

Safe Routes to School Programs:

National and Florida Overview

Pat Pieratte
Florida's SRTS
Coordinator



Because of the Perfect Storm we've discussed:

Safety:

- Pedestrian
- Bicycle
- Other traffic
- Personal

Health:

- Inactivity & resulting:
 - Obesity
 - Diabetes
 - Asthma
- Lack of independence
- Air Pollution & resulting:
 - Asthma

Transportation:

- Depletion of oil
- Rising fuel prices
- Rising school busing costs
- Congestion

and other school
issues such as:

Growing enrollment

Demand for new and
renovated facilities



and the success of
Safe Routes to
School Programs in
other countries &
the United States:

(Digest of Education Statistics, 2002)

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The Federal SRTS Program was established in September, 2005:

\$612 million to States

Program Guidance issued January 2006

Funds infrastructure & non-infrastructure

Requires State SRTS Coordinators

All States have Coordinators
44 States have funded SRTS



More Information:

- FHWA:
<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes/>
- SRTS Clearinghouse:
www.saferoutesinfo.org

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Florida's Safe Routes to School program

\$29.1 million through 2009;
distributed to 7 Districts

Program managed by Districts
under state Guidelines & SRTS
Coordinator, Pat Pieratte

Two Calls for Applications have
been completed

380 SRTS projects and
programs have been funded
so far



For more
information:

www.srtsfl.org

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**Each state
designs their
own program
following the
Federal SRTS
Guidelines**



How is Florida's SRTS program set up?

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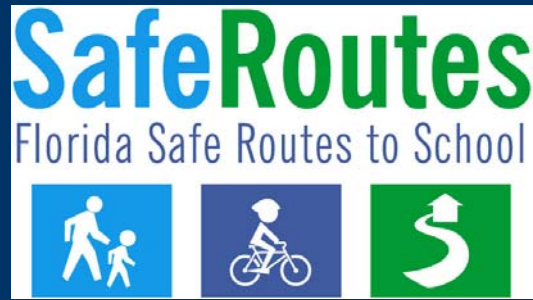


Florida's SRTS Program Structure

- **State SRTS Coordinator:**
 - Establishes Guidelines & Application forms
 - Creates & updates website
 - Provides overall program direction & training
- **District SRTS Contacts**
 - Infrastructure projects: District Safety Engineers
 - Non-Infrastructure programs: District Community Traffic Safety Team Coordinator or District Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator
 - Day to day contact with local schools, governments & others
 - Review & rank applications for submittal to State SRTS Coordinator

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Results of First Two Application Cycles

- Everyone worked hard to publicize SRTS, help applicants & review applications
- All Districts received many more applications than could be funded
- Few Non-Infrastructure applications received
- Projects selected and programmed for multiple years (thru FY '2013)



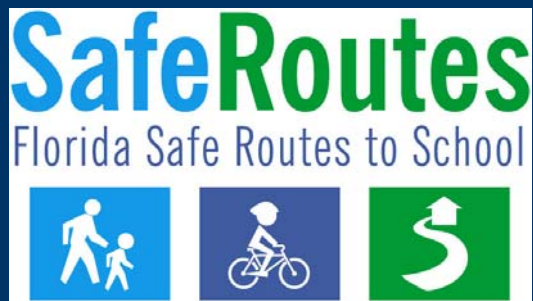
Results of First Two Application Cycles, Cont.

What we learned:

- **Each District has to determine how their program will work best**
- **Detailed applications:**
 - Require a lot from the applicant
 - Make it easier to select good projects
- **Modifications made:**
 - Infrastructure application tightened up to stress school-level planning & 5E's
 - Non-Infrastructure changed to Information Form-open till \$ committed

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Infrastructure Application Process

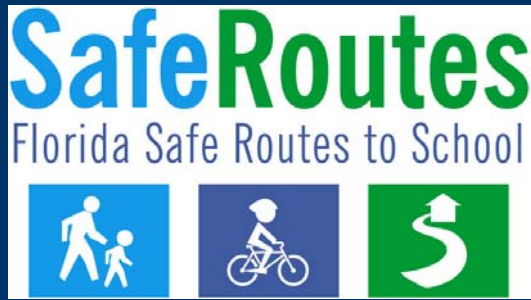
- **Call for Applications each fall**
- **Eligible Applicants:**
 - School Boards
 - Private Schools
 - Community Traffic Safety Teams
- **Eligible Sponsors:**
 - Counties
 - Cities
 - Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's)
- **Other Partners encouraged**



Infrastructure Application Process, Cont.

Applicants, Sponsors & Partners:

- Pick a school
- Identify problems
- Propose solutions
- Fill out application
- Gather required signatures
&/or letters of support
- Submit them to District SRTS
Contacts by deadline



Infrastructure Application Process, Cont.

District:

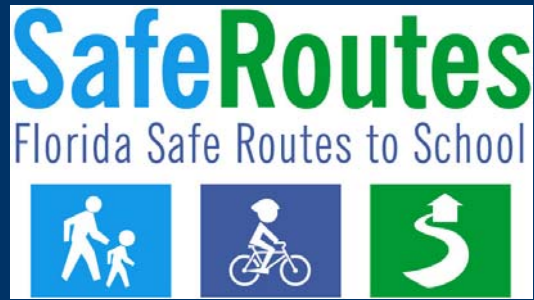
- Evaluation committee ranks applications according to state criteria
- Submits selected projects to State SRTS Coordinator

State:

- SRTS Coordinator reviews projects

District:

- Revise projects as needed
- Proceed with project details—Work Program, Local Agency Program (LAP) agreement, design phases, invoicing, etc.



Non-Infrastructure Process

- **Fill in Non-Infrastructure Information Form or Write Scope of Services**
 - basic proposal ideas
 - work with District (& they work with me) to develop a good proposal
- **No Call for Applications**
 - apply at any time
 - open until available funds committed



Non-Infrastructure Process, continued

- **More qualified partners:**
 - government entities
 - non-profits
 - schools
 - universities
- **More options for Districts:**
 - Develop District-level activities & materials
 - Work with existing partners to enhance programs
 - Solicit new ideas from potential partners

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Resources:

Elements of Safe Routes to School programs

Education

Encouragement

Enforcement

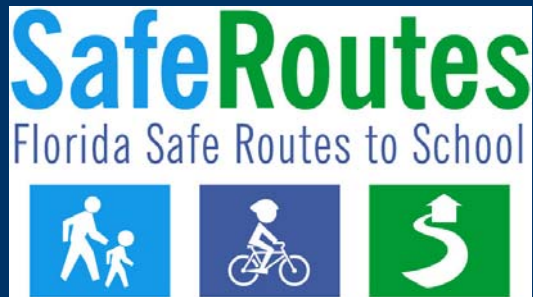
Engineering

Evaluation



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Website Tools:
www.srtsfl.org

- **Basic Program Information**
- **Application Guidelines**
- **Non-infrastructure Information Form**
- **Links to:**
 - Safe Ways to School Toolkit
 - Other helpful sites
- **During Calls for Applications:**
 - Infrastructure Application

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Education:

Teach safety skills

Create safety awareness

Foster life-long safety habits



- Florida Traffic and Bicycle Safety Education Program
- WalkSafe Program

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Education:

Includes
parents,
neighbors
and other
drivers

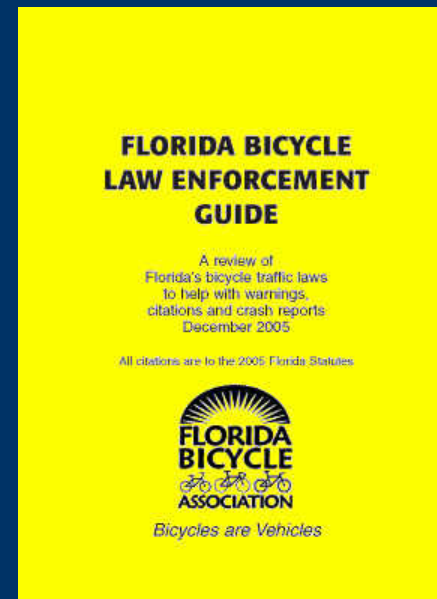
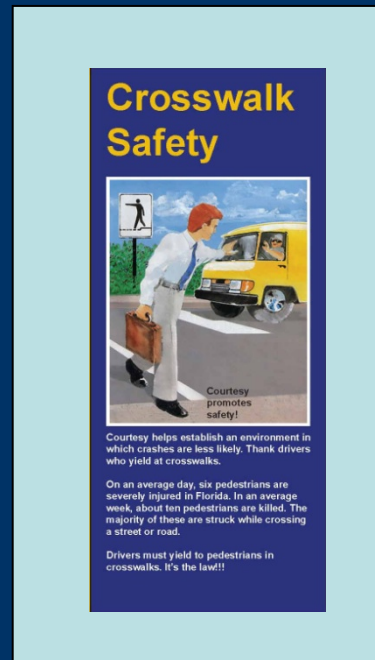
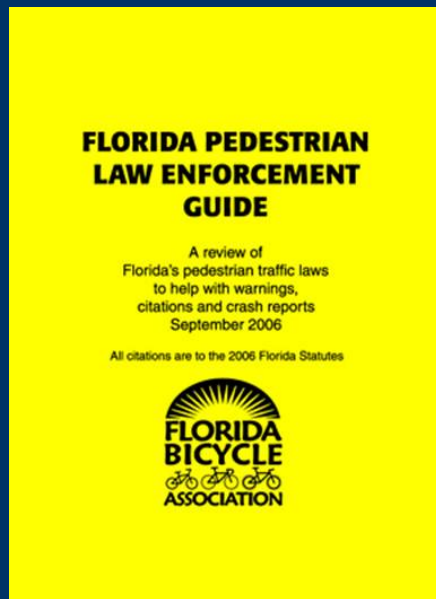


Education:

Downloadable brochures relating to walking and bicycling are available from the DOT site:

www.dot.state.fl.us/safety

(click on Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety)



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Florida Education Programs:

- Florida Bicycle and Traffic Safety Education Program (Volusia Co & others)
- Walk Safe Program (Miami-Dade & others)
- Education programs by Safe Kids, hospitals or other groups (Hillsborough, Pinellas & others)
- Public information campaigns (Brevard County & others)

Encouragement:



Download
Walk 'n Roll
punch
Card from
website



Increases popularity of walking & biking
An easy way to start SRTS programs
Emphasizes fun of walking and biking

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Florida Encouragement Programs:

- International Walk to School Day (many Florida counties)
- Walking Wednesdays (Hillsborough County & others)
- Walking School Buses & Bike Trains (Hillsborough County & others)
- Mileage Club (Hendry & Glades Counties, planned for Panhandle counties)

Education & Encouragement:

- The Districts & Central Office have ordered educational & promotional items for local use
- Educational & Promotional items relating to walking and bicycling, will be available late this fall from the new Ped/Bike Resource Center at UF, Technology Transfer Center



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Enforcement:

Increases awareness of pedestrians and bicyclists

Improves driver behavior

Helps children follow traffic rules

Decreases parent perceptions of danger



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Florida Enforcement Programs:

Florida is the only state with mandatory training for its crossing guards



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Florida Enforcement Programs:

- Florida is not funding local enforcement programs with SRTS funds (other funding sources)
- We expect every funded SRTS program to work with their local law enforcement agency to:
 - enforce traffic laws near schools
 - help educate students on safe pedestrian and bicycle practices
- We are considering providing training courses for law enforcement personnel on:
 - what the traffic laws are relating to drivers, pedestrians & bicyclists
 - how to enforce these laws near schools
 - how to teach pedestrian & bicycle safety

Engineering:



- Creates safer settings for walking or biking
- Can influence the way people behave



Examples: New or improved

- School zones
- Routes to school
- Crosswalks
- Traffic calming

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Florida Engineering Resources:

- Involve your City or County Engineers on your SRTS teams, to help determine what solutions are needed
- DOT's District Safety Engineers may be able to help, and will review projects they are considering for funding

Florida Engineering Projects:

- Many sidewalk projects around state
- Many traffic engineering projects (one District ordered solar powered speed feedback signs and school flashers for requesting schools. The locals will install & maintain them
- Miscellaneous projects:
 - Bike paths
 - Pedestrian bridges
 - Traffic calming

Evaluation:

Is the program making a difference?

SURVEY ABOUT WALKING AND BIKING TO SCHOOL
- FOR PARENTS -

Dear Parent or Caregiver,
Your child's school wants to learn your thoughts about children walking and biking to school. This survey will take about 10 - 15 minutes to complete. We ask that each family complete only one survey per school year (children attend). If more than one child from a school brings a survey home, please fill out the survey for the child with the next birthday from today's date.

After you have completed this survey, send it back to the school with your child or give it to the teacher. Your responses will be kept confidential and neither your name nor your child's name will be associated with any results. Thank you for participating in this survey!

These first few questions gather some general and background information. Remember, all information will be confidential, and no identifying information will be released.

1. What is the grade of the child who brought home this survey? (K = 0) _____ grade
2. Is the child who brought home this survey male or female? MALE FEMALE
3. How many children do you have in Kindergarten through 8th grade? _____ (NUMBER)
4. What is your ZIP Code? (please provide ZIP + 4 if known) _____ ZIP code (you may only fill in what you know)
5. How far does your child live from school? (choose one)
 a. less than 1/4 mile f. 1 mile or 1/2 mile
 b. 1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile g. 1/2 mile to 1 mile
 c. 1/2 mile up to 1 mile h. Don't know
6. On most days, how does your child arrive at school and leave for home after school? (circle one choice)

| Active at school | Leaves for home |
|---|---|
| a. Walk | a. Walk |
| b. Bike | b. Bike |
| c. School Bus | c. School Bus |
| d. Family vehicle (only with children from your family) | d. Family vehicle (only with children from your family) |
| e. Carpool (only with children from other families) | e. Carpool (only with children from other families) |
| f. Transit (only bus, subway, etc.) | f. Transit (only bus, subway, etc.) |
| g. Other (skateboard, scooter, bike, roller, etc.) | g. Other (skateboard, scooter, bike, roller, etc.) |

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SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL
STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TALLY SHEET

School Name _____ Grade: _____ # of students enrolled in class _____
Teacher: _____ Monday's Date: _____
School's Zip Code _____ (used to identify weather conditions)

Teachers, here are simple instructions for using this form:

- Please conduct these counts each of the five days of the assigned week.
- Before asking your students to raise their hands to indicate the one answer that is correct for them, read through all potential answers so they will know what the choices are.
- Ask your students as a group the question "How did you arrive at school today?"
- Read each answer and record the number of students that raised their hands for each.
- Follow the same procedure for the question "How do you plan to leave for home after school?"
- Please conduct this count regardless of weather conditions (i.e., ask these questions on rainy days, too).

| | Step 1: Fill in the weather conditions and number of students in class each day | | Step 2: Ask students "How did you arrive at school today?" and "How do you plan to leave for home after school?" (record number of hands for each answer) | | | | | | |
|---------|---|--|---|------|------------|--|--|----------------------------------|--|
| | Weather (to note on weekly calendar) | Number of Students (to take when count starts) | Walk | Bike | School Bus | Family Vehicle (only with children from your family) | Carpool (only with children from other families) | Transit (only bus, subway, etc.) | Other (skateboard, scooter, roller skates, etc.) |
| Mon AM | | | | | | | | | |
| Mon PM | | | | | | | | | |
| Tues AM | | | | | | | | | |
| Tues PM | | | | | | | | | |
| Wed AM | | | | | | | | | |
| Wed PM | | | | | | | | | |
| Thur AM | | | | | | | | | |
| Thur PM | | | | | | | | | |
| Fri AM | | | | | | | | | |
| Fri PM | | | | | | | | | |

Comments (Please list any discrepancies to these counts or any unusual travel conditions to/from the school on the days of the tally):

Every funded SRTS program in Florida must provide before & after data using these forms

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The future of SRTS

Q: What Does the Future Hold for Safe Routes to School?

A: Good question! It depends on who you ask.

Everything is up in the air, with the new 6-year Transportation Bill required next year

The future of SRTS

The Safe Routes to School Task Force recommends that the SRTS Program become a permanent feature of future transportation legislation:

1. Spend current federal SRTS funds effectively by building on successful implementation strategies
2. Improve Federal support for SRTS by strengthening forthcoming transportation legislation
3. Promote and encourage support for SRTS programs among other partners with a stake in the success of these programs
4. Address other challenges that SRTS programs face
5. Look towards the future: advance innovative solutions that support SRTS efforts

The future of SRTS

The Governmental Accountability Office's report on Safe Routes to School:

1. There has been a lot of progress in implementing the SRTS program, by FHWA and the states
2. A comprehensive evaluation component is needed, including health and environmental outcome measures & collaboration by the states with the Clearinghouse, CDC & EPA
3. Matching funds should be required or at least allowed, to encourage local buy-in and implement more projects

The future of SRTS

The SRTS National Partnership's comments on the GAO report:

- 1.They agree on the progress which has been made
- 2.They agree on the evaluation component, but feel Department of Education should be involved also, and that the four federal agencies should make recommendations on school siting so it's possible for more children to walk or bike to school in the future
- 3.They disagree on matching funds and feel the program should remain 100% federally funded so that low income areas can receive benefits. They also recommend that states set aside funds for more SRTS programs, & that states which do so be rewarded with more funds.

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The future of SRTS

FHWA's "Refocus, Reform, Renew: A New Transportation Approach for America" proposes:

1. A clearer & more focused Federal role (fund Safety, Interstate Highways & major metropolitan areas)
2. A data & technology driven approach to safety, including replacing narrowly focused safety programs with a grant program that builds on the successes of Strategic Highway Safety Plans
3. Increased State & municipal flexibility
4. More rational & accountable investment decisions
5. Encouragement of more efficient pricing & leveraging of Federal resources
6. More efficient & effective environmental stewardship

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The future of SRTS

A proposal has been introduced in Congress which would:

1. Double the funds for SRTS in the next Transportation Bill
2. Include high schools as eligible recipients of SRTS funds

So we will just have to wait and see what develops.

But you need to let your congressional representatives know you support SRTS!

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Steps in creating a SRTS Program

Bring together the right people

Hold a kick-off meeting

Gather information and identify issues

Identify solutions

Develop a Plan

Fund the plan

Act on the plan

Evaluate, make needed changes and keep moving

Summary: Safe Routes to School goals

Where it's safe, get kids walking and biking

Where it's not safe, make it safe



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Ultimate

Goal:

To some
day see
this cover
on Time
Magazine



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Questions?

Contact:

Florida SRTS Coordinator

Pat Pieratte, 850-245-1529

Pat.Pieratte@dot.state.fl.us

Or your District Contact

(see map & chart)

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