

# The Spin



Colorado Safe Routes to School State Network

Volume 4, Issue 1

## Happy New Year!

The start of a new year is a great time to reevaluate content and test some new ideas. For each month in 2015, we plan to open The Spin with a frequently asked question or tips related to Safe Routes to School and active transportation. If there are particular questions you have or ideas about useful content, please let us know.

### **January's Question: At what age can children walk to school by themselves?**

There is no federal or Colorado law setting a legal age minimum before children can walk to school alone. However, the school district or school where the child attends may have a policy that prohibits children under a certain age from walking to school alone.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safe Administration, even children in the same grade vary in their readiness to handle traffic situations, such as choosing a safe time to cross a street. In general, children are not ready to cross a street alone until age 10, but parents have the best opportunities to effectively assess their individual child's skills and teach safe behavior. It is less a matter of chronological age, and more about whether children have demonstrated that they can safely walk and cross streets independently.

For additional information about when children are

## In This Issue

### Stories from Schools

Steamboat Springs' Safe Routes to School Program Gains Momentum

Denver Launches SRTS Website

### Cruisin' with CDOT

Communities Continue to Seek Funding for SRTS Projects

Save the Date for Bike to School Day 2015

### National Crosswalk

U.S. Awareness of Protected Bike Lanes Is Growing Exponentially

Model School Wellness Policy Available from Alliance for a Healthier Generation

### Training Wheels & Webinars

Register Now for 2015 Bicycle Summit

America Walks 2015 Webinar Series: Inspiring Stories of Walkable Communities

Grand Valley Walking and Biking Trails Summit

[Subscribe to The Spin »](#)

ready to walk alone, see the [National Center for Safe Routes to School's resource, Teaching Children to Walk Safely as They Grow and Develop.](#)

## Stories from Schools

---

### Steamboat Springs' Safe Routes to School Program Gains Momentum

“Steamboat Springs is very bike friendly, but everyone still likes their suburbans,” says Sally Cariveau, Steamboat Springs School District’s Safe Routes to School coordinator. To tackle the challenges presented by a largely rural population, the district has established “Hike and Bikes” on Friday mornings in the spring and fall with drop-off points for busses that allow all riders an opportunity to participate. Families are also encouraged to consider driving to drop-off points and allowing their children to walk or bike to school from there.

“The community really gets behind these programs,” Cariveau says. And their success is due, in part, to the city’s focus on creating and promoting walking and biking trails, she says. Additionally, the district’s bicycle rodeos in the spring are staffed by community volunteers and the city provides community service officers to accompany the students as they hike and bike to school on Fridays.



The district has applied for funding to continue to promote and expand its program through the Colorado Safe Routes to School non-infrastructure grants. “I’m hoping to run some newspaper and radio ads if we receive the funding,” Cariveau says. “I’d also like to create incentive programs to encourage participation.”

In the meantime, Cariveau is focused on planning this year’s bike rallies and ramping up the hike and bike events once the snow clears. “The culture of Steamboat is one that really supports active transportation,” she says. “That translates into a lot of possibilities for our Safe Routes to School program.”

### Denver Launches SRTS Website

A new website has been launched this week as part of an effort to streamline all of the SRTS efforts in Denver. Funded by a two-year grant from Kaiser Permanente and administered by Denver Health, the project’s partners include the transportation department of Denver Public Schools, Denver Health, the City and County of Denver and Bicycle Colorado.

The overall goal of the effort is to provide a policy, systems and environmental approach that support efforts to institutionalize SRTS in Denver. The group hopes to encourage thinking beyond the “yellow bus” to educate schools about active transportation options that make kids happier and healthier, while decreasing traffic congestion and increasing safety. [» View the website](#)

## **Cruisin' with CDOT**

---

### **New Executive Director Appointed for CDOT**

In early January, Governor Hickenlooper announced that Shailen Bhatt will replace Don Hunt as the executive director of the Colorado Department of Transportation in mid-February. Bhatt is currently the secretary of the Delaware Department of Transportation where he has led efforts for the state's rise from #18 to #4 in bicycle-friendly rankings.

In a 2012 interview with Bike Delaware, Bhatt underscored the importance of creating multi-modal opportunities: "We're not saying everybody needs to get on a bike, but, from an economic perspective, from the environmental side, we need to give people who want that opportunity the safest shot possible to adopt this lifestyle."

### **Communities Continue to Seek Funding for SRTS Projects**

CDOT received 18 Safe Routes to School applications for non-infrastructure (education and encouragement) projects this fall from school districts and communities throughout the state.

The SRST Advisory Committee is currently reviewing the applications and will make a recommendation to the CDOT Transportation Commission for approval in the coming month.

### **Save the Date for Bike to School Day 2015**

Even though it is cold and snowy outside, CDOT reminds you to start thinking about Bike to School Day, which will be held on Wednesday, May 6. Make sure the date is on your calendar and be on the lookout for the website and the opportunity to register your event. Eighty-six Colorado schools registered in 2014; we hope to see even more this year!

## **National Crosswalk**

---

### **U.S. Awareness of Protected Bike Lanes Is Growing Exponentially**

A recent article from *StreetsBlog USA* talks about the current trends and how the approach of separating bicyclists from drivers is really gaining momentum.

Buried inside this trend is another one of changing language. Last year was the year when most professionals settled on the phrase “protected bike lane” as the best way to describe these designs to a general audience. [» Read more](#)

## **Model School Wellness Policy Available from Alliance for a Healthier Generation**

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation has been working with districts across the country since 2006 to create and implement strong wellness policies, guided by evidence-based practices. In November 2014, the Alliance published a [model wellness policy](#) to help school districts get ahead of finalized school wellness policy requirements anticipated from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in 2015. [» Learn More](#)

## **Training Wheels & Webinars**

---

### **Register Now for 2015 Colorado Bicycle Summit**

This two-day program, set for February 9-10 at the Denver Embassy Suites Hotel, is geared to educate and empower attendees, identify common bicycling issues and solutions in our communities, demonstrate the power of a unified voice to the state legislature and set priorities for improving the future of bicycling in Colorado. [» Learn more and register](#)

### **America Walks 2015 Webinar Series: Inspiring Stories of Walkable Communities**

America Walks has announced its first series of webinars for 2015. Building on the theme of "Inspiring Stories," these free webinars will showcase specific walkable community successes achieved by local elected officials, health care industry leaders and seasoned campaigners.

- Thursday, February 5 (10 a.m. MST): **Elected Officials Walk the Walk**  
Based on America Walks' recently published case studies, this webinar will feature three local elected officials who have used their status as political leaders to advance walking and walkability. [» Register](#)
- Friday, February 20 (9 a.m. MST): **What's Happening in Health Care?**  
Walking is one of the healthiest activities you can take up, so this webinar showcases two exciting programs from the health care industry. [» Register](#)
- Monday, March 9 (9 a.m. MST): **Lessons from the Experts: 10 First Steps to Walkability**  
Join celebrated speaker and walkability expert Mark Fenton for a rapid-fire review of best practices for those beginning to build more walkable communities. [» Register](#)

## Grand Valley Walking and Biking Trails Summit

Learn how to work toward a more livable community through active transportation at Grand Valley's 2nd Walking and Biking Trails Summit on March 13 at the Two Rivers Convention Center in Grand Junction, Colo. The day-long summit includes keynote speaker Ralph Becker, mayor of Salt Lake City and National League of Cities president, along with presentations on the economic benefits and challenges of creating walking and biking conducive environments. [» Learn more and register](#)

---

The purpose of the **Colorado Safe Routes to School State Network** is to facilitate two-way information sharing and connecting among communities and organizations in order to lift up what is working, identify new opportunities and galvanize support for policy and culture change that will increase the number of students walking and biking safely to and from school in every Colorado community.

[LiveWell Colorado](#) serves as the lead facilitator for the Network. Other members of the Network's steering committee include: [Action for Healthy Kids](#), [Bicycle Colorado](#), [Colorado Department of Transportation \(CDOT\)](#), [Children's Hospital Colorado](#), [Kaiser Permanente](#), [Safe Routes to School National Partnership](#), and subject matter experts.

[Unsubscribe](#) • [Contact Us](#) • [Subscribe](#)