

Hyde Park Elementary School
School Travel Plan

1. Identification of individuals and organization involved in the local SR2S team

The Safe Routes to School Team at Hyde Park Elementary School is composed primarily of members of the School Health Team, which meets monthly to discuss issues of health and safety for its students. The committee is headed by Robin Wright, the school nurse, and is regularly attended by the following members:

- Ilene Levitt, HPES Principal
- Dorothy Reeve, Vermont Dept. of Health
- Robin Wright, School Nurse
- Charleen McFarlane, Superintendent's Office, Lamoille North Supervisory Union
- Shirley Mason, School Food Service
- Diane Lehoullier, Kindergarten Teacher
- Karen Akins, Safe Routes to School Coordinator

A new PE teacher, Margot Fleming, will start in the fall of 2007 and will be an important member of this team.

PTO

The Safe Routes to School Coordinator regularly coordinates with the PTO through one of its members, Denise Green, who is supportive of the program. The Safe Routes to School program was introduced to the PTO as it was forming at the start of the 2006/7 school year. The PTO membership was provided an update on the infrastructure piece of the program in the spring.

Other Parents

- Jessica Cote, a parent of two elementary school children, has been active in our walk to school events.
- Sarah & Eric Perry, parents, have been helpful in providing feedback on village sidewalk projects.
- DeAnne Blueter has volunteered to assist with the walking school bus.

Town Officials

David DiDomenico, Village Trustee, is our liaison with the village trustees and

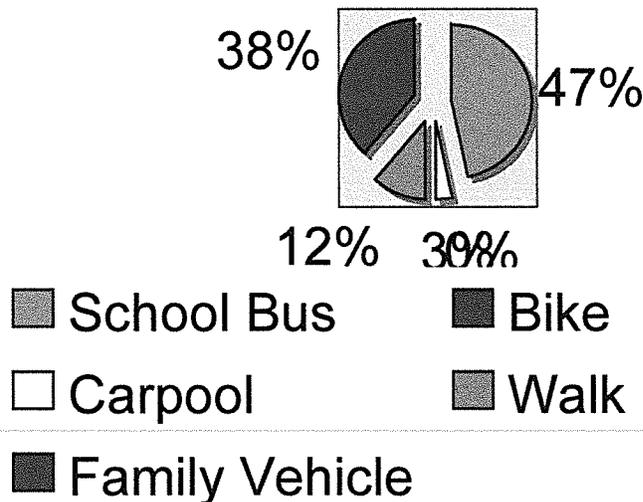
enhancement committee. David attended the SR2S infrastructure workshop and has been instrumental in moving the sidewalk project forward

2. Assessment of the current levels of walking and biking

Currently almost half of the students at Hyde Park Elementary get to and from school by bus (47%), although a large number are also driven by parents (38%). The small number of children walking and biking to school has more to do with the distance from school than anything else. Most of the children who live in the village, as opposed to the town, routinely walk to school unless they live on the north side of Route 15. Approximately 12% of students walk to school at Hyde Park Elementary.

Classroom surveys conducted in the fall of 2006 show the following travel behavior:

Student Travel Mode-Hyde Park Elementary



According to the parent survey, many more parents drop their children off in the morning, for convenience or because it's on their way to work, and let their children take the bus home. Walking home from school is also more popular than walking to school, ostensibly due to the lack of a time crunch in the afternoon.

Travel Modes To and From School (Reported by Parents)

	To School	From School
Walk	14.91%	17.57%
Bike	2.57%	2.58%
School Bus	34.19%	42.38%
Family Vehicle	44.73%	34.63%
Carpool	3.34%	2.58%
Transit	0.00%	0.00%
Other	0.26%	0.26%

The low rate of biking is probably due to both terrain and traffic volumes on roads throughout the village. The residential areas of the village can be a relatively steep one-way climb for younger kids coming to/from school on their bike. Biking and overall fitness could increase substantially once the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail is completed and biking becomes more a part of the school's culture. Lack of safe crossing points across Route 15 also prevent students living within a reasonable biking distance of school from riding to school. If anything, residences north of Route 15 are more apt to bike than walk because of the longer distance from home to school.

3. Identification of the physical and cultural barriers students face

Distance

One of the biggest barriers to walking and biking that is not subject to change is the rural nature of the community. Distance was identified by parents as one of the top two factors affecting their school travel decision. The parent survey indicated that 40% of Hyde Park Elementary students live beyond 2 miles from the school, making walking and biking impractical.

Distance from Home to School

Less than 1/4 mile	65	17%
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	59	15%
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	44	11%
1 mile up to 2 miles	56	15%
More than 2 miles	155	40%
Don't know	4	1%

Unsafe Crossing/Intersection Safety

Route 15 serves as a barrier to walking/biking for children who do technically live close enough to walk/bike. There are no designated pedestrian crossing points along the roadway, and morning rush hour traffic does not have adequate pedestrian gap opportunities to allow for a safe crossing.

Speeding

Speeding is also a problem on Route 15, as well as other local roadways, as it contributes to lack of a safe pedestrian gap for children to cross and decreases stopping and sight distance, making it an extremely dangerous crossing for children. Speeding was identified as one of the top two factors affecting parents' travel decisions.

Sidewalks/Paths

The lack of a complete sidewalk network within the village core is also a problem, resulting in unsafe conditions for even those children who do live within the village.

School Crosswalks

The intersection of Depot and Main Street, where the main school crosswalks are located is a safety hazard. Poor line of sight obscures the visibility of the Depot Street crosswalk for drivers. Improving this crossing will become even more important after the dry bridge at the bottom of Depot Street is replaced and Depot Street becomes even more a cut—through route from Johnson to Stowe.

School Entrance

Conditions on the school grounds themselves do not meet minimal design standards. Students arriving on bike and foot must currently pass through traffic lanes and in back of parked cars to reach the front entrance. The chaos in the

parking lot at the beginning and end of the school day, with parent pick-up and drop-off and bus loading and unloading, is an unsafe area for kids to be mixing with traffic

Bicycle racks are located next to the playground, so that kids biking to school must also cross through the parking lot to secure their bikes. This is an unsafe traffic mix for bikers as well.

Education

Children in Hyde Park have not had access to pedestrian and bicycle safety education in the classroom, nor is there a local group who regularly sponsors a bicycle safety fair for the local kids, although there is an annual bicycle safety fair in nearby Morrisville.

4. An outline of what steps will be taken to overcome these barriers

Parents of Hyde Park students indicated that there were a number of factors which, if changed, would affect their decision to allow their child to walk or bike to school.

Issue	Issue affects travel decision		Change might affect travel decision	
	number	percent	number	percent
Distance	209	53.45%	69	17.65%
Driving Convenience	14	3.58%	12	3.07%
Time	83	21.23%	34	8.70%
Extracurricular Activities	38	9.72%	21	5.37%
Traffic Speed	211	53.96%	87	22.25%
Traffic Volume	180	46.04%	79	20.20%
Adults to Walk With	58	14.83%	48	12.28%
Sidewalks & Pathways	137	35.04%	87	22.25%
Intersection Safety	153	39.13%	80	20.46%
Crossing Guards	68	17.39%	49	12.53%
Violence or Crime	168	42.97%	80	20.46%
Weather or Climate	149	38.11%	60	15.35%

The top issues which might affect their travel decision are 1) sidewalks and pathways, 2) traffic speeds, 3) traffic volumes, 4) intersection safety, and 5) violence or crime. As part of our Safe Routes to School program, there are the steps we intend to take to increase walking and biking to Hyde Park Elementary School:

a. Infrastructure/Engineering

i. Complete Village Sidewalk Network

The Village Trustees will be pursuing funding for both the Depot Street sidewalk and Johnson Street extension sidewalks. Included in the Depot Street sidewalk application to the Safe Routes to School program is a segment of sidewalk along the front of the school to ensure safe passage to the school entrance. The Johnson Street extension sidewalks would use transportation enhancement funding.

ii. Intersection Safety

The Safe Routes to School coordinator is working with the LCPC and the Village of Hyde Park to increase intersection safety at Route 100/Route 15. Although pedestrian safety is not the main focus of the ongoing Road Safety Audit, the Safe Routes to School team will continue to request that this be considered in the recommended solutions. Other intersection treatments along Route 15, such as a mast arm with pedestrian crossing sign, will be proposed in the next funding round under Safe Routes to School.

iii. School Crosswalks/Markings

New school crosswalk markings and signage are being requested under the Safe Routes to School Infrastructure program. As a quick fix, an in-street pedestrian crossing sign was purchased for the school crossing in the spring of 2007.

iv. Bike/Ped Education

The new PE teacher or school nurse? Will attend the September 11th training session for Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety educators. Once that training is completed, this function will be institutionalized and be incorporated into the school's curriculum (Ilene?)

v. Encouragement

1. Walking School Bus

To encourage students to walk, we will again set up a

remote drop off at St. Michael's church and encourage parents and kids to participate in a walking school bus on a intermittent or continuing basis.

2. Local Trail Maps

Maps of all the local trails will be created and distributed to Hyde Park students so that can familiarize themselves with the opportunities to move about on bike and foot on off-road trails. We will promote physical activity on the school trail system and adjacent Lamoille Valley Rail Trail.

3. Special Events

We will continue to participate in the following events on a regular basis:

- a. International Walk to School Day/Week/Month (October)
- b. Governor's Spring and Fall fitness challenge (October & April)
- c. Way to Go week (May)
- d. Heart Health Month (February)
- e. Bicycle Safety Fair (spring 2008)

In each case, the Safe Routes to School Coordinator will prepare promotional materials and submit them to the school principal for insertion in Extreme News, as well as to the editor of the PTO Newsletter. Copies of materials to be distributed to students will be given to the school nurse, who will ensure that materials are distributed to students in their classrooms or backpack mail, whichever is appropriate.

Local partners for a Bicycle Safety Fair will be recruited to assist with a fair each spring. Partners could include Lamoille County Sheriff's Copley Hospital, VFW Auxiliary, the Lamoille Fit & Healthy Council, and the Friends of the LVRT. Each of these groups would be contacted to determine interest in participating during the winter of 2007/08.

5. A timeline for implementation and identification of who will take the lead for each step

SR2S Action Plan

Hyde Park Elementary School

Who	What	Category	Deadline	Start
SR2S Coordinator	Promote walking school bus/drop off	Encouragement-Walking School Bus	Aug-07	Sep-07
Village Trustees/LCPC	Complete infrastructure application	Engineering	8/17/07	Jul-07
School Principal	Recruit staff for ped/bike safety training	Education	9/11/07	Aug-07
SR2S Coordinator	Special Event-Walk to School Day/Week/Month	Encouragement	Oct-07	Sep-07
School Nurse	Governor's Fitness Challenge	Education	Oct-07	Sep-07
PE Teacher/Nurse	Ped/bike skills instruction	Education	1-Oct	9/21/07
SR2S Coordinator/LCPC	Map Local Trails	Education	11/1/07	9/1/07
SR2S Coordinator	Recruit Sports for Life Instructor	Education	Nov-07	Sep-07
School Nurse	Promote Heart Healthy Month	Education	Feb-08	Dec-07
School Nurse	Governor's Fitness Challenge	Education	Apr-08	Apr-08
SR2S Coordinator	Organize bike safety fair	Education	5/15/08	4/1/08
PTO Newsletter Editor	Incorporate Regular articles re. SR2S	Education	Monthly	7-Aug
SR2S Coordinator	Write/submit articles re. SR2S	Education	Ongoing	8/20/07
School Principal	Insert Extreme News articles re. SR2S	Education	Weekly	Aug-07
School Health Committee	Promote/evaluate SR2S Activities	Evaluation	Ongoing	Ongoing

Signature of Principal

Ilene Levitt
Principal
Hyde Park Elementary School