

# Community Safe Routes to School Final Report

The Community Safe Routes to School (CSRTS) Program was a WalkBoston initiative jointly funded by the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Four communities participated the program – Brockton, Newton, Stoneham and Watertown. Each is located in the Boston metropolitan area and the communities represent a range of urban and suburban characteristics, as well as a mix of socio-economic and demographic characteristics. Over the two-year period, the number of participating schools grew from 24 to 27 schools. The number of students grew from 9,000 in Year 1, to 11,300 in Year 2 when Brockton added three elementary schools to the program.



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## Key Questions

The purpose of the CSRTS program was to study how best to apply the Safe Routes to School concept to promote changes in the travel patterns of school children by working both inside the schools and with a broad set of community partners. Key issues we had to address included:

- What will it take for school systems and/or municipalities to adopt SRTS and start funding it?
- Is two years enough to make a difference?
- Is 8–10 hours a week of programming for 3–15 schools in a municipality enough to make a difference in the town’s systems, policies, pedestrian environment and the behavior of students, parents and the community at large?
- Will the programs have any lasting impact in these four communities?

We used the four communities selected for the CSRTS pilot program to test four different, albeit overlapping, models for configuring the CSRTS initiative. In Brockton the program was primarily school department based. In Newton the program was primarily supported by municipal staff and school parents. Stoneham’s program relied on individual leaders in each participating school; and Watertown’s program leaned on community advocates and advocacy groups.

### 27 Schools in four communities

Brockton	5 schools
Newton	15 schools
Stoneham	4 schools
Watertown	3 schools

A critical element of the program was the hiring of a part-time, local community coordinator to oversee the effort and to provide continuity in each of the municipalities. Although the coordinators in each city had similar roles and responsibilities, each coordinator had a different background and skill set. Brockton’s coordinator was a school department employee, Stoneham’s was a community activist, while Newton’s and Watertown’s were school parents. (Newton’s first year coordinator was also a former city employee.)

Their skills were also diverse. One had experience in community outreach, another had a planning background, a third had a background in communications and the fourth was an artist. Another hallmark of the CSRTS program was the use of local task forces to act as a link to the community at large. Once again, the diversity of the four communities provided a chance to compare different task force compositions.

- Brockton: Public Health, Nutrition and Parent Liaisons from the five schools.
- Newton: City Departments—Planning, Police and Health, Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force and parent representatives from 15 elementary schools. Presence of all schools has encouraged more inter-school cooperation, an added bonus.
- Stoneham: Informal, ad hoc task force
- Watertown: Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee and environmental groups.



One key question we sought to answer was: Why did some task forces work better than others? A number of factors seemed to affect the task forces’ success.

- Scale – bigger groups seemed to make each meeting feel energetic, in small groups it was harder to maintain attendance and enthusiasm
- Who involved - city agencies vs. city agencies plus parents
- Vibrancy of program not necessarily related to task force – this is an interesting finding that should be reviewed as other programs get underway

### **Setting And Meeting Goals**

Over the two years of the program, WalkBoston’s focus was on setting and meeting the following program goals in all four communities.

- A. Incorporate SRTS more into community life.
  1. Increased teacher and classroom involvement with SRTS activities.
  2. Increased CSRTS involvement by community groups and municipal agencies (police, public works, libraries, and health).
  3. Develop local and regional media coverage of the program, activities and events.
- B. Sustainability
  1. Expand SRTS to more schools.
  2. Encourage local communities to pick up more of the financial cost.
  3. Develop stronger base of program support among parents and other local activist groups.
  4. Reach out to business community for financial and in-kind support.

### **Activities**

In order to reach these goals, the community coordinators worked with local officials, volunteers and businesses to develop and sustain program activities and, to extend these activities to additional students in additional schools. We also worked to deepen community support and to encourage the towns and local businesses to formalize financial and in-kind support.

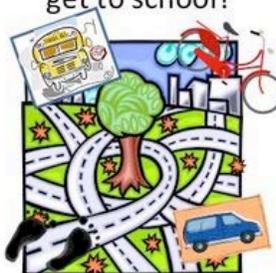
### CSRTS Program Activities

	Brockton	Newton	Stoneham	Watertown
Walk on Wednesdays	Fall, 2,292 students walked: Spring 3,359 students walked for total of 5,551 walking trips.	Regularly walked	Included 80-100 per school – 320-400 students	
Footsteps for Feeding Families	5 Schools	4 Schools with 40+ boxes of food to the food pantry	2 Schools	3 Schools
Walking School Buses	See Walk on Wednesdays	See Walk on Wednesdays	Walking School Buses at 4 schools	27 Walking School Buses
Pedestrian Safety Training	All students at 5 CSRTS schools through Health & Education Program of Brockton School Dept.	4 schools with MassRides training and 2 schools provided training on their own	1 school	
Bicycle Safety Training	Bike Rodeo	1 school; police participated in training.	1 school	MassRides training
In-Class-Projects such as Pedometer Program				429 students (4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> graders) walked 13,500 miles over two weeks.
Brochures		See brochure encouraging walking to school below		
CSRTS Website				Developed as part of the Hosmer School website



Foot Steps for Feeding Families

### How will my child get to school?



When you were young, you most likely walked to school or took a bus. Approximately 50% of children, then, walked or bicycled to school. **Today, only 15% of children walk or bicycle to school.** Let's grow that feeling of community in our neighborhood schools by trying to walk to school at least once a week. This helps create a safer traffic situation near the school, by having less cars. Did you know that 20% of morning traffic is parents or caregivers taking their children to school.

**Newton Safe Routes to School**

#### The case for walking

1. Most elementary children live close to their schools. 85% live within a mile. Those that live further or in a safety zone qualify for **bus service** and can be "bus heroes."
2. Walking provides a great opportunity to get **exercise and fresh air**. Children arrive at school better prepared to learn.
3. Physical activity helps increase academic achievement.
4. Walking to school provides young children an opportunity to learn **pedestrian skills**. Skills that will last them a lifetime.
5. Walking is an all season activity. Only the clothes change.
6. It is a *polar bear* to find a parking space when there is snow on the ground. Walking to school in snowy weather is refreshing and stimulating.
7. Walking gives children a **sense of accomplishment and independence** and extra social time with friends.

#### How to get on board

1. Walk, every day, most days, any day you can. **Walking can be faster than driving.** You do not get stuck in traffic and do not have to find a parking space.
2. Get together with a neighbor to **share the walk – walking buddies**. Get a bunch of neighbors together - **walking school bus**.
3. Feel like you live too far? Ease into it, **drive part way**, walk the rest. **Try car pooling**.
4. Walk on the city- wide **Go Green, Wear Green Days** –the last Friday of every month! Make it a family event. Rethink everyone's commute that day.
5. If you live on the bus route, take it and your child is a "**bus hero**".

Thinking about driving?  
Learn the rules!



## Newton Walk to School Brochure

### Impact of the CSRTS Program

The changes we looked for occurred in four basic aspects of community life

1. Policy & systems change
  - Within the school system
  - Community change
2. Environmental change
3. Behavior change
4. Sustainability

#### Policy and Systems Change

Over the life of the CSRTS program, walking to school became an acknowledged policy of the four communities with accompanying actions that included: expanding the number of participating schools in Brockton from 2 to 5 and paying parent liaisons to carry out CSRTS functions, enforcing safety in drop off/pick up areas in Newton, proclaiming October as National Walk to School Month in Watertown and developing a walk with medallion markers and accompanying map widely used by students and residents in Stoneham.

**Brockton:**

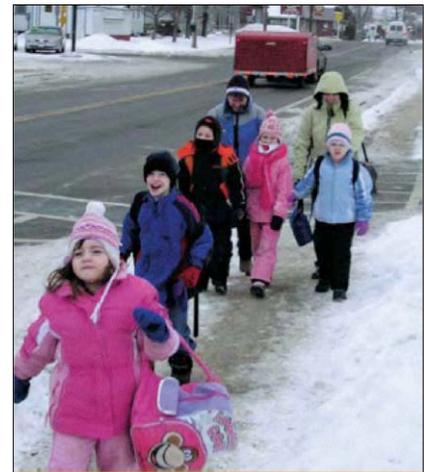
- School officials set a policy of reducing busing and shifting increased number of students to neighborhood schools in order to reduce transportation budget.
- Officials began to view SRTS as integral to this policy.
- School officials assigned paid parent liaisons in each school to carry out SRTS

**Newton:**

- Snow Removal Policy Enacted – Cooperative effort of CSRTS Taskforce sub-group formed as Safe Sidewalks, Newton aldermen, League of Women Voters, Bicycle/Pedestrian Taskforce (Note the policy was enacted in the Winter of 2011 after the completion of the CSRTS program.)
- City officials began to address pedestrian mobility in four Newton neighborhoods based upon a report and recommendations by students at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Spring 2010.
- Mayor created a Climate Change Committee
- Police substantially increased enforcement of moving violations near schools
  - Crosswalk sting operation in May 2010 – with 48 citations for moving violations.
  - When drivers were stopped, they said they “Didn’t stop for pedestrians because they thought it was optional.”
  - Pedestrian accidents have declined 10 – 12% in the last year

**Stoneham:**

- Instituted increased recycling in the schools
- Through a collaboration of historic, municipal and civic groups created the Historic Downtown Walk created with medallions placed in the sidewalk and a map developed to trace the medallions. Students on school field trips regularly use this walk.
- The Stoneham Chamber of Commerce, the Stoneham Superintendent and the CSRTS coordinator sponsored a Stoneham Gets Green, Eco-Awareness Day.
- The Stoneham Gets Green Eco Awareness Day was also the unveiling of Farm Hill Farmers’ Market, scheduled to begin in June 2010.



**Walking School Bus Route on Snowy Day**

**Watertown:**

- In the second year of the CSRTS grant (2009-2010 school year) the Town cleared snow from sidewalk corners along Walking School Bus routes.
- The Town Council issued a proclamation that October is Walk to School Month and a town wide walk was held to commemorate the event.

**Environmental Change**

Thanks to community support and the cooperation of town and school officials, the CSRTS local coordinators were able to improve the walking environment in the vicinity of schools. The result has been that sidewalks, crosswalks and school drop off zones have come under scrutiny and some problems have been addressed.

**Brockton:**

- Brookfield School is the recipient of a School Infrastructure Grant to address:
  - Lack of sidewalks on Jon Drive
  - Possible change of vehicle entrance to rear of school
  - Restriction on vehicle travel on Jon Drive during school start/dismissal



**Newton:**

- Angier School: The City is re-locating crosswalks and reconfiguring roadway to improve student safety
- Blue Zone Project: Cooperative effort of planning, schools & police resulted in re-organization of Blue Zones (temporary parking for drop off/pick up) at 4 schools, with impact beyond the 4 schools
- The Bowen School has an infrastructure project and will assess school crossings on Parker Street, a primary access road to Route 9, which is a major arterial roadway.

**Stoneham:**

- Infrastructure grant awarded to the Central School to increase student safety due to substantial drop off/pick up and other traffic at nearby middle school.
- At the Robin Hood school, one entrance is temporarily blocked off at start/dismissal by cones and parents drop off/pick up at only one school entrance.



**Watertown**

- Hosmer School is redesigning drop off/pick up areas to reduce vehicle/walking student conflicts
- An advocacy program to reduce Mt. Auburn Street from four to two travel lanes and incorporate a bicycle path – is an on-going effort.

### **Behavior Change**

The results of the Walk to School surveys are presented in the following table. Survey analysts have told us that the best way to measure walk-to-school rates are to compare season-to-season travel patterns. Thus readers should compare fall '08 to fall '09 and spring '09 to spring '10. As shown in the table, over the program's two years, the number of students walking to school increased except in Newton where walking was a substantial mode choice from the beginning of the project. It should also be noted that in the two fall surveys, '08 and '09 all fifteen of the City's elementary schools undertook the survey, but in both years the number of participating schools dropped substantially in the spring survey to about 5 schools.

In both Stoneham and Watertown the number of students who walked to school increased although unfortunately, the survey data for Watertown in the second year was either lost or not obtained.

In Brockton, two schools were with the program throughout its duration: the Downey and Brookfield schools. As shown in the table both schools showed an increase in the number of students walking from year to year. For example, the number of students walking to school in these initial two schools increased from 14% in the spring of 2009 to 16% in the spring of 2010.

In Brockton's second program year, three additional schools were added to the program. These schools were much larger than the initial two schools and the percent of students who walked to school were much lower. In the table, only the results of the Hancock School are shown because the other two schools the Davis and Kennedy did not undertake the spring surveys. Walk to school rates at these schools in the fall of 2009 were 17% and 11% respectively.

### **Walk to School Survey Results – Percent of Students Walking**

	Brockton Year 1 & 2	Brockton Year 2	Newton	Stoneham	Watertown	Total
Number of Schools	2	3	15	4	3	27
Fall '08	16%		35%	21%	23%	
Fall '09	17%		34%	22%	30%	
Spring '09	14%	6%	33%	25%	NA	
Spring '10	16%	7%	30%	28%	NA	

## **Sustainability**

Given the recession and financial crisis that occurred over the study period, locating the resources to institutionalize, support and extend the CSRTS programs has proven to be challenging. Some progress has been made and more may be in the works in some communities.

- **Brockton:** Coordinator will continue program as part of her Parent Outreach position assisted by the parent liaisons
- **Newton:** SRTS Taskforce will continue with rotating chairmen; funding from City for coordinator position still being pursued
- **Stoneham:** Coordinator has created non-profit—Market America—with percentage of proceeds funding on-going SRTS
- **Watertown:** Coordinator has applied for and received some local foundation/business grants for programs, but not staff.

## **What We Learned**

### **WalkBoston Perspective**

BOTH carrots and sticks are needed to effect behavior change – so far SRTS (around the country) has been completely based on carrots

- Commitment of school staff (principal, teachers, custodians) is critical to school success
- Staff time is needed to support and build a program of real, behavior and policy changing effectiveness
- Creating and sustaining change is time consuming and requires a long-term commitment by both activists and funders, as well as by town and school staff and officials.

The CSRTS program has shown grounds for optimism. With two years of funding, development and activity, the local task forces and local community coordinators produced significant progress. Only time will tell if the pilot communities will be able to sustain the programs in a fashion that will make more progress, especially in producing changes in walking behavior and long term policy changes that make walking easier and safer.

### **Coordinators' Perspective**

- It is important the SRTS is fully integrated into the school system, and not just seen as another program competing for time & resources
- SRTS can reduce congestion around schools which create unsafe walking conditions
- It is important that adequate funding be provided to sustain the program

### **Going Forward**

In order to earn a share of local resources, SRTS has to show that it will:

- Save money through a reduction in busing (Only applicable to Brockton in this project since it is the only community that provides school choice)
- Limit use of roadways near the schools
- Illustrate how walking/bicycling to school contributes to childhood development: i.e., fitness and academic success
- Incorporate walking/bicycling to school and physical activity in general into school programs.

## In-Kind Contributions

In the second year of the CSRTS program communities made substantial direct and in-kind contributions. These contributions ranged from police in Newton who enforced laws regarding stopping at crosswalks for an in-kind contribution of \$15,935 to the development and printing of 10,000 walking maps of Watertown by the Tufts Health Plan. Direct contributions included funds from banks in Stoneham and Watertown to bicycle racks at the Brookfield School in Brockton.

A summary of contributions is presented in the following table. A detailed explanation of the contributions follows.

### Direct and In-Kind Contributions to the CSRTS Program

	Brockton	Newton	Stoneham	Watertown	Total
Direct	\$9,750		\$2,350	\$4,700	\$16,800
In-Kind	\$12,235	\$22,635	\$9,550	\$21,000	\$65,420

Below is a detailed listing of the direct and in-kind contributions by community.

#### **Brockton:**

Direct Contributions \$9,750

- Parent liaisons in five schools working 2.5 hrs/wk on CSRTS = \$5,250
- Bicycle rack for 20 bicycles installed at Brookfield School to encourage students to bicycle to school = \$4,500

In-Kind Total: \$12,345

- Physical Education Department provides pedestrian safety training for students in five CSRTS participating Schools = 130 hours x \$40/hour = \$5,200
- Police patrols assigned to walking routes near participating CSRTS Schools on special walk days = \$43.75/hr x 60 hours = \$2,625.
- Chartwells Company donated about \$400 worth of snacks and prizes for Walk to School Days
- Horace Mann Insurance donated a bicycle for a drawing of students who Walked On Wednesdays for \$120
- Participation of principals, School Health Department and teachers in overall CSRTS Program, especially for special Walk Days = \$40/hour x 100 hours = \$4,000

#### **Newton:**

In-Kind Total: \$22,635

- Police Patrolmen
- Eight officers assigned International Walk to School Days
- Police assist in bicycle safety training
- Police conduct crosswalk sting on walking routes near schools
- Police enforce Blue Zones – parent drop off/pick up areas
- \$35-hour, plus 25% benefits = \$43.75 x 300 hours = \$13,125
- Police Captain
- Attended monthly task force meetings
- Oversaw crosswalk stings and blue zone enforcement

- Attended Statewide SRTS Conferences
- \$45 plus benefits =  $\$56.25 \times 50/\text{hrs} = \$2,810$
- Planning Director \$35/hr, with benefits =  $\$43.75 \times 25 \text{ hours} = \$1,100$
- PTO (various schools) printing of bl
- Composting and recycling at selected schools
- Printing of Walk to School Day banners by Newton North HS for elementary schools = \$300
- Participation of Superintendent, principals and teachers = \$5,000

### **Stoneham:**

Direct Contributions: \$2,350

- Eastern Bank - \$250
- Stoneham Bank - \$100
- Funding Raised for Medallions = \$2000

Indirect Contributions:

- Wentworth Interns – 2 semesters = \$3000
- Police presence for events = 12 hrs x \$40 (assume benefits included) = 480
- Stoneham After School Program provided supplies & supplies provided – paint, photos, poster board, etc. = \$600 – LA Fitness backpacks, water bottles & trial memberships and reduced rates = 1,200
- Atlantic Chiropractic – T-Shirts, pencils & other items - \$250
- Whip Hill Estate – Christmas celebration event – facility space donated = \$300

### **Watertown:**

Direct Contribution: \$4,700

- Watertown Savings Bank –
- Watertown Community Fund to provide on-going staff support for the CSRTS Coordinator in late summer-early fall--\$2,500
- Harvard O’Neil Grant

Indirect Contribution:

- Town shoveling snow from street corners for the Walking School Buses = \$2,000
- Development and printing of 10,000 Watertown Walking Maps that have been distributed to all students and other residents of the town = \$10,000 (funding is from Tufts Health Plan)
- Story Walk Installation – Department of Public Works & Health Department

## **Other Groups Involved in CSRTS Activities**

As the CSRTS program became incorporated into local activities and organizations, many community groups participated in the program. Below is a listing of the community groups ranging from the minor league baseball team in Brockton (The Rox) to the Safe Sidewalks Committee in Newton that eventually achieved a snow-shoveling ordinance.

- Brockton Rox (Minor League Baseball Team participated in special Walk Days), Kiwanis Club, Fuller Craft Museum
- Newton League of Women Voters, Safe Sidewalks Committee, Newton Bicycle and Pedestrian Taskforce, Newton Aldermen – selected members, Green Decade Coalition – initiated composting and recycling at selected schools

- Stoneham Historical Society, Stoneham Chamber of Commerce, Local Martial Arts Academy, Stoneham Public Works Department, Boy Scouts of America – clean up of walking routes, American Heart Association Walking Challenge
- Stoneham Story Walk Installation – Department of Public Works & Health Department, Environmental Groups, Independent Bookstore

## **Epilogue - Summary of the First Year after the Program**

A major hope for the CSRTS program during the two years that it received state and foundation funding, was that walk to school programs would be sustained after the grant period was completed. As WalkBoston prepared this wrap-up report we contacted the communities to assess the extent to which the program is being sustained.

We were pleased to see that the program is actively continuing, particularly the Walk on Wednesdays, walking school buses and police enforcement of drop off/pick up areas. Policies that will encourage walking have also been enacted. For example, Newton passed a sidewalk snow shoveling ordinance requiring property owners to shovel sidewalks. Parents had identified snow as a major deterrent to their children walking to school in a CSRTS survey that was conducted in the first year of the CSRTS program. In addition, several of the communities have raised small amounts of money to support SRTS activities.

A summary of ongoing SRTS activities in the four communities is provided below. The programs in Brockton and Newton have proven to be more sustainable because they have been more integrated into community activities. Brockton's SRTS program is well integrated into the school department through the school based parent liaisons and via the parent outreach coordinator who is a real cheerleader for the SRTS program. Newton's SRTS Taskforce has continued and a MassRides staffer chairs the meetings. Parents are still actively involved in the program at a number of Newton schools.

Neither Watertown nor Stoneham shows the same level of integration as Brockton and Newton. This may be because neither of the coordinators was able to build a strong team involving parents and teachers. Nevertheless several of the schools are still doing Walk on Wednesdays, and other programs.

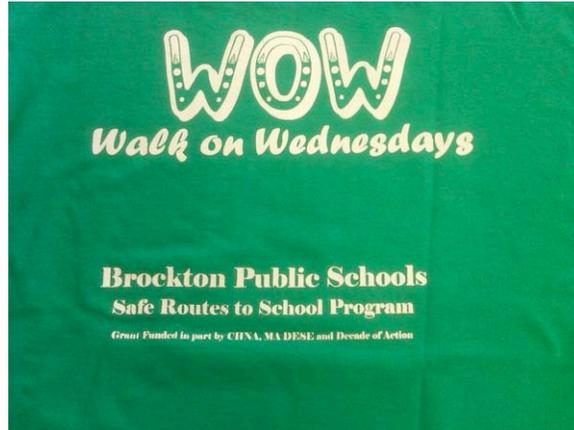
### **Brockton:**

A very strong commitment on the part of the Parent Outreach Coordinator (who had also served as the CSRTS coordinator) has sustained this program. At the five participating CSRTS Schools, parent liaisons are continuing to devote a couple of hours a week to walking activities through the staffing of tables at Walk on Wednesdays. They have also recruited parent volunteers at four of the schools.

- Over the fall and spring, 16 walking events were held and by mid-May more than 3,000 walking trips had been made to the schools.
- At the Walk on Wednesday events, drawings for Walker of the Week were held and winners were given a green T-shirt.
- Many students participated in the Decade of Action Walk held in May. There they were given the green T-shirts and snacks (see photos below).
- Physical activity funds have also been raised: \$1,050 from a Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for a green grant, \$500 for the Decade of Action, funds from the Wellness Departments, and \$450 for playground

equipment/supplies at the Kennedy and Brookfield Schools who participated in the Walk to School Surveys.

- Finally, Brockton has been promoting Safe Routes to School through a presentation at the State's SRTS Workshop and also received a Golden Shoe from WalkBoston.



[< Back to News](#)**Brockton Public Schools Participate in Worldwide Launch of the Decade of Action for Road Safety***Posted 05/10/2011 12:47 PM***WEAR. BELIEVE. ACT.**  
DECADE OF ACTION FOR ROAD SAFETY 2011-2020**Brockton Public Schools Participate in Worldwide Launch of the Decade of Action for Road Safety**

Brockton Public Schools students join children in 100 cities around the world in recognizing the first-ever worldwide Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011-2020). From Sydney to Rio de Janeiro to Nairobi, traffic safety champions will gather today with the goal of saving 5 million lives and preventing 50 million injuries in the next 10 years.

The United Nations is launching the Decade in the face of a worldwide epidemic of road deaths. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for young people, both in the U.S. and worldwide and is set to become responsible for more deaths overall than even HIV/AIDS over the next 10 years. May is also designated as National Youth Traffic Safety Month.

The Brockton Public Schools are participating in the Decade of Action for Road Safety in conjunction with the Safe Routes to School/Walk on Wednesdays program, a state and national effort to increase children's fitness, reduce traffic and pollution, and make communities safer for all walkers.

"Walking to school is the first step toward a healthy life. Students get the exercise, the energy and fresh air as they walk to school with their friends and parents," said Specialist for Parent Engagement Jane Feroli, who oversees the program. "A morning walk helps prepare students mentally for their academic school. We hope that we can raise awareness and excitement for walking and road safety through these valuable programs."

Since 2008, more than 10,000 children in five Brockton Public Schools have participated in the Walk on Wednesdays program. This spring, the district received a \$500 grant from Decade of Action to help promote the program at the Brookfield, Davis, Downey, Hancock and Kennedy Schools. The state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provided an additional \$1,000 Green Grant to support the program, and CHNA provided \$500.

In Brockton, students will focus on the importance of road safety and Peer Leaders will spread the word throughout the schools. Feroli said children can be great spokespeople, and she hopes they will share this important safety focus with their parents and family members. Prizes and motivational gear – including yellow Road Safety Tags will be given out, and Chartwells School Dining Services is providing healthy snacks for walkers. In March, Brockton was awarded the Golden Shoe Award from WalkBoston for its "leadership and enthusiasm for the Safe Routes to School Program."

Although traffic deaths have decreased dramatically in recent years in the United States, more than 30,000 Americans die on the roads every year. Globally, 1.3 million people are killed in traffic accidents and more than 30 million are injured every year.

"If we can train our children to be smart pedestrians, we are raising a generation of better drivers," Feroli said. "And we know that if we work together with the home, school and community, we can affect a positive change and save lives."

For more information about the worldwide launch of the Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011-2020), visit: [www.decadeofaction.org](http://www.decadeofaction.org) or [www.fiafoundation.org](http://www.fiafoundation.org).

**Newton:**

Highlights of 2010-11 School Year include the following:

- Continued monthly meetings of the Safe Routes to School Taskforce, which includes representatives from all 15 elementary schools and selected city officials.
- Several schools have also sustained their Safe Routes to School committees.
- The Taskforce added representatives from 3 of the 4 middle schools; key issues here are improving access to information on and use of the MBTA by students, and encouraging more students to bike to school.
- Program elements at individual schools vary. Some highlights include:
  - Pierce had instituted a monthly “Walk with the Principal Day” that has been well received.
  - Mason-Rice, Cabot, Angier and Zervas (and potentially others) have done bike safety training in at least one of the upper grades.
  - Mason-Rice did a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade pedestrian safety program.
- Coordinated walking campaigns for International Walk to School and Massachusetts Walk to School Days
- Developed a generic brochure “How Will My Child Get to School?” to be used as a resource for any school (see attached). It was originally developed for use at one school and then adapted for use throughout the system.
- Newton has made both policy and environmental changes to encourage walking to school. In the past year, the Safe Sidewalks Committee, an outgrowth of the SRTS Taskforce, successfully persuaded the city to pass an ordinance requiring property owners to shovel snow on sidewalks.
- The Police Department, which actively participated in the SRTS Taskforce during the two years of the program, has continued active enforcement of the Blue Zones (drop off/pick up areas) and has conducted crosswalk stings to ensure that students can walk to school safely. Parents also contributed time to improving Blue Zone safety. For example at the Burr School, parent volunteers (in orange safety vests) assisted in the Blue Zones and “No Parking” areas at drop-off and pick-up to help keep the Blue Zone moving and the “No Parking” areas clear.
- Initiatives at some schools have also included a focus on bicycling to school. Burr School added two bike racks (with lockup space for up to 24 bikes) thanks to a City of Newton grant that provided new bike racks at a number of locations throughout the city. In addition, this spring the Burr School did bike safety training through MassRIDES/MassBike for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders.
- The Bowen School received an Infrastructure Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. They will be installing a pedestrian traffic light, crosswalks and a pedestrian island. The Newton Transportation Council has approved the project and it is expected to go into final design in the next several months and be constructed in the summer of 2012.

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## Safe Routes program may be expanded to Newton's middle, high schools

Posted by Sarah Thomas

August 20, 2010 12:00 PM

By Sarah Thomas, Town Correspondent

Safe Routes to School, which aims to ensure that Newton's elementary school children can walk and ride bicycles to school without danger, could be extended to students in middle and high school, the city's safety subcommittee said.

"Extending this program to provide education and support to older students could have a wonderful effect," said committee member Lois Levin.

The program was initially started as a grass-roots movement by elementary school parents tired of navigating the traffic logjam during school pickups and dropoffs.

Currently, all of Newton's 15 elementary schools have Safe Routes to School committees.

Until last year, a grant from WalkBoston also funded a Safe Routes coordinator position, Christine Lacey. Funding the position again would cost \$9,000.

"If we think this is an important use for the city's funds, we have to make a policy recommendation letting the mayor know that," said committee chair Stephanie Pollack. "We should advise on policy and let city figures figure out how to implement it."

Less than 30 percent of Newton's students walk or ride bikes to school, according to Newton police traffic bureau commander Howard Mintz. Some of Newton's elementary schools also do not allow students younger than fourth-grade to bike to school.

"We also need to consider the fact that younger students and older students use transportation very differently," said committee member Sean Roche. "We can't just port the exact same program from the elementary school to the high school and expect it to work the same way."

Roche also reminded members that encouraging students to use alternative modes of transportation creates new congestion and safety concerns on sidewalks and intersections.

Pollack said she hopes to develop a specific recommendation in time for the next meeting of the full Transportation Advisory Committee, which is scheduled for Sept. 20. The safety subcommittee also hopes to meet at least one more time before then.

"What I'm hearing is that we can at least agree that having a coordinator for the schools' Safe Routes programs is a very good thing, and that there can be a focus on bike and pedestrian safety education for middle and high school students," Pollack said. "We are also hoping to have some high school students attend a future meeting and speak on this issue."

Sarah Thomas can be reached at [sarah.m.thomas@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.m.thomas@gmail.com).

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## How will my child get to school?



When you were young, you most likely walked to school or took a bus. Approximately 50% of children, then, walked or bicycled to school. **Today, only 15% of children walk or bicycle to school.** Let's grow that feeling of community in our neighborhood schools by trying to walk to school at least once a week. This helps create a safer traffic situation near the school, by having less cars. Did you know that 20% of morning traffic is parents or caregivers

Newton Safe Routes to School

### The case for walking

1. Most elementary children live close to their schools. 85% live within a mile. Those that live further or in a safety zone qualify for **bus service** and can be "bus heroes."
2. Walking provides a great opportunity to get **exercise and fresh air**. Children arrive at school better prepared to learn.
3. Physical activity helps increase academic achievement.
4. Walking to school provides young children an opportunity to learn **pedestrian skills**. Skills that will last them a lifetime.
5. Walking is an all season activity. Only the clothes change.
6. It is a *polar bear* to find a parking space when there is snow on the ground. Walking to school in snowy weather is refreshing and stimulating.
7. Walking gives children a **sense of accomplishment and independence** and extra social time with friends.

### How to get on board

1. Walk, every day, most days, any day you can. **Walking can be faster than driving.** You do not get stuck in traffic and do not have to find a parking space.
2. Get together with a neighbor to **share the walk** – walking buddies. Get a bunch of neighbors together – walking school bus.
3. Feel like you live too far? Ease into it, **drive part way**, walk the rest. **Try car pooling**.
4. Walk on the city-wide **Go Green, Wear Green Days** – the last Friday of every month! Make it a family event. Rethink everyone's commute that day.
5. If you live on the bus route, take it and your child is a "**bus hero**".

Thinking about driving?  
Learn the rules!



## Safe Routes to School Annual Events

**International Walk to School Day**  
October

**Massachusetts Walk to School Day**  
May

Join your community, far and near, and plan events for these special walking days!

Newton Safe Routes to School

### Drop off and pick up should be in the BLUE ZONE or LIVE PARKING AREA ONLY.

- Children must get out of & into the car by themselves, onto the sidewalk
- Drivers never get out of the car
- **Don't park in the blue zone or Live Parking area**, this is for a quick pick up or drop off
- Double parking, even to quickly pick up a child, creates backups
- Turn off your engine, it's the law, making it **illegal to idle a car within 100ft of a school**
- **Parking in a yellow zone is illegal**
- **Keep the paths for buses clear**; when the bus is blocked, all traffic comes to a halt
- Make certain children know pick-up plans
- Older children can utilize alternative pick up zones away from school
- If these options will not work for you or your child, please take the time to park.
- Be a great role model, follow the rules

### Help maintain a smooth traffic flow

- **No U-turns** in front of the school, it is illegal and unsafe
  - Keep children on sidewalks safe, **don't turn around in driveways**. Instead, plan your route to eliminate need to turn around
  - **Jaywalking is dangerous**, use crosswalk and crossing guards. Make safe habits for life!
  - Children get in cars from the sidewalk, not street side.
- Park responsibly and legally
- Obey "No Parking Signs"
  - Don't park up on grass or within 5 ft. of driveways
  - Staff parking lot is off-limits to all parent cars
  - Teach your children and caretakers the rules
  - Be a great role model, follow the rules

## Stoneham

The Stoneham program is continuing with Walk on Wednesdays at several of the schools. The Central School has also conducted safety training for second graders using parent volunteers.

A major pedestrian safety project is scheduled to begin at Central School, which experienced a fatal student accident several years ago. The drop off and pick up areas have been redesigned with funds from a MassDOT, SRTS funded infrastructure grant. The entry and exit routes are being narrowed to one lane and a wider sidewalk constructed. In order to qualify for funding, Stoneham's Town Meeting recently passed two articles related to the SRTS program. These articles handed over to the program the parcel of town-owned land near Central School and designated it as a public way. The Department of Transportation will handle the project, which will make the traffic flow better and upgrade sidewalks and curbing so access will be safer for the children attending Central School and Stoneham Middle School.



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Highway Division



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### Notice of a Public Hearing

A Design Public Hearing will be held by MassDOT - Highway Division to discuss the proposed SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (CENTRAL SCHOOL) in Stoneham, MA.

**WHERE:** Town Hall  
Banquet Hall  
35 Central Street  
Stoneham, MA 02180

**WHEN:** Wednesday June 9, 2010  
at 7:00 P.M.

**PROJECT#:** [605876](#)

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed STONEHAM - SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (CENTRAL SCHOOL) project. All views and comments made at the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

**PROPOSAL:** The proposed project consists of the installation of new sidewalks, multi-use path, ADA compliant wheelchair ramps, crosswalks, signing, and pavement markings on Central Street, Central Elementary School exit driveway and at the main entrance to Central Elementary School.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The town is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be discussed at this hearing.

Written views received by MassDOT subsequent to the date of this notice and up to five (5) days prior to the date of the hearing shall be displayed for public inspection and copying at the time and date listed above. Plans will be on display one-half hour before the hearing begins, with an engineer in attendance to answer questions regarding this project. A project handout will be made available on the MassDOT website listed below.

Written statements and other exhibits in place of, or in addition to, oral statements made at the Public Hearing regarding the proposed undertaking are to be submitted to Frank A. Tramontozzi, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT Highway Division, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, ATTN: Project Management Section, Project File No. 605876. Such submissions will also be accepted at the hearing. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked within ten (10) business days of this Public Hearing. Project inquiries may be emailed to [dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us](mailto:dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us)

The community has declared that this facility is accessible to all in compliance with the ADA / Title II. However, persons in need of ADA / Title II accommodations should contact Angela Rudikoff by phone VOICE (617) 973-7005, TDDY (617) 973-7306 or email [angela.rudikoff@state.ma.us](mailto:angela.rudikoff@state.ma.us). Requests must be made at least 10 days prior to the date of the public hearing.

In case of inclement weather, hearing cancellation announcements will be posted on the MassHighway website <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Highway/>.

## Watertown

Watertown's CSRTS program has continued over the past year. The CSRTS program recently received a \$2,500 Education Grant from the Watertown Community Foundation for a part-time coordinator for "walking school buses," and other program elements through 2011.

Ongoing programs include Walk on Wednesdays and walking school buses. The coordinator also works with the Watertown Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee. As an example she announced that May 4 was "Massachusetts Walks to School Day" on the committee's web site and invited the public to join with Watertown Community SRTS, students, faculty and parents in celebrating "walking for health and the environment."

The program continues to produce results. According to a member of Watertown's Lowell School office staff, "Definitely more children are walking and bicycling to school than before. We even have children skateboarding to school." The principal of the Hosmer School reported that the school had re-organized pick-up and drop-off to make it safer for walkers.

Hosmer Weekly Page 2 of 3



### Community Calendar

#### Community Safe Routes to School

#### CSRTS GOALS

- Increase Families' Physical Activity
- Improve Neighborhood Pedestrian Safety
- Provide Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Education
- Reduce Traffic around School
- Build Community
- Improve the Environment

**WALKTOBER in WATERTOWN- put on your walking shoes!**

Join Watertown CSRTS every Wednesday for "Walking Wednesdays" by walking or riding your bike to school. Start your own Walking School Bus or join an existing one!

**WALKTOBER Happenings:**

- Footsteps Feeding Families Fridays - Walk to school on Fridays this Fall and bring a canned food donation to support the Watertown food Pantry! Drop-off located near entrance to the school's main office.
- Safety Training for all 2<sup>nd</sup> grade elementary students
- Fall Story-walks
- Grades 3-5 Pedometer Challenge - Wed., Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>
  - Stay tuned to see which grade will travel the most number of miles.... Pedometers will be given out this week and the challenge to walk the most steps goes through November 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Town-Wide Watertown Walks Day - Wed., Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>

**WALKTOBER** CSRTS initiatives have been made possible by very generous grants from the Watertown Community Foundation and the Harvard-O'Neill Foundation. Many Thanks!

#### 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Grade Child/Parent Book Club

The first meeting of the child/parent Book Club will be held in the Hosmer Library on Thursday, October 21, 2010 from 6:30-7:00pm. The Book Club is for students in the 4th and 5th grades and their parents (or relative, older sibling, etc.).

At the first meeting, we will introduce the book selection, distribute copies of the book, talk about what is expected to take place during our book discussion, and agree on a future date for discussion. Approximately four to five weeks later, we will meet and hold the discussion from 6:30-7:00pm. Parents may wish to contribute a snack and/or drink after the discussion for our social half hour from 7:30-8:00pm (optional).

Sign up for the Book Club will be done on a book-by-book basis. Families who cannot make the first meeting may still sign up and receive a book in order to participate in our first book club discussion (your child must see Mrs. Feeney for a book copy).

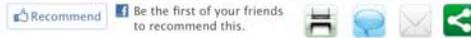


## Watertown Community Foundation awards \$45,000 in grants

By Press Release

**Wicked Local Watertown**

Posted May 23, 2011 @ 01:54 PM



WATERTOWN – The Watertown Community Foundation (WCF) has awarded “Grants to Core Institutions” and “Education Grants” totaling \$45,600 to nonprofit organizations in Watertown.

“WCF received almost twice as many grant proposals this year versus 2010 requesting nearly \$83,000 – so we were not able to fund them all. Nevertheless, we are pleased to be able to help so many great nonprofits with important community projects,” said Michael Schade, WCF Executive Director.

The WCF Board of Directors awarded grants from its Arsenal Education Income Fund as follows:

**Arsenal Center for the Arts:** \$5,000 – Watertown Core Institution Grant to help provide art education for children and adults, and to inspire people to create and grow through the arts. The Center offers courses in pottery, design, drawing, collage, printmaking, glass, clay, painting, sculpture and crafts.

**Community Safe Routes to School:** \$2,500 – Education Grant for a part-time coordinator for “walking school buses,” etc. through 2011.

**Friends of Project Literacy:** \$5,000 – Education Grant for free English language classes and tutoring for adults. 300 adult students participated in the past year, and there are 78 volunteer tutors.

**Hosmer School PTO:** \$2,500 – Education Grant for picturing writing training and art supplies for K and pre-K classes at Hosmer School in Watertown.

**Parent Child Home Program – Watertown:** \$5,000 – Education Grant for home visits to low-income Watertown families with preschool aged children. These home visits have proven to be an effective way to empower parents in their role as a child’s first teacher. There are several families on PCHP’s waiting list.

**Springwell:** \$2,500 – Education Grant for Springwell’s Home Delivered Meals Program which provides Watertown Elders with free, nutritious meals at home and educational nutrition counseling. In 2010, 28,904 meals were delivered to Watertown seniors; this is a 9% increase over 2009.

**Watertown Boys and Girls Club:** \$5,000 – Watertown Core Institution Grant for services to the youth of Watertown. Serves 700-800 youth members annually. Programs include: swimming lessons, open swim, homework help and tutoring, computer lab, arts and crafts, physical activities, team sports and social recreation.

**Watertown Children’s Theatre:** \$2,500 – Education Grant for a touring production of C.S. Lewis’s literary classic, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* at Watertown elementary and middle schools and at the Arsenal Center for the Arts (free of charge).

**Watertown Citizens for Environmental Safety – Watertown Gardens:** \$5,000 -- Education Grant for starting Watertown’s first community garden with goals of 1) educating children who participate, 2) providing space for Willow Park and other Watertown residents to grow some of their food and learn about gardening, and 3) providing some fresh local produce to a local food pantry.

**Watertown Council on Aging/Senior Center:** \$600 – Education Grant for a series of Healthy Aging workshops at the Watertown Senior Center.

**Watertown Family Network:** \$5,000 – Watertown Core Institution Grant for “Welcome Home Baby Baskets,” inter-generational programs at nursing homes, preschool playgroups, Early Childhood Information Fair, early literacy, clothing exchanges and young family parenting programs.

**Wayside Multi Service Center:** \$5,000 – Watertown Core Institution Grant for its after-school enrichment programming (cooking and arts-based activities) in Watertown’s low income housing development.

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### Popular Videos



Massachusetts Residents React to Tornado



Sarah Palin tours the Freedom Trail



Police: 5 Killed in Shootings in Southwest Ariz.



Clinton: FBI to Probe China Email Hacking Charge



Romney Opens Presidential Bid Challenging Obama



Weiner: No more questions