The ninth annual National Bike to School Day looked a little different from the ones that came before it. Schools and communities couldn’t gather together for Bike to School Day as they typically would due to the COVID-19 pandemic. But families and Bike to School Day champions shifted gears and came together in spirit, while physically apart, to continue this annual tradition of celebrating the benefits of active travel and recognizing the importance of safety.

This year, Bike to School Day included a week of ideas from May 4-8 to encourage communities to celebrate together from a distance. The menu of ideas included decorating sidewalks or windows with signs of encouragement to bike and walk, conducting a bike safety and helmet fit check, walking or biking, contacting officials about safety concerns on local streets, and interviewing family members about walking and rolling. Across the country, communities put their own spin on the celebration.

“It was inspiring to see the creative ways people celebrated Bike to School Day this year,” said Nancy Pullen-Seufert, director of the National Center for Safe Routes to School, which coordinates the national event. “The strong commitment to this event from coast to coast serves as an important reminder to local, state, and national leaders about the need for places to safely bike and walk.”
COMMUNITIES PUT A CREATIVE SPIN ON EVENTS

Following Bike to School Day, the National Center for Safe Routes to School distributed a survey to better understand how communities celebrated the 2020 event and came together around biking during a public health crisis. Survey respondents participated in celebrations in 31 states. Here’s what a few respondents had to say about their Bike to School Day celebrations:

1. **Yadkinville, NC**
   - We celebrated a virtual bike to school week with different daily activities, theme days and participation prizes.
   - Oshkosh, WI

2. **Severna Park, MD**
   - The students were given the task one week to take a bike ride with a parent that would have been the equivalent distance of riding to school.

3. **Arlington, VA**
   - Instead of celebrating Bike/Walk/Roll to School Day this year, we opted to provide schools, families and students with ideas to celebrate Bike Month by posting daily tips, resources and ideas on biking, bike safety, bike classes, route planning, local rules, etc. We did this by tweeting a new resource every school day, then consolidating all the tips all on our web page.

4. **Yadkinville, NC**
   - On our school websites, three of us Physical Education teachers posted the interactive daily information provided for Bike to School week. Then on May 5 we let our students know that we would be biking around our school communities so we could say hello ‘from a distance.’ We had to spread it out over a three-day period...but the response from the students and families was wonderful. What started as a small opportunity, turned into a huge blessing for all.

5. **Yadkinville, NC**
   - Instead of celebrating Bike/Walk/Roll to School Day this year, we opted to provide schools, families and students with ideas to celebrate Bike Month by posting daily tips, resources and ideas on biking, bike safety, bike classes, route planning, local rules, etc. We did this by tweeting a new resource every school day, then consolidating all the tips all on our web page.
We completed a virtual bike day in which all students wanting to participate logged their time or mileage for a day in May. Parents, students, staff and friends joined together as they were allowed in few numbers to show their support on city sidewalks from their house to a local park, up and down their own street or around their home and sent in videos before and after to share their smiles and burn those calories.

— CANTON, NC

BIKE TO SCHOOL DAY BUZZ

Participants continued to elevate the sense of community that makes Bike to School Day so powerful by posting about their adventures on social media. There were over 300 #BiketoSchoolDay posts from 32 states on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram in May 2020. Below are a few examples of what participants shared.

Today we join communities in celebrating the joy that walking and biking to school brings into our communities. We enjoy taking advantage of the opportunity to support safety, fun and community.

— MORRISVILLE, NC

Loving our ability to continue the education of physical, social and emotional health to all our high school students!

— FALL RIVER, MA

Bike to School Day 2020 shouldn’t go unrecognized just because COVID-19 has changed school as we know it. Bike riding reduces stress, strengthens your bones and muscles, improves heart health and posture, and promotes mental health. While we can’t bike to school, we can still get out and ride anyway.

— GARLAND, TX

LET’S KEEP THE MOMENTUM GOING!


For more information about the events, visit www.walkbiketoschool.org. Check out the “Beyond the Event” section for more information about how to keep safe walking and biking a priority year-round!