

EDUCATION

MA Safe Routes to School Bicycle Safety Education

The Massachusetts Safe Routes to School program provides Bicycle Safety Education to School Partners through classroom sessions and school assemblies. Bicycle safety education is geared specifically towards fourth through eighth graders. SRTS Outreach Coordinators also organize bicycle safety education Train the Trainer sessions for school administrators and adult volunteers.

✓ Our Bicycle Safety Training Model is based on the following beliefs:

- Children need Bicycle Safety Education skills consistently reinforced because they are still developing the cognitive, problem-solving and visual skills needed to cross the street, identify a safe place to ride and to estimate speed and distance to make a safe crossing.
- A bicycle safety training program must provide a supervised and structured real world context that will be easy for children to recall when applying these skills.
- Learning occurs in the context of social interactions. Both peer and adult onsite training will help children grasp the safety concepts that cannot be achieved alone or through a lecture-type format.
- A bicycle safety program should include positive reinforcement for correct behaviors to ensure that the habit is developed.

✓ What does Bicycle Safety Education involve?

- A SRTS Bicycle safety trainer spends 30-45 minutes per session teaching the basics of Bicycle Safety with each classroom.
- The trainer brings a helmet and a bicycle to demonstrate how to properly fit and wear a bicycle helmet and make sure a bicycle is safe to ride. This is an interactive learning session that challenges each student to immediately demonstrate bicycle safety skills.
- The trainer can teach at least two classes at one time, not to exceed 40 students in one session. All School Partners can receive up to 6 sessions.

✓ What do Students learn?

- **Why We Should Love to Bike:** physical fitness benefits, protecting the environment, improved academic performance, and personal enjoyment
- **Helmets:** why and how to properly wear a bicycle helmet
- **Bright & Tight:** proper bicycling clothing
- **Simple bicycle maintenance** and **Rules of the road**



National Bike to School Day is a national event to increase bicycling among elementary and middle school students. A school bike rack in Newton was packed with bikes of all shapes and sizes on National Bike to School Day in 2012.

Questions? Your SRTS Outreach Coordinator is here to help.

Massachusetts Safe Routes to School

1.857.383.3810

www.mass.gov/safe-routes-to-school

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✓ Who provides SRTS Bicycle Safety Education?

The training is offered by the Massachusetts Safe Routes to School program, an initiative of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). MA SRTS Outreach Coordinators will organize and lead the curriculum for each Bicycle Safety Education course, as well as serve as a statewide resource for School Partners following the training. MA SRTS also works with local bicycle safety experts at MassBike to offer Bicycle Safety Education services.

✓ My school wants to provide Bicycle Safety Education to students. How do we get started?

Bicycle safety education training is free for all Safe Routes to School Partners. Follow these four easy steps to schedule training at your school:

1. Obtain approval and schedule a date with your school's administration.
2. Express your interest in organizing a Bicycle Safety Education session to your SRTS Outreach Coordinator.
3. Inform your SRTS Outreach Coordinator of the date and they will coordinate the training session.
4. Notify students and parents when the training will be taking place.

✓ How do I ensure my students receive Bicycle Safety Education each year?

In addition to the Bicycle Safety Education model, Massachusetts Safe Routes to School also offers *Train the Trainer* workshops for Bicycle Safety Education. A SRTS Bicycle Trainer will lead a one-hour training session consisting of a course demonstration, a discussion of the key instructional points and a performance run through. The ideal class size for a Bicycle *Train the Trainer* session is two to six faculty members.

For more information about this option, contact your Safe Routes to School Outreach Coordinator.



Students and parents take part in a bike train in Fairhaven.

ALL Safe Routes to School Partners are Eligible to Receive free Bicycle Training!

All Safe Routes to School Partners are eligible to receive Bicycle Safety Education and we do not prioritize schools based upon percentages of bicycle riders. Even if students are not biking to school, they are most likely biking elsewhere. This is a free and easy way to help them do so more safely!

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