

BIKE & ROLL

TO SCHOOL DAY

2022

A RESURGENCE OF CELEBRATIONS AND A NEW NAME

On May 4, 2022 and throughout the month of May, students, families and community leaders across the country took to the streets and sidewalks to celebrate Bike & Roll to School Day. This year, 1,985 events from 46 states and the District of Columbia registered their participation at walkbiketoschool.org. The 2021-2022 school year saw schools returning to full time, in-person classes and addressing emerging needs for getting students to and from school. Despite competing needs related to pandemic recovery, Bike & Roll to School Day has seen numbers grow from the 2021 participation, showing the desire to be outside and celebrate active ways of getting to school. According to organizers responding to the post-event survey, 58% of their events featured a combination of walking and biking.



CELEBRATING A NEW NAME

At the beginning of 2022, we launched a renaming of the event to Bike & Roll to School Day complete with a redesign of our website and update of materials. The name change recognizes the ongoing efforts to ensure events are accessible for children of all abilities. Survey respondents were asked specifically about inclusion and accessibility, and we learned about all the work event organizers undertook to encourage accessibility at their events. Many organizers discussed including options to participate for those who cannot walk or bike, and these options were promoted as part of the event. When route planning, we learned that organizers tested routes to ensure they were promoting the most accessible routes to school for everyone who wished to join the event. A good practice for planning an event is to enlist a coalition to help plan and carry out the event. Many organizers highlighted that their events supported accessibility by recruiting support from teachers, parents, and school staff for students with differing abilities. We also have reports of schools with events that included students using adaptive bikes. Finally, the name also recognizes the popularity and presence of scooters, skateboards and all wheeled mobility devices.



BRINGING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

The National Bike & Roll to School Day event in Washington, DC, organized by the Ward 6 Public School Parents Organization, brought together families, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser (pictured bottom right), local community and government agency representatives, advocates and one marching band to send-off students to more than a dozen area schools.

Communities participate in Bike & Roll to School Day for a variety of reasons. In our post event survey, 75% of organizers revealed that their community was motivated by building a sense of neighborhood and 73% hold an event to increase school spirit. Both of these rates are higher than what surveys have shown in the past five years.

Comments shared by organizers illustrate their enthusiasm for

“ We used the event to draw community attention to a dangerous road outside the school. The school PTA subsequently agreed to fund a road redesign project using paint and flower pots - a great tactical urbanism effort that will be completed in fall 2022. ”
- TAMPA, FL

the events themselves and how they bring the school community together. An organizer from Evansville, IN wrote, “This was our tenth year participating in Bike & Roll to School Day! This has become one of the best traditions at our school and students, families, and staff look forward to it yearly. We always have great turnout for this event, and it is a fun way to engage our community.” In addition, as schools and school activities have been disrupted for the past two years, many remarked about the event as a return to sense of normal for the school community and the students. Events also helped to highlight ongoing activities that promote walking or biking. These include the tradition of annual events like Bike & Roll to School Day, year-round walking and biking programs, and safety education efforts like in-school curriculum or bike rodeos.



Washington, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser joins Bike & Roll to School Day

USING BIKE & ROLL TO SCHOOL DAY TO ADDRESS URGENT NEEDS AND BUILD TO A BETTER FUTURE

An event organizer from Orlando, FL describes how Bike & Roll to School provided an opportunity to test out a bike lane, showing both the demand for biking and the feasibility of placing better infrastructure for students biking to school.

"I dreamed up a plan to take over a lane on this particular road for our event to show that there are many people who would walk, bike, or roll to school and many other destinations along this "Main Street" route. This area has been discussed within our group in the past because there is no sidewalk along a portion of this road and until this year also missing curb cuts.

As a group, we met with city officials and performed a walking audit a couple years back, pre-pandemic, with curb cuts finally being installed this year. The City

of Orlando (and their consultant Kittelson & Assoc.), Safe Routes to APS, and Orlando Bike Coalition came together to create a route that would highlight the poor current conditions of Corinne Dr. This road has been a hot topic in the area for many years. They have completed a major study and the design funding is available, but construction funds are not.

This Bike & Roll Day installation piloted several separation types from flex posts to wave delineators. This one-day project will help inform a Quick Build guide for the City of Orlando to implement more short-term safety solutions for walking and biking. It was a dream come true. My words can't really express how cool it was to see elected officials, families and community members, other city government staff walking, running, biking, and rolling down this street!"



Credit: Bike/Walk Central Florida

“ Everyone was encouraged to participate. We included everyone in our posters, and spent a lot of effort this year to make getting to school safe and accessible to everyone.
- BURKE, VA ”

“ There are 17-24 bikes a day at school. Before bike to school day there were 6!! The awareness of the day has made an impact on the families.
- ROCKVILLE, MD ”

MAKING SAFER PLACES TO BIKE, WALK, AND ROLL

Safety for biking, walking, and active transportation was also a frequently noted (70%) motivation for community participation. Organizers explained how they used their events to promote safety in different ways. In some places, organizers used events as opportunities to draw attention to specific safety needs. Some places saw a Bike & Roll to School event as the chance to show local officials places with demand for riding but with a lack of bicycle lanes. In other places, organizers sought to draw attention to areas with sidewalks in disrepair. Organizers also used their events to show where students need safer places to cross streets on their routes to school. Other organizers used events to show off what is possible with newly installed infrastructure. In one location, the event was held on a new path that provides student a safe space to ride or walk on the way to school. Multiple organizers used their events to highlight a pop-up bicycle lane, showing how a bike lane was both necessary and feasible on the route to school.

INCREASING ACCESS TO WHEELS

The National Center for Safe Routes to School, LaScoota scooters and Magneto skateboards teamed up for a giveaway for local events in celebration of Bike & Roll to School Day this year. The giveaway offered ten sets of skateboards, helmets and four fleets of 30 scooters and helmets to Title 1 schools and discounts for families and programs. The parent company, Moonshot Brands, also offered a portion of the proceeds from discount orders to be donated to an organization that helps provide adaptive mobility equipment and opportunities for children with special needs.



“ Our school introduced a parent-led bike to school program at the start of the COVID pandemic. Without sports options and difficult bus journeys, parents working from home rallied together to create multiple routes of daily bike to school teams with over 100 children biking on average 140 days out of the school year. The Bike to school day just one promotional tool used to highlight their efforts and spend the day campaigning and raising money and awareness for others. This is still continuing today 2 years on we have slightly less daily riders but no less enthusiasm.

– BALLSTON LAKE, NY



JOIN THE CELEBRATION NEXT TIME

On October 12, 2022, Walk and Roll to School Day offers another chance to celebrate an active trip to school while promoting the event for students of all abilities. Bike & Roll to School Day returns next spring on May 3, 2023. Check walkbiketoschool.org for all information on upcoming events, registration, tips for planning events, and information on walking, biking, and rolling throughout the year.

“ With COVID restrictions still in place on campus, biking and walking to school events have been a great way to build community this school year.

– BERKELEY, CA

