



Spring 2018



Coordinator's Corner

Spring is always an exciting time for SRTS, and this year is no exception. Biking and walking activities on hiatus for the winter are starting back up again; communities are preparing applications for another round of Non-Infrastructure Grants; and planning for Bike to School Day is beginning in earnest.

In this spring newsletter, you will find more information on all of the above, as well as information about equity and Vision Zero; learn about basic bike maintenance; and meet the winners of Virginia's Most Outstanding Crossing Guard Award for 2017.

If you have questions or would like more information on any of the topics included here, please call the Virginia SRTS Hotline at 1-855-601-7787 or send an email to info@virginiarts.org.

Regards,
Rob Williams
Virginia SRTS Coordinator



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CALENDAR

APRIL

- 4: National Walking Day
- 5: QuickStart Mini-grant due date
- 22: Earth Day
- 23: Non-Infrastructure Grant applications due

MAY

- 1-31: National Bike Month
- 9: Bike to School Day
- 18: Bike to Work Day

Friends & Faces: Teaming Up for Equity

Low-income students are more likely to walk to school, but less likely to have access to safe walking and bicycling facilities. This has significant consequences for the health and safety of these children. In fact, according to a report by Smart Growth America, Hispanic children suffer a pedestrian fatality rate that is 40 percent higher than the rate for white children. The pedestrian fatality rate for African American children is more than twice as high as the rate for white children. These statistics suggest that there are significant inequities in our transportation system that are relevant for Safe Routes to School.



A special thanks to our panel! (From left to right) Krystle Cook-Communities in Schools, Tara FitzPatrick - Greater Richmond Fit4Kids, Rachel Arrowsmith - Communities in Schools, Dr. Lauren Powell - Virginia Department of Health, Louise Lockett - Sports Backers, Sarah Powers - Richmond City Health District, Danyel Smith - Greater Richmond Fit4Kids

PHOTO CREDIT: Sarah Powers

Equity was the focus of a recent training for Virginia SRTS coordinators. The training featured a lively panel discussion among representatives of Richmond-area organizations working on equity (pictured below left). This column is a summary of what was discussed.

What is equity?

There are several definitions of equity. Here are three of the most common definitions:

- Equity involves trying to understand and give people what they need to enjoy full, healthy lives. Equality, in contrast, aims to ensure that everyone gets the same things in order to enjoy full, healthy lives. Like equity, equality aims to promote fairness and justice, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same things.- Original Author Unknown
- The presence of justice and fairness within the procedures, processes and distribution of resources by institutions or systems. Facing equity issues requires an understanding of the underlying or root causes of inequalities and oppression within our society.- Original Author Unknown
- Ensuring that Safe Routes to School initiatives are benefiting all demographic groups, with particular attention to ensuring safe, healthy, and fair outcomes for students with disabilities, low-income students, Native American students, students of color, female students, LGBTQ students, students whose families speak a language other than English, homeless students, and other demographic groups.- SRTS National Partnership

Where does the need for equity arise?

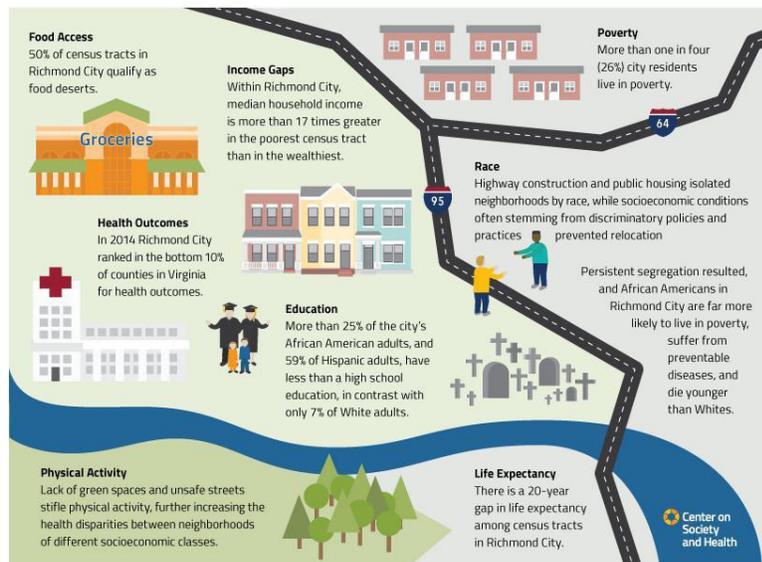
The need for equity arises from a history of inequity. Examples include racially segregated housing and transportation facilities, highway construction projects that plowed through inner city neighborhoods, and underinvestment in pedestrian and bicycle facilities in low-income communities.

How does equity fit into SRTS?

Equity considerations apply to all aspects of SRTS. Equity comes into play when assessing needs, reaching out to community members, identifying education, enforcement, and evaluation strategies, and allocating resources for SRTS implementation. In recognition of its centrality, many SRTS programs have adopted equity as the “sixth E” of SRTS alongside Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Engineering, and Evaluation.

What does working towards equity entail?

Working toward equity requires consulting with people who are often left out of public decision-making processes. Without such consultation, it can be very difficult to understand the needs in a community as they relate to walking and bicycling or to get community buy-in for changes. One challenge is that low-income people often work multiple jobs and may have a harder time attending public meetings and responding to online surveys. Language may also be a significant barrier. An equitable approach to SRTS requires a creative approach that makes it easier for people who face such barriers to participate. Examples include coordinating SRTS meetings with already-scheduled meetings or events, meeting people where they live, coordinating transportation to meetings, and providing food, childcare, and translation services.



The above infographic shows key findings from a report produced by Engaging Richmond and VCU's Center for Safety and Health

Working toward equity also requires a multipronged approach that leverages partnerships. There are many forces that produce inequities and they are often complexly interrelated. For example, in some communities, students will stay home from school if their parents are not available to take them because of work schedules. This may be due to parents' concern about the child's safety on the way to school or other factors, but the result is that the child falls behind academically, which perpetuates inequity. In cases like this, it can be especially helpful to develop partnerships like the ones in Richmond, where Greater Richmond Fit4Kids, Communities in Schools, and the Richmond Health District have partnered to improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities near schools and to coordinate a walking school bus program aimed at reducing absenteeism.

Vision Zero & SRTS

Advancing Safe Routes to School
Through Vision Zero



IMAGE CREDIT: Safe Routes to School National Partnership

Vision Zero is a growing international campaign to eliminate all deaths and serious injuries on public streets and roadways. Achieving Vision Zero includes improving road safety near schools by prioritizing engineering improvements in school zones, or conducting targeted safety enforcement. Likewise, community members play a large role in shaping road safety near schools, especially during arrival and dismissal. That's why it's critical to encourage safe behaviors for everyone. Vision Zero for Youth also means that every child, parent, and neighbor learns to travel safely whether by foot, bike, bus, or car.

Locally, VDOT affirmed its goal of zero deaths and serious injuries with its [2017-2022 Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#). The Virginia SRTS Program is part of the state's Vision Zero work. Our activities to educate and encourage parents and students to safely walk, bike, and ride transit when traveling to school, improve road safety for the entire community.

Nationally, the National Center for Safe Routes to School is leading the [Vision Zero for Youth](#) movement, along with support from the Highway Safety Research Center, Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, Child Health Initiative, and the FIA Foundation. The Safe Routes to School National Partnership recommends the following five

strategies to integrate Safe Routes to School into broader Vision Zero initiatives:

1. Use data to prioritize safety improvements near schools
2. Leverage local Vision Zero initiatives to increase investments in Safe Routes to School programs
3. Support comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian safety education in schools
4. Reduce speeding and speed limits near schools
5. Establish community-based grants to support Vision Zero and Safe Routes to School through outreach and education

For more ideas and materials for your own targeted school zone campaign, check out the [Zone In, Not Out toolkit](#).

Non-Infrastructure Grants

The Virginia SRTS Program funds municipal- or school division-based local SRTS coordinators through its Non-Infrastructure Grant program. This reimbursement program funds both full- and part-time SRTS coordinators. The [online application](#) is due by 11:59 PM on March 23, and can be started by submitting the required [Activities and Programs Plan](#). Previously submitted APPs must be updated to reflect your most recent activities and planning for the grant period. Cities or school divisions applying for a fourth round of funding will need to include a 20 percent local match in their grant budget.

Information and resources for the grant program are available on our [School Travel Plans and Grants webpage](#), under [Non-Infrastructure Grants](#). Resources include grant guidelines, the Activities and Programs Plan template, and a FAQ sheet.

Please contact the Virginia SRTS Program at 1-855-601-7787 or info@virginiasrts.org with any questions.

Bike to School Day Registration Now Open!

Each year, tens of thousands of children, parents, school officials and community leaders nationwide participate in National Bike to School Day (BTSD). Last year, 226 Virginia schools participated in BTSD -- the 4th best turnout nationwide!



Whether you are a seasoned Bike to School Day champion or will be planning an event for the first time, be sure to check out the resources on the program website, including [How to Plan a Walk or Bike to School Day Event in 7 Days](#) and our [Learn it, Do it, Live Event Ideas tip sheet](#).

If your bike has collected dust over the winter, make sure to read our bike maintenance tips below! Also, remember to apply for a QuickStart Mini-grant which can help support Bike to School Day activities.

To register your Bike to School Day event and find event ideas, visit the [Walk and Bike to School Day website](#). The Virginia SRTS Program uses this database to track growth from year to year and send decals to participating schools.

Bike to School Day & QuickStart Mini-grants

Are you planning a Bike to School Day event? Consider supporting your event with a [QuickStart Mini-grant](#), which can be used to fund a range of activities that encourage safe walking and bicycling to school. The final spring due date for these \$1,000 grants is April 5.

QuickStart Mini-grant funds can be used for the following activities in support of Bike to School Day:

- **Bike Rodeos** - Funds can be used to purchase materials to set up a bike rodeo or to bring in outside help to run a bike rodeo.
- **Bike to School Day Incentives** - Incentives for Bike to School Day should be used to encourage participation and can take the form of promotional goods or safety items. Promotional goods include t-shirts, reflective snap bracelets, incentive tokens, and water bottles. Safety items include reflectors, seat covers, bike lights, helmets, and safety vests.
- **Bike to School Support** - Mini-grants can be used to improve access to biking throughout a school. This could include adding bike racks, cables, locks, and tools which provide students with a place to secure their bikes or perform maintenance.
- **Access to Bikes** - Bike fleets, including Strider bikes and trikes, provide students with access to bikes at school. Bikes fleets may need to be stored in storage sheds or trailers, and materials for bike repairs including tools, tires, tubes, and brake pads can also be funded. During colder months, bike trainers can be used to keep up momentum!
- **Bike Education** - The printing of a bike curriculum or other safety literature for distribution qualify as an eligible expense.
- **Bike Trains and After School Bike Clubs** - Help support before and after school bike activities with a mini-grant to purchase incentive items, team t-shirts, or safety vests.

Bicycle Maintenance Tips

As colder, winter days make way for warmer, sunnier days, it's time to get your bike out and make sure it is in proper working order! See below for some tips on maintaining your bike:

What tools or materials do you need to fix your bike?

We suggest you keep the following tools and materials available to fix problems on your bike:

- Multi-tool with a metric Allen Key and screwdrivers
- Tire levers
- Floor air pump with pressure gauge
- Extra tubes

Issue	Solution
Bike is dragging along (friction) or tires are getting pinch flats (tube is pinched by rim)	Add air to your tires! The PSI is too low. The recommended tire pressure is on the tire sidewall; check it, then fill
Brake stops the bike but feels sluggish when pulled or does not immediately spring back	Drop a small amount of oil in pivots of brakes and on cable near housing entrances or change cable housing
Brake lever pulls all the way to handle bar and still doesn't stop the bike	Brake cable is too loose! Tighten brake cable or turn barrel adjuster counter-clockwise
Brake lever only pulls a small amount before braking	Brake cable is too tight! Loosen brake cable or turn barrel adjuster clockwise
Brake is rubbing the rim on one side	Check if the wheel is centered. If so, the brake is off center so use the centering screws to adjust
Brake pads are squeaking when they touch the rim	Pads needs to be "toed in." The leading edge of the brake pad should hit the rim first
Brakes are properly adjusted but stop slowly	Pads may be dry rotted or hardened and need to be changed or sanded
Chain is chirping or squeaking	The chain needs oil! Use Tri-flow or other chain lube (not WD-40)
Chain is skipping in one spot when you pedal backward	Chain may have a kink in it, replace rusty portions or bend out
Chain is skipping forward, especially when pedaling uphill and may only happen in two or three common gears	Chain is worn, check chain, cassette, and chain rings and replace
Gears shift but are slow in either direction	Drop a small amount of oil on cable near housing entrances, change cable and housing
Chain is skipping around in any gear any time	Cable tension is off or derailleur hanger could be bent
Rattling of any kind	Check if hardware, fenders, racks, headset, and hubs are loose and tighten as necessary

Bike Fleet Maintenance

Interested in more tips for maintaining your school's bike fleet? Contact your [Local Technical Assistance Coordinator](#) for more information!

Most Outstanding Crossing Guard Winners

Thank you to everyone who took the time to nominate their crossing guard this past winter. We received nominations for 76 individual crossing guards from all areas of Virginia. Choosing only six winners for the award was challenging. Please join us in congratulating the winners of Virginia's Most Outstanding Crossing Guard Award!

Dave Becker, Loudoun County

Dave Becker is a retired firefighter who continually seeks opportunities to be involved with Emerick Elementary and Blue Ridge Middle school. He regularly makes announcements over the school loudspeakers and attends school events and musical productions.

Dave is present for his crossing guard duties during the heat, cold, rain, and snow, and always has a smile on his face while maintaining a safe environment.



Doris McKellick, Chesapeake

With over 30 years of experience, Doris McKellick takes the utmost care in her job every day, rain or shine. Each day she coordinates with the School Safety Officer to ensure that arrival and dismissal for walkers, bikers, and buses happens in a safe and efficient manner. Doris' dedication is evident to all who know her. As one parent remarked, "I remember seeing Mrs. Doris when my son was still in primary school - she is well past retirement age and is still working! She is so dedicated and sweet."



Beeda Lee-Pawlak, Fairfax County

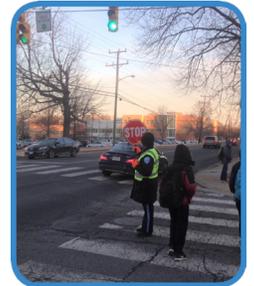
Beeda Lee-Pawlak is a first-year crossing guard, but those who nominated her have "never been more impressed with a crossing guard." Beeda expertly manages a busy intersection with a firm and friendly demeanor. One parent remarked that, "Her whistle, uniform, and hand motions are always crisp and perfect. I have never seen a crossing guard who does her job so well! It



prompted me to call the school just to find out who she is so I could nominate her!"

Almaz Abebe, Arlington County

Almaz Abebe exhibits strength, awareness, and professionalism every day as a crossing guard at Kenmore Middle School. She always treats children with care and respect that is reflected in the respect children show her as they wait patiently to be crossed and do not flout the rules. With an observant eye, Almaz has helped to prevent overeager students from walking into the street!



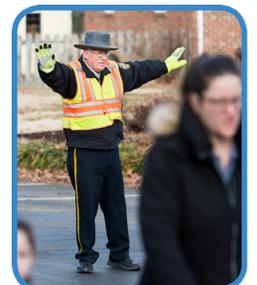
Anne Rodriguez, Fairfax County

Anne Rodriguez, who has been a crossing guard for the past five years, is a special part of the community. Every walker and bike rider is greeted with a smile, and she often gives kids high fives. She knows students' names, as well as the names of their siblings and parents. Students adore her, and she has the ability to make tired, grumpy kids happy again by acknowledging every single person!



Bruce and Kathleen Morrison, Chesterfield County

Bruce and Kathleen Morrison are a unique couple in Chesterfield County, and in addition to being wonderful crossing guards, they are key assets to the community. They know all walkers and their parents by name and often take the time to help students coordinate with their parents if there is an issue. Bruce and Kathleen go the extra mile by setting up cones and equipment to improve crossing safety.



Learn more about this year's Most Outstanding Crossing Guards [here](#).

