Waterloo Region
School Travel Planning 2015
School Travel Planning

- Process that combines ASRTS programming with Transportation Demand Principles
- Encourages active and sustainable travel modes to and from school
- Designed to address barriers to active travel
- Recognized as a best-practice to:
  - Decrease vehicular traffic around schools
  - Increase physical activity of children
  - Improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists

ASRTS = Active and Safe Routes to School
Project History

• Funding from Waterloo Region Healthy Communities Partnership

• Sustainable Waterloo Region contracted to work with 4 schools during 2014/2015 school year
  ▫ Millen Woods Public School (Waterloo)
  ▫ St. John Paul II Catholic Elementary School (Kitchener)
  ▫ Manchester Public School (Cambridge)
  ▫ Silverheights Public School (Cambridge)

• Subgroup of Active & Safe Routes to School Committee provided input and guidance
School Travel Planning (STP) Process

• Initiate project
  ▫ Choose schools
  ▫ Establish school STP committees

• Collect data
  ▫ School Profile
  ▫ Classroom hands-up counts
  ▫ Family surveys
  ▫ Walkabout
  ▫ Traffic counts/ observation

• Develop Action Plan
  ▫ Education
  ▫ Encouragement
  ▫ Environmental changes
  ▫ Enforcement

• Implement Action Plan
• Monitor and Evaluate
Data Collection 2015

- Classroom Hands-Up Surveys
  - 5 consecutive school days falling between January 27 – February 9, 2015
- Family Surveys
  - 410 surveys submitted
  - Average response rate – 28%
- Staff Surveys
  - 43 surveys submitted (3 schools)
- School Walkabouts
- Traffic Observations
Symbols

- Walked
- Cycled
- Rode school bus
- Did not know
- Drove
- Carpooled
- Other
Morning Travel Mode Split - All Schools

Based on 7798 student responses from four schools in Waterloo Region, over five consecutive school days between January 27 and February 9, 2015.
Afternoon Travel Mode Split - All Schools

Based on 7408 student responses from four schools in Waterloo Region, over five consecutive school days between January 27 and February 9, 2015
Travel Mode Split by Distance to School - All Schools

Based on 408 families who answered this question (out of 410 submitted surveys) from four schools in Waterloo Region, February 2015
Morning Travel Mode Split by Division - All Schools

Based on 7798 student responses from four schools in Waterloo Region, over five consecutive school days between January 27 and February 9, 2015
Morning Travel Mode Split by School

Based on 7798 student responses from four schools in Waterloo Region, over five consecutive school days between January 27 and February 9, 2015
Morning Routines

55% of responding families usually have an adult accompany children to school.

42% usually go on to work

- 66% by car
- 25% on foot

53% usually return home

- 64% on foot
- 25% by car

Based on 401 families who answered this questioned (out of 410 submitted surveys) from four schools in Waterloo Region, February 2015
Why do children walk to school?

- It is good for their health
- It fits with family routines
- They enjoy it
- It is good for the environment

Based on 393 families who answered this questioned (out of 410 submitted surveys) from four schools in Waterloo Region, February 2015
Why are children are driven to school?

- Parents going somewhere else
- Concerns for personal safety (bullying, strangers)
- Time pressures
- Weather

Based on 393 families who answered this questionned (out of 410 submitted surveys) from four schools in Waterloo Region, February 2015
Opportunities to get more 4-10 year olds walking

Parents of 4-10 year old students said they would allow their children to walk to school if...

- "They were older"
- "There were less traffic dangers"
- "They did not have to walk alone"
- "There was a safer way to get there"

Based on 247 families with children 4-10 years who answered this questioned (out of 410 submitted surveys for all ages) from four schools in Waterloo Region, February 2015.
Opportunities to get more 11+ year olds walking

Parents of 11+ year old students said they would allow their children to walk to school if...

"There were less traffic dangers"

"We did not live so far from school"

"They did not have to walk alone"

"There was a safer way to get there"

Based on 81 families with children 11+ years who answered this questioned (out of 245 submitted surveys for all ages) from two schools in Waterloo Region, February 2015
School Staff Support for School Travel Planning

“Our school neighbourhood is safe for children to walk to and from school”

Based on 43 submitted staff surveys from three schools in Waterloo Region, February 2015
School Staff Travel Mode Split

Based on 43 submitted staff surveys from three schools in Waterloo Region, February 2015
Walkabouts & Traffic Observations

- Winter-related obstacles
- Driver behaviours
- Pedestrian behaviours
- School bus drop-off/pick-up locations
- Other
  - Garbage trucks
  - Trains
  - Major roads
How do we compare?

Travel Mode Split to School

GTHA Harris Decima (May 2011)
- Walking: 36%
- Cycling: 24%
- Public Transit: 32%
- Car: 3%
- Other (public transit, etc.): 5%

Waterloo Region 4 schools (February 2015)
- Walking: 39%
- Cycling: 21%
- Public Transit: 37%
- Car: 3%
Possible Focus Areas

- Travel behaviour to school
- Students living more than 0.5km from school
- Strategies so students do not walk/cycle alone
- Strategies that identify safer routes to walk
- Strategies that address safety issues (real and perceived)
  - Traffic safety
  - Personal Safety
We're all in this together

- Students
- Parents
- School staff and administration
- School Boards
- Student Transportation Services
- Municipalities
- Public Health
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