless your school has an opt-out policy. This form can be found at [alamedacountysr2s.org/our-services/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/](https://alamedacountysr2s.org/our-services/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/).*
4. Have fun and celebrate your success!

## Above & Beyond Ideas

### Give away a small reward to participants.

Something as simple as a sticker can go a long way. Sample sticker templates can be downloaded from [alamedacountysr2s.org/our-services/plan-an-event/ongoing-walk-roll-to-school-days/](https://alamedacountysr2s.org/our-services/plan-an-event/ongoing-walk-roll-to-school-days/).

**Create posters or a banner** that will greet students when they arrive at school. Potential phrases include “Thanks for walking,” “It’s Bike to School Day,” “Hike it. Bike it. I like it!” or “It’s cool to walk and bike to school!”



**Distribute punch cards to students** participating in Walk and Roll to School Day events. After participating in a certain number of events, the students can redeem punches for an item of the organizers’ choice. (A punch card template can be downloaded at [alamedacountysr2s.org/our-services/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/](https://alamedacountysr2s.org/our-services/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/).)

# Helpful Materials

If your school is registered\* as a part of the Alameda County Safe Routes to Schools Program, organizers of Ongoing Walk and Roll to School Days will receive:

- » Monthly emails with ideas for next month's ongoing event
- » Newsletter templates for outreach and promotion
- » Promotional poster template
- » Vinyl banner

Additional resources can be found on the SR2S Program's Online Resource Center by visiting this webpage: [alamedacountysr2s.org/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/](http://alamedacountysr2s.org/plan-an-event/monthly-walk-roll-to-school-days/).

\*If your school is not registered for the SR2S program, please contact [info@alamedacountysr2s.org](mailto:info@alamedacountysr2s.org) or visit [alamedacountysr2s.org/register/](http://alamedacountysr2s.org/register/).





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