Sidewalk Safety Smarts
Why Pedestrian Safety Training?

Today’s walkers encounter more traffic on their way to school

- 25% of morning traffic is due to school commuters.
- School zones designed for cars, not pedestrians.
Children have little walking experience.

More than two-thirds of all trips made by 5-15 year olds are made by car as passengers.
WalkBoston’s Program

• Began in 2000.
• Unique combination of curriculum, on-site training, and outdoor experience.
• Supported by a variety of organizations and funders.
  – Individual schools.
  – Community programs and organizations.
  – Health, safety, and education advocates.
  – Current state-wide program provided through MassRides and Executive Office of Transportation.
What is Pedestrian Safety Training?

- Walking safety curriculum designed primarily for second-graders.
- More than learning by book, video or worksheets.

Students learn skills using the real environment in the area around the school.
Parents get involved

• Adults are trained to lead the lessons using the same environment.
• Each adult leads two children at a time on the safety walk.
• Reminds parents about the importance of safety and gives them a larger picture of the issues.
Organizing

Four Basic Steps:
• Recruit volunteers.
• Plan and schedule.
• Conduct training.
• Receive feedback and provide follow-up.
• Repeat again for the same students to reinforce learning.
Recruiting volunteers

- Schools recruit the volunteers using notices and letters to parents.
- Majority are parents of second-graders.
- Free lunch is a great incentive.
- Need to recruit at least 5-6 adults.
- Consider using student interns.
Training volunteers

- One-hour orientation shows adults how to teach safety lessons.
- Takes place in the outdoor school environment.
- Tips provided for how to use specific places to teach skills.
Provides teaching tips for adults

• Start easy and increase difficulty.
• Use variety of teaching techniques: questioning, practicing, demonstrating, assessing “how we did”.
• Role play.
• Repeat the basics.
• Use teachable moments.
• Mix fun and seriousness.
Have fun and be spontaneous
Safety measures

- Adults take two children at one time.
- Parents sign permission forms for children to take the walk.
- Some schools require CORI checks; very few.
- Safety vests add visibility.
- Police or crossing guards can be involved.
Scheduling

- Uses time during the school day.
- Scheduled around school and teacher schedules.
- Each student is out of class no more than 30-minutes.
- Time frame depends on the number of children and the number of volunteers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 - 9:30</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Train the Trainers: Walk route and role play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 - 11:00</td>
<td>Student Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 - 10:00</td>
<td>20-24 students (10-12 adults)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 - 10:30</td>
<td>20-22 students (10-12 adults)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 - 11:00</td>
<td>20-22 students (10-12 adults)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 - 11:45</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 - 12:30</td>
<td>20-22 students (10-12 adults)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 - 12:45</td>
<td>Evaluate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Overcoming resistance

• Safety is important for children to learn.
• Children out of class no more than 20-30 minutes.
• Fits into the school schedule and teacher’s needs.
• Outside trainers and volunteers do all the work.
• Good for health and encourages walking for physical and mental fitness.
Selecting a route

- Reasonable distance.
- Places where children walk.
- Moderate levels of traffic and danger.
- Use intersections, crosswalks, school parking lots and driveways.
- Good learning examples.
The Student Training

• Short introduction provided to the whole class before walks begin.
• Each adult takes two students on 20-30 minute walks.
• Students returned to class, two more students taken.
• Process repeated until all students have been trained.
The fun begins…..

Using the sidewalk as a classroom.
Safe places to cross

- Where is it safest to cross?
- How to choose good crossing points even without crosswalks.
- No crossing between parked cars.
Safe places to walk

• Choose and use the sidewalk.
• On streets without sidewalks - walk facing traffic and stay on the side when possible.
The world according to a second-grader.

- Demonstrate how walkers are often “invisible” to drivers.
- Remind them to SEE and be SEEN.
Common obstacles to seeing and being seen

Fences, bushes, walls, trees, light posts.....
Looking and Listening

• Practice looking left, right, left and behind and left again BEFORE moving.
• Knowing how intersections work and which ways cars can move.
• Keep looking WHILE you are moving.
• Look AND listen….if you hear a noise, stop and look.
Small children - Big cars

- Uses cars to show how drivers can’t see children -- even when they are looking.
- Parking lots and safety tricks.
Watch everywhere

Home driveways, alleys, up one-way streets.....
Tricky situations

• Where to stand before crossing.
• Strange intersections.
• What to do if a driver stops to wave you across.
• Dropping something while crossing.
How do drivers behave?

• Drivers don’t always stop for walkers to cross.
• Drivers have been known to break the rules.
• Making eye-contact with drivers helps.

Students begin to think about taking charge of their own safety.
Pedestrian Safety Training.....

• Works in all settings – urban, suburban, rural.
• Works at all schools.
• Works for all children.
  – Regardless of walking distance to school.
  – Regardless of athletic ability.
  – Any age can benefit.
  – Important for differently-abled students.
Best when paired with traffic safety education and enforcement.

- Educate parents and community members.
- Reward pedestrians and drivers who follow good skills.
- Deliver warnings and tickets.
This would be the ideal….

- Until we achieve this, we can do a lot to improve safety through education.
- Parents, principals and students give high marks to the program.
- Simple, sustainable and affordable.
In case you missed any of this....

A Pedestrian Safety Training Tool Kit with instructions for organizing your own safety training will be available from:

– MassRIDES web: www.commute.com
Thank you!

Karen Hartke
www.walkboston.org
Khartke@walkboston.org
617/367-9255
45 School St., Old City Hall, Boston, MA 02108