



# Safe Routes to School: District Policy Workbook

*Presented by*

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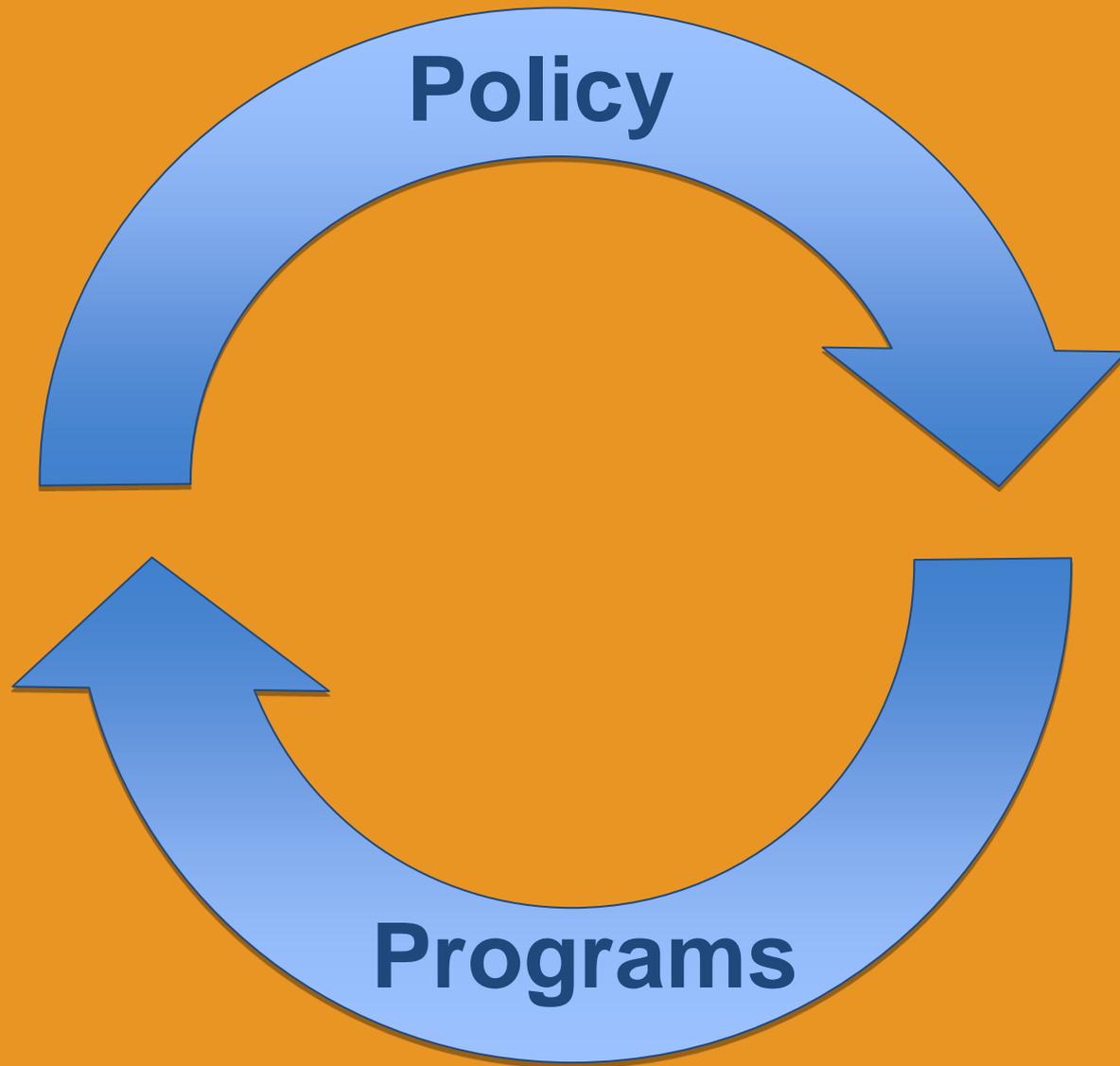


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Safe Routes  
to School  
National  
Partnership

**“Beginner”  
Policies**

## Introduction: Safe Routes to School

- Role of School Districts in Student Health
- About Safe Routes To School
- How to Work With School Boards
- General Resources

## Instructions

## Getting Started

## The Policies

### Beginner

- Support for Active Transportation
- Support for Safe Routes to School
- Roles of Districts, Schools, Parents/Guardians, and Students
- Minimizing Driving
- Following the Law
- District Task Force
- School Teams
- Traffic Safety Education
- Walking School Buses and Bicycle Trains
- Walk to School Day and Other Promotional Activities
- Enforcement
- Incorporation into Student and Parent Handbooks
- Incorporation into School Wellness Policy

### Intermediate

### Advanced

- Role of School Districts in Student Health
- About Safe Routes To School
- How to Work With School Boards
- General Resources

## Instructions

## Getting Started

## The Policies

### Beginner

### Intermediate

### Advanced

## Finish Up Your Policy

## Citations

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## ct Policy Workbook

y Workbook! It is designed to help school community members create and implement Routes to School programs. The workbook will build your own customized Safe Routes to community.

ncourages students to walk, ride bicycles, or pool. Active transportation improves health, ct the environment. Making it easy for n many community stakeholders, including orhood businesses, planners, transportation School Policy Workbook helps schools make

orting [Safe Routes to School](#)



# Support for SRTS



**Everyone has a role to play**

# Walking School Buses & Bicycle Trains



# District Task Force





# School Wellness Policy



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## FACT SHEETS

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**Safe Routes to School:  
Minimizing Your Liability Risk**

*Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs can help reduce schools' risk of liability while making it safer for students to walk or bike. This fact sheet explains why liability fears shouldn't keep schools from supporting SRTS programs, and offers practical tips for schools and community advocates.*

Some schools have been reluctant to support Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs due to concerns about being sued if an injury or problem arises. But such fears are largely unwarranted. By acting responsibly and understanding the liability issues in question, schools, nonprofits, and parent groups can help students reap the health and academic benefits of SRTS programs while minimizing the risk of a lawsuit. In fact, well-run SRTS programs can even reduce schools' risk of liability by identifying potential dangers and putting measures in place to protect children against injury.

Because nonprofits, parent groups, and schools may all be involved in SRTS programs, it can be important for each of these groups to understand SRTS and liability. This fact sheet explains why liability fears shouldn't stop school districts from supporting SRTS programs, provides an overview of liability and negligence, and offers practical tips on how school districts and others can reduce their risk of liability.

Because liability issues vary from state to state, consulting with a local lawyer may be helpful in understanding your specific issues, as well as in structuring SRTS programs to minimize liability concerns.

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**Volunteers and Liability  
The Federal Volunteer Protection Act**

*People who volunteer for a nonprofit or school may be concerned about a lawsuit if an injury occurs. This fact sheet provides an overview of legal protections designed to shield volunteers from liability.*

Volunteers are crucial to the fight against childhood obesity—leading kids in physical activity through Safe Routes to School programs and after-school activities, teaching cooking and gardening classes, and encouraging healthy lifestyles through many other programs. Volunteers often make it possible for financially stretched schools, nonprofits, cities, and counties to do more to create healthy communities and help children lead healthier lives.

But people sometimes worry that they could be at risk of liability if an injury occurs while they are volunteering. Fortunately, a federal law—the Volunteer Protection Act—provides volunteers with significant protections from liability associated with volunteer activity<sup>1</sup> in every state but one.<sup>2</sup> Some states also have laws that provide additional protections for volunteers.

The Volunteer Protection Act protects volunteers under many circumstances, although it does not eliminate the possibility of a lawsuit. It does not shield the nonprofit or governmental agency using the volunteer's services from liability; it only protects the volunteers themselves.

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**Smart School Siting  
How School Locations Can Make Students Healthier and Communities Stronger**

*Locating schools within communities can mean healthier students by making it easier for students to walk and bike to school, and to use school playgrounds and facilities outside of school hours.*

Forty years ago, nearly half of all students walked or biked to school.<sup>1</sup> Now, only 13 percent do.<sup>2</sup> Why this change?

The biggest reason is because today's schools are located too far from children's homes for walking or biking to be practical.<sup>3</sup> In recent decades, due to a variety of pressures, schools have increasingly been built on the outskirts of communities.<sup>4</sup> As a result, two-thirds of schools are now located far from where children live.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, obesity rates for children and adolescents have more than tripled,<sup>6</sup> and nearly a third of children are overweight or obese.<sup>7</sup>

But locating schools *within* communities can mean healthier students by making it easier for students to walk and bike to school, and to use school playgrounds and facilities outside of school hours. Districts can promote healthy school siting by locating schools near where students live, whether by retaining centrally located schools or by building new schools within communities instead of on their outskirts.

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## FORTHCOMING PRODUCTS



**Fact sheet on liability  
and crossing guards**



**Fact sheet on liability and  
remote drop offs**

# THANK YOU!

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