


Innovative Efforts for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety (Tuesday, 3/31/09, 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm) -- Michelle Wynn, STIPDA

Strengthening the Practice of Injury & Violence Prevention



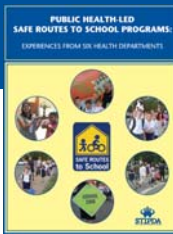
Public Health Led Safe Routes To School Programs: Experiences From Six Health Departments

Michelle Wynn, MPH
Lifesavers 2009 Conference
Nashville, TN – March 31, 2009 – 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

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Background

- ❖ Six sites:
 - Cleveland, OH
 - Comanche County, OK
 - Eastern Highlands Health Dist. (Tolland), CT
 - Maricopa County, AZ
 - Mecklenburg County, NC
 - Union County, OH
- ❖ One year grant period (non-infrastructure) – June 07 to May 08
- ❖ Funding provided through C.A. with NHTSA
- ❖ Followed key steps to developing a SRTS program from the national guide




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Key Steps of a SRTS Program

- ❖ Bring the right people together & hold a kick-off meeting
- ❖ Gather information & identify issues
- ❖ Identify solutions
- ❖ Make a plan/Fund the plan
- ❖ Implement the plan
- ❖ Evaluate the plan



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Strengths Of Public Health Led Safe Routes to School Programs

- Fits into broad mission of PH
- Goals of PH & SRTS programs align well
- PH is aligned with & already involved in partnerships needed for SRTS programs
- Promotion of a SRTS program can be used to facilitate change within a community
- PH professionals contribute key skills and experience to SRTS programs (e.g. data analysis, health education, capacity building).



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Engaging Public Health in Safe Routes To School Programs

"There couldn't be a more ideal time for capitalizing on the fact that walking is healthy, it saves gas, and if we have safer routes to school, we can reduce injury, have safer routes for senior citizens, and have safer routes to walk to the store. Everyone wins. There is a lot of leveraging that can be done."



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STEP 1: Bringing the Right People Together & Hold a Kick-Off Meeting

- Involve diverse stakeholders & partners
- PH carries a legitimacy or credibility with it that is helpful in coordinating SRTS efforts
- Consider existing collaborative model
- Foster program ownership
- Engage coalition members



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STEP 2: Gather Information & Identify Issues

- ❖ Gather data from multiple sources
- ❖ Visit the schools and neighborhoods
- ❖ Work with existing programs
- ❖ Use online programs for data collection
- ❖ Seek a mentor
- ❖ Share the results



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Partnership strengthened by sharing data

"The city has specific schedules – one day to fill potholes, another to fix sidewalks and curb ramps and lights. We were able to establish a relationship with one traffic engineer who sat down with me after we did these walkability audits and we looked at the results. He was able to say we will likely get to one project in three months, but he bumped up another one of our activities because this was a Safe Routes to School program."



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STEP 3: Identify Solutions


- ❖ Use data to identify solutions
- ❖ Gather community input on solutions
- ❖ Consider consistency among participating schools
- ❖ Use the 4 E's



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STEP 4: Make a Plan

- Develop short & long term goals
- Develop effective timeline - consider school calendars
- Form workgroups for focus
- Identify how coalition members can contribute
- Respect school's desire for ownership & initiative
- Build upon existing efforts & adapt resources and materials



Existing maps can be adapted for Walk to School events.


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STEP 5: Implement a Plan

Implementation Tips

- Work around a school's schedule
- Assign tasks to coalition members well before school ends
- Follow up by email during summer
- Schedule SRTS meeting in Sept. after school staff are acclimated to new school year.
- Make contingency plans for SRTS events and meetings
- School principals & assistant principals may find on-site visits helpful
- Keep coalition members engaged by addressing
 - long-term goal of establishing a local SRTS program
 - short-term goal of implementing specific SRTS activities in participating schools.



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Walk to School Programs

Types

- Walking School Bus
- Walking Wednesdays
- International Walk to School Day

- Get the word out!
- Develop permission forms/waivers
- Establish drop-off points
- Consider pros/cons of Safe Houses
- Review safety tips before each walk
- Consider incentives
- Anticipate liability concerns




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Other Program Ideas

- Bicycle rodeos
- Anti-idling campaigns



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Specific Incentive Examples from STIPDA sites

- Punch Cards
- A Golden Award



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Other Programs at STIPDA sites

- Safe Homes
- Themed Walk to School Days



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Communication is Essential for Plan Implementation



"The most significant remedy to program implementation delays was continued efforts to communicate with coalition members."

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STEP 6: Evaluate the Plan

Six Step Process for SRTS Program Evaluation

- 1. Plan the program/ Collect information
- 2. Write objectives
- 3. Decide what, how and when to measure
- 4. Conduct the program and monitor progress
- 5. Collect information and interpret findings
- 6. Use results

- ☛ Evaluate from the beginning
- ☛ Develop a tailored evaluation plan
- ☛ Use evaluation tools relevant to SRTS
- ☛ Plan for data collection, analysis & reporting

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Benefits of Program Evaluation

"It was a lot of work, but I think we got a lot out of it and it made me look at things that wouldn't have even been on my radar."


"The evaluation plan helped me stay on task and kept me organized."

"The evaluation plan helped me know that I was moving in the right direction."

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Major Program Successes from STIPDA Sites

- Reduced traffic congestion around schools
- Increased safety around schools
- Conducted walking school bus, walk to school days, bike rodeos
- Developed permanent coalitions
- Health department invested in full time staff person for SRTS
- Developed key programs like anti-idling campaigns, safe houses, and incentive programs
- Conducted National SRTS Training

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Unexpected Outcomes Reported from STIPDA Sites

- **Among coalition members**
 - Apply to other aspects of job
 - Provide opportunities for professional growth
 - Personal benefits (i.e., living in areas programs implemented)
- **Among schools, parents, and students**
 - New sense of safety
 - Children at school on time, ready to learn
 - Increase in attendance, on time arrivals
 - Improvements in relationships among teachers, students, parents, and community
 - Increase in volunteering at the school
 - Good relationship developed/strengthened with health department

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Sustainability and Expansion *No and low-cost opportunities*

- Include long range planning from the start
- Use SRTS program data to apply for other funding
- Involve representatives from district, city, county level
- Include SRTS in community plans
- Hold strategic planning meetings
- Find a home for the coalition
- Involve businesses

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Sustainability and Expansion
Outcomes of developing a strong foundation

- Three sites received state SRTS funds
- One site received two sources of additional funding
- Two sites now have committed staff person for SRTS activities, 3rd has hired an intern
- One site integrated into Steps to a Healthier US program
- Two sites included SRTS into school/city plans
- One school committed funding for a crossing guard

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Questions?

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PUBLIC HEALTH-LED SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS:
EXPERIENCES FROM SIX HEALTH DEPARTMENTS



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