



## Introduction for Teachers

### The Problem

You've probably noticed...fewer students are walking/wheeling for the school journey

Across Canada, we are facing a modern-day challenge. Car culture is taking over and fewer kids are using active modes of transportation (i.e., walking, cycling, rollerblading, scooting) for their school journey. When students are driven to school instead of walking or wheeling, they miss the opportunity for much-needed physical activity, fresh air and quality interaction with

parents, caregivers and friends; and driving increases school zone congestion, which in turn makes conditions less safe for those who do walk or wheel, and adds to air pollution. Also, school staff frequently waste valuable time dealing with traffic issues and complaints. Sound familiar?

### A Solution

School Travel Planning is a proven approach for addressing this problem

School Travel Planning (STP) is a process that involves diverse stakeholders at the school and regional level in the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan to get more students using active transportation. To date, individual STP schools have experienced shifts toward active travel of over 20%!



### So Many Benefits!



#### Healthier Children

- Active school travel helps school-aged children meet the recommendation to accumulate at least 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity, which is associated with improved physical and mental health.



#### Less Traffic and Pollution

- Reducing the number of children being driven to school reduces greenhouse gas emissions and particulate air pollution around the school; this improves air quality and reduces associated risks of lung and cardiovascular diseases.



#### Safer School Zones

- Reducing traffic volumes creates safer school zones and saves school staff time. Improving walking and cycling routes to school also enhances the safety, connectivity, and quality of life for the community as a whole.



#### Better Academic Performance

- Increased physical activity specifically associated with the school journey increases alertness and attention during the school day.
- Physical activity supports healthy brain development, which can lead to improved learning and academic outcomes.

Let's work together to re-ignite a culture of walking and wheeling to school

## How it Works

### The STP Process

School Travel Planning flows through a six-phase process over an initial period of two to three years. The process is guided and supported by a Facilitator whose role is to bring everyone together, coordinate activities and compile the School Travel Plan.

### Teachers' Role & Responsibilities

Teachers have an important role in creating a culture of walking and wheeling at schools. There are many ways that you can be involved in School Travel Planning:

- **Join the School STP Committee.** As a member of the committee you will:
  - attend regular meetings during the school year;
  - participate in a Walkabout survey to assess the current routes to school; and
  - help develop the school's Action Plan to address travel issues identified.
- **Assist with data collection** by conducting a Student Travel Survey in your classroom. (Older students can help with this task.) This is a quick, hands-up survey to collect data about the travel modes used by students (to and from school). The STP Facilitator will handle data entry and analysis of the surveys. You may also be asked to distribute a Family Survey for your students to take home.
- **Teach about active transportation.** The STP process can be a great opportunity for enquiry-based learning, e.g., using the data collected as part of your lesson plans, incorporating math, geography, literacy, art and social studies.
- **Help to implement the School Travel Plan,** particularly any actions related to education and encouragement about walking and cycling.

### Examples of STP Actions Other Schools Have Taken Include:

- Improved signage and crosswalks
- New bike racks and cycling skills training
- Walking and cycling route maps
- Fun walking events
- Classroom learning activities about active transportation

### Positive Feedback

*"I feel proud of the work we accomplished. Families were eager to change their habits and my students ended the year with a sense of pride and a greater understanding of what it really means to be healthy and environmentally friendly...I have also noticed less traffic out my window this year. I think our message brought positive change to our community."*

Elizabeth Kim, grade 4/5 teacher



## Get Involved Now

Please contact the Principal if you have any questions or if you'd like to join the School STP Committee. For more information about School Travel Planning, visit [www.ontarioactiveschooltravel.ca/school-travel-planning](http://www.ontarioactiveschooltravel.ca/school-travel-planning).