

WESTFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

143 Brookside Road Westford VT 05495

Safe Routes to School School Travel Plan

Last Updated: December 2009

For More information please contact:

Pam Mathews

Regional Safe Routes to School Coordinator

Local Motion

Pam@Localmotion.org

802 363-5231

802 482-4120

Westford Elementary School School Contact Information:

<u>School Name:</u>	Westford Elementary School (WES)
School Address:	146 Brookside Road
City, State, Zip:	Westford VT Zip: 05494
School Telephone Number (office line):	802 878-5392
Grade levels at school:	K - 8
Total number of students enrolled:	227 (FY08)
Grade levels to participate in SRTS (if different):	Same
Number of students in participating grades:	227

<u>School Principal Name:</u>	David Wells
School Principal Telephone Number:	802 878-5932
School Principal Email:	dwells@ccsuvt.org
Local SRTS Team Leader Name:	Allison Weinhagen
Team Leader Address:	1246 Osgood Rd.
City, State, Zip:	Westford VT 05494
Team Leader Phone:	802 878-5804
Team Leader email:	Weinhagen3@surfglobal.net

School Characteristics:

Active school wellness or coordinated school health team? Yes

Policies/procedures that discourage/prohibit students from walking or bicycling to school? No

Estimated current % of students: walking to/from school 3% bicycling to/from school 5%

Local Government Contact Information:

<u>Town Name:</u>	Westford	
Town Manager/Administrator Name (if applicable):	n/a	
Town Mgr./Administrator email:		
Selectboard/City Council Chair Name:	Dave Tilton	
Selectboard/City Council Chair email:	westfdvt@together.net	
Municipal office Address:	1713 VT Rte 128	
City, State, Zip:	Westford, VT	Zip: 05494
Telephone Number:	802 878-4587	

SRTS TEAM MEMBERS

NAME	TITLE	ORGANIZATION	ADDRESS	CONTACT INFO
Allison Weinhausen	Parent Volunteer		1246 Osgood Road Westford VT 05494	Weinhagen3@surfglobal.net 802 878-5804
David Wells	Principal	Westford Elementary School	143 Brookside Road Westford VT 05494	802 878-5932
Seth McQuade	P.E.	Westford Elementary School	143 Brookside Road Westford VT 05494	802 878-5932
John Quinn	Select Board member	Town of Westford	1713 VT Rte. 128, Westford VT 05494	802 878-4587 Fax 802 879-6503

Deborah Travis	School Nurse	Westford Elementary School	143 Brookside Road Westford VT 05494	802 878-5932
Pam Mathews	Regional SRTS Coordinator	Local Motion	14 Hawk Lane Hinesburg VT 05461	pam@localmotion.org 802 363-5231 802 482-4120
Kristy Trask	Chair	HOPE (PTO)		
Kim Morse	Guidance	Westford Elementary School	143 Brookside Road Westford VT 05494	802 878-5932
Tammy Brown	Recreation	Town of Westford	1713 VT Rte. 128, Westford VT 05494	802 878-4587 Fax 802 879-6503
State Police				(802) 878-7111

DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL

Westford Elementary School is a K-8 school located in a rural area. The school is located on the edge of Westford's Town Center. This area is zoned for higher density residential and mixed-uses. It represents the Town's sole village growth center, and contains numerous destinations for children and other community members. For example, around the Town Common, after school programs are available at the Town Library; food and snacks are available at the Westford Market; and various community events (theater, socials, open mike, movies, boy/girl scouts, etc.) take place at the Brick Meeting House.

The school is about 0.5 miles away from the residential neighborhood made up of Brookside Road residents and those who live around the Town Common. This neighborhood is within easy walking distance to the school, and is zoned to allow for more growth than any other portion of town. To walk or bike to school children must travel on Brookside Road, which is a gravel, class 2 town road. As a result of the SRTS program, students have demonstrated their willingness to walk and bike to school. For example, Westford used punch cards as part of an incentive program in the spring of 2007 and the bike racks at school overflowed with incredible participation.

SCHOOL BUSSING POLICIES

Policy: Transportation

File Code: EEA

It is the policy of the Chittenden Central Supervisory Union that students may be furnished partial or total transportation to and from school, at the discretion of the local school board. In determining the student transportation policy, the local school boards shall consider:

1. differences in the geographic area of member school districts;
2. unique circumstances and experiences regarding the transportation of students to and from school; and
3. the expectations of their respective communities on this topic.

It is understood that transportation to and from school will be provided for students receiving special education services when such transportation is included in the Individual Education Plan for the student.

Field Trips and Co/Extra Curricular Transportation

Member school districts shall provide transportation for students on approved field trips and for student-athletes to and from approved co/extra curricular events. Students shall not transport themselves or other students to or from such events. However, in unusual circumstances and with advance written permission, only the principal, or in the case of athletics, the athletic director¹, may permit the transportation of a student by the student's parent(s) or the parent'(s) adult designee according to procedures established by the principal or athletic director. For purposes of this policy, students cannot serve as the adult designee in providing transportation. Students, staff, and volunteers participating in approved field trips or athletic events shall observe all applicable school rules and regulations and are required to obey all instructions by school authority in charge, and/or the bus driver.

Legal Reference: 16 V.S.A. 1222

Adopted: November 24, 2003

First Reading: June 23, 2003

Chittenden Central Supervisory Union

BICYCLING RESTRICTIONS, (INCL. AGE LIMITS, HELMET REQUIREMENT)

No restrictions-helmets required

EXISTING SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICIES

The policy and its guidelines are based on the following rationales:

Chittenden Central Supervisory Union believes that in order for children to achieve their full academic potential, healthy eating patterns are essential. A well-planned and well-implemented school nutrition program positively influences students' eating habits. Consuming a variety of nutritious foods promotes healthy growth and development and provides the necessary energy for learning.

A comprehensive physical education program, coupled with opportunities for moderate to vigorous physical activity on a daily basis, has been shown to improve student learning and wellbeing.

Quality physical education programs positively impact students' physical, social, and emotional health. *Quality physical education programs provide opportunities for children to understand the importance of physical activity and to acquire skills to combat a sedentary lifestyle. By incorporating a variety of programs and opportunities, both competitive and noncompetitive, into the curriculum the goal is to instill a passion in the students for lifelong physical activity.**(Highlighted by author of this STP for illustrative purposes).

Chittenden Central Supervisory Union's Nutrition and Fitness Policy was developed with guidance from the Department of Education, Department of Health, Department of Agriculture, and Vermont educators to comply with Vermont's Act 161 of the 2004 Vermont General Assembly and the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004. The policy is divided into five sections:

- I. Nutrition
- II. Physical Education Instruction
- III. Physical Activity
- IV. Implementation
- V. Reporting to the Community

Section I. Nutrition

Nutritious Food Choices

A. Nutritious foods are available and promoted as a choice for students wherever and whenever food is sold or otherwise offered at school during school hours.

B. Foods and beverages produced and available through curricular programs are governed by existing instructional standards and curriculum policies, and not subject to the following guidelines.

Definitions

1. Nutritious foods are nutrient-dense foods including whole grains; low-fat or non-fat dairy products; fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables; lean meats, poultry, fish, and beans. Nutritious foods exceed the nutrient levels of Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value. (The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). 7 CFR 210.11 and 7 CFR 210, Appendix B).

The School Food Service Program

C. All reimbursable meals are planned to conform to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the nutrient standards established in the regulations of the National School Lunch Program (7 CFR 210) and the School Breakfast Program (7 CFR 220).

D. A la carte foods

Definitions

1. A la carte food includes all foods sold by the food service program that are not part of a reimbursable meal.

“A la carte” refers to foods and beverages sold by the food service program in addition to the USDA reimbursable school meals. These food sales are intended to provide students with some additional healthy food choices and to support a nutritionally-sound school food service program. Since studies show that students who consume nutritionally well-balanced reimbursable school meals have better overall nutrient intakes than those who consume foods from any other source, a la carte foods are priced to encourage students to select well-balanced, nutritional meals rather than a la carte foods; are limited in quantity and variety; and are designed to supplement, not replace, school meals.

E. Food pricing strategies are designed to promote the purchase of nutritious items and/or reimbursable meals.

- Compatible with federal regulations for such purchases and to the extent it is financially feasible, the food service program will establish procedures to consider locally grown and produced foods and beverages within its purchasing practices.

Other Food Choices for Students at School

F. All food sales on school grounds during regular school hours are under the management of the school food service program (exclusive of those foods available through curricular and instructional programs). Nutritious foods are included as choices at any time foods are sold at school to students.

G. Foods sold for the purpose of fundraising should consider the importance of healthy foods. Schools should encourage fundraisers that promote positive health habits such as the sale of non-food and nutritious food items as well as physical activity fundraisers to support school events. Foods sold for the purpose of fundraising should not be sold before the end of the last daily lunch period.

H. Classroom snacks and celebrations should promote the importance of healthy foods.

I. Foods sold through vending machines must conform to the guidelines established by the USDA and adopted by the State of Vermont:

1. No foods or beverages of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) as defined by the USDA in 7 CFR 210.11(b) are sold from vending machines in the food service area during meal service times.
2. Foods and beverages available to students from vending machines during non-meal service times should include healthy, nutritious food and beverage choices.
3. For Grade K-8: Eliminate the sale of foods and beverages from vending machines outside of the school meal program during the entire school day. Vending may be permitted after school hours and must provide healthy or nutritious food and beverage choices.
4. For Grade 9-12: The sale of foods and beverages from vending machines may be permitted before, during and after meal periods.

However, vending must provide healthy or nutritious food and beverage choices.

Nutrition Education and the Promotion of Healthy Eating Behaviors

J. Nutrition education should be included within the schools' educational program.

The nutrition education focuses on developing healthy eating behaviors based on theories and methods proven effective by research, and is consistent with Vermont's Personal Development Standard 3.5 and aligned Vermont's Health Grade Expectations.

K. The food service authorities should develop a coordinated program to promote healthy eating behaviors, ensure maximum participation in the school meal program, and should ensure that all eligible children participate and receive free and reduced priced meals. Schools and staff should ensure that students eligible to receive free or reduced price meals and milk are treated equally and not easily identified by other students.

L. Drinking water and hand washing facilities should be conveniently available for students at all times. Hand washing should be promoted and encouraged before meal times.

M. The District staff is discouraged from using food as a reward and prohibited from using food as a punishment for students.

Section II. Physical Education Instruction

Class Structure and Curriculum

A. All students should receive regular, age-appropriate, quality instruction in physical education separate from recess, consistent with board-approved physical education curriculum that is aligned with Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities and Vermont's Grade Expectations. The District's curriculum and assessments are aligned with the National Physical Education Standards (achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical fitness), The Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities' Personal Development Standards 3.3 and 3.6, and with the Vermont Physical Education Grade Expectations.

B. The curriculum uses developmentally appropriate components to enable students to achieve/maintain a health-enhancing level of Physical Fitness.

C. The curriculum equips students with the knowledge and skills necessary for lifelong physical activity. The curriculum emphasizes the teaching of positive attitudes and the personal/social skills appropriate for lifelong participation in physical activities.

D. The curriculum offers students multiple choices of opportunities that will prepare students for a wide variety of healthy physical lifetime activities, including self expression and personal challenges.*

E. The curriculum builds students' competencies in their own physical abilities and thus improves their self confidence.*

F. Efforts should be made to meet the number of minutes for physical activity as specified by the National Association for Sports and Physical Education.

LOCAL CONDITIONS AND ISSUES

1. Westford is a rural community with only a few identifiable clusters of residential development. Besides the Brookside/Town Common neighborhood, the other 3 clusters (Mountain Road, Covey/Old #11 area, upper Osgood Hill Road) present some real distance challenges (2+ miles) for bike/pedestrian access to the school. With that said, a limited number of kids from these neighborhoods do bicycle to school currently. With innovative approaches, geared to the traditional rural Vermont town, we continue to be confident that more children in these somewhat more removed neighborhoods will be able to walk or bike to school (e.g., walking school bus drop off points, safe bicycle routes, etc.). The SRTS program will continue to provide an excellent opportunity for collaboration between the school, municipal leaders, and the community at large.
2. The parking lot, parent drop-off area of the school has been identified as an area of concern. Current conditions make entering the school grounds via bike or on foot hazardous. Town and Westford Elementary School officials have studied the issues and explored making improvement with funding through a bond on the Town ballot but the effort was rejected. They hope to apply for SRTS funds in the fall of 2009.

ATTITUDES AFFECTING WALKING AND BICYCLING

Attached to the end of this plan is Parent Survey data collected mid-program spring 2008. 180 surveys were distributed with 39 returned. Data shows that major issues affecting attitudes about walking and biking include traffic volume and speed, lack of sidewalks and paths, distance, need for adults to walk and bike with and fear of crime. Parent comments follow the survey data..

CURRENT LEVELS OF WALKING AND BIKING

Student Tally Data are unavailable at time of this update. We are attempting to retrieve past information from National center for Safe Routes to School.

ANECDOTAL OBSERVATIONS

With the introduction of the Safe Routes to School program, the bike racks at WES went from having one or two bikes per day to “overflowing” with over 20 bikes on some days. Children have repeatedly demonstrated their willingness to walk and bike to school during successful walking Wednesday programs.

Westford School & Surrounding Area

2 Mile Radius Around School



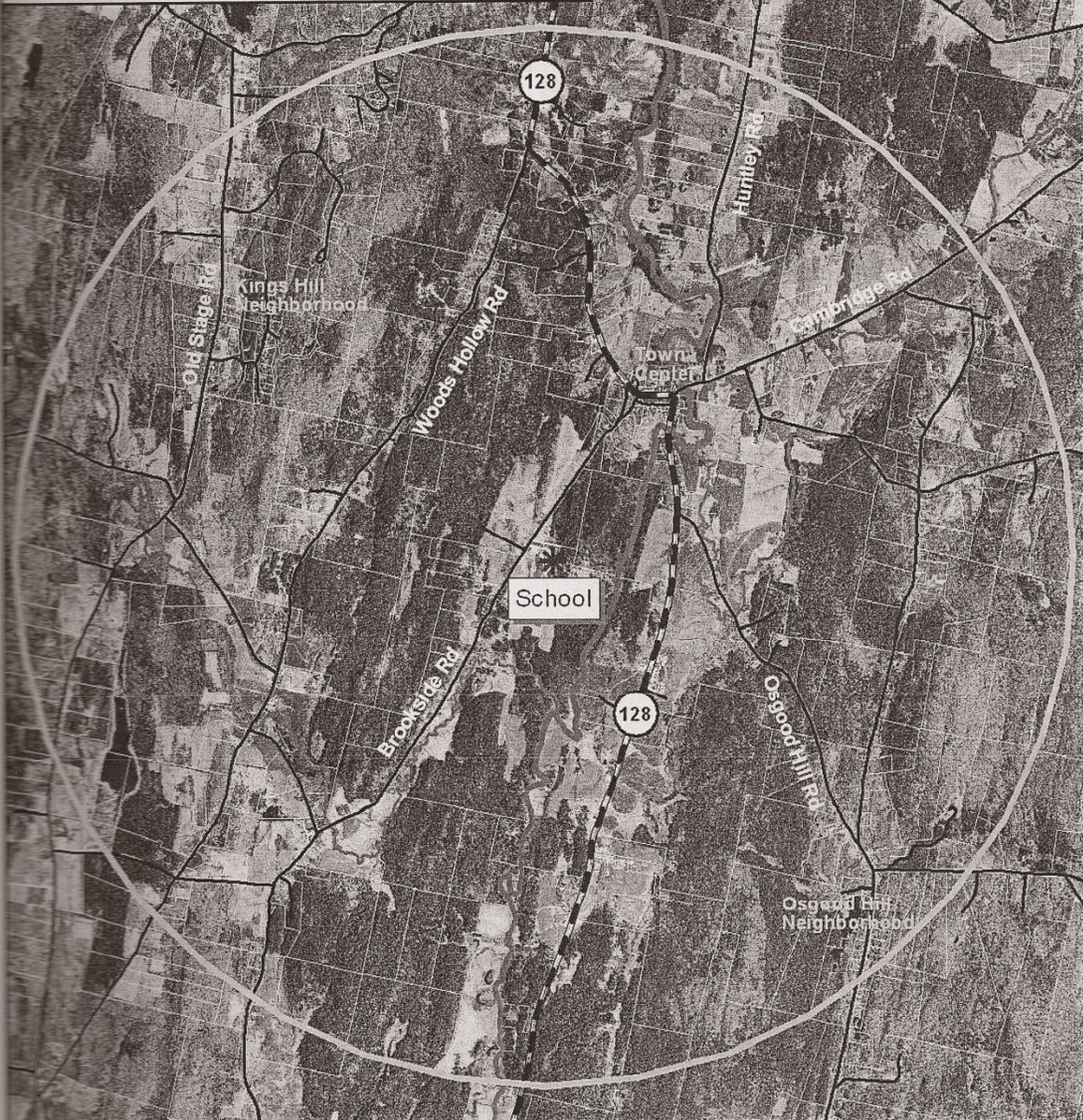
map date 5/4/2006

1:32400 1 inch = 2700 feet

Spring 1999 Orthophoto

1000 0 1000 2000 3000 Feet

Map shows points of reference,
roads, major waterways, and
2005 Parcel Lines



PROGRAM GOALS

1. Continue to encourage walking and biking to and from school, town center, and drop and walk points (such as town center).
2. Educate students in safe walking biking and bus loading and unloading practices.
3. Educate parents and motorists to be aware of walkers and cyclists.
4. Improve school lot to allow for safer walking and cycling.

PHYSICAL BARRIERS

1. No sidewalk on Brookside Road (dirt road). High built-up shoulders. Traffic often travelling at high speeds for conditions.
2. Access to school unsafe for pedestrian and cyclists. Bus, drop-off, pedestrian and bike travel mixed.
3. Unsafe to cross VT Rte. 128
4. Distance too great for many students

CULTURAL BARRIERS

1. Parents think it unsafe to walk in rural areas (perceived stranger danger).
2. Parents in the habit of putting kids on the bus or dropping off at school.
3. Students not accustomed to walking and biking.

STEPS TO OVERCOME BARRIERS (PROPOSED SOLUTIONS FOR THE 5 E'S)

<u>Five E</u>	<u>Barrier</u>	<u>solution</u>	<u>Who's Responsible?</u>	<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Goal Achieved?</u>
Education	Students not accustomed to walking to School	Teach safety skill through WalkSmart	Local Motion/Allison Weinhagen	Fall 2008	Yes *taught in January 2009
	Students not accustomed to biking to school	Teach safety skills through BikeSmart	Local Motion	Spring 2009	yes
	Motorists	Place lawn	SRTS Team-	Fall 2009	yes

	unaware of walkers and cyclists	signs to educate motorists	Allison Weinhagen		
	Perceived Stranger Danger	Teach Child Lures Prevention program in school or Rad Kids?	David wells, School team	Fall 2010	
Encouragement	Students unaccustomed to walking and biking to school	Continue to Celebrate IWALK, Way to Go!	SRTS Team-School	Fall 2006,2007, 2008 - Ongoing	Yes
	Students unaccustomed to walking and biking to school	Continue Walking Wednesday program	Allison Weinhagen	2006-2009 - Ongoing	yes
Enforcement	Motorists travelling too fast/unaware of walkers /cyclists	Ask for police support during walking events	Allison Weinhagen	IWalk events 2006,2007, 2008	yes
Engineering	No sidewalk /path on Brookside	Explore possibility of adding path	Alex Weinhagen	2005-2997	No- no public support for path
	School Parking lot unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists	Apply for SRTS infrastructure funds to Improve bike/ped infrastructure in School parking lot	SRTS Team/Town officials	Fall 2009	
Evaluation		Conduct student tallies twice/year	Allison Weinhagen / School	ongoing	Yes- however tally missed in fall 2008 due to team restructuring

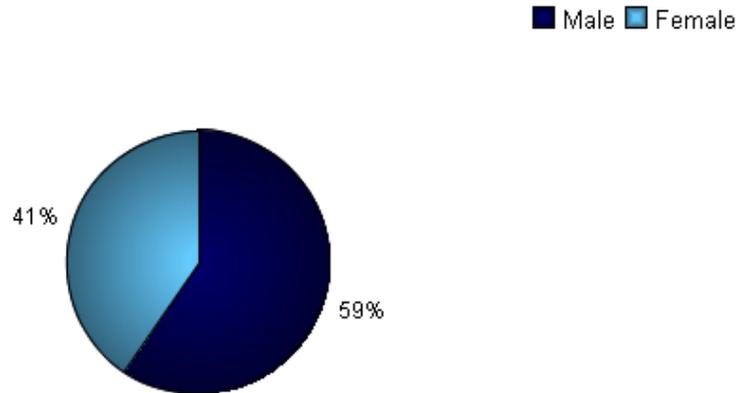
					conducted later in school year
		Conduct parent surveys once/year	SRTS Team	Ongoing	yes

Parent Survey Summary

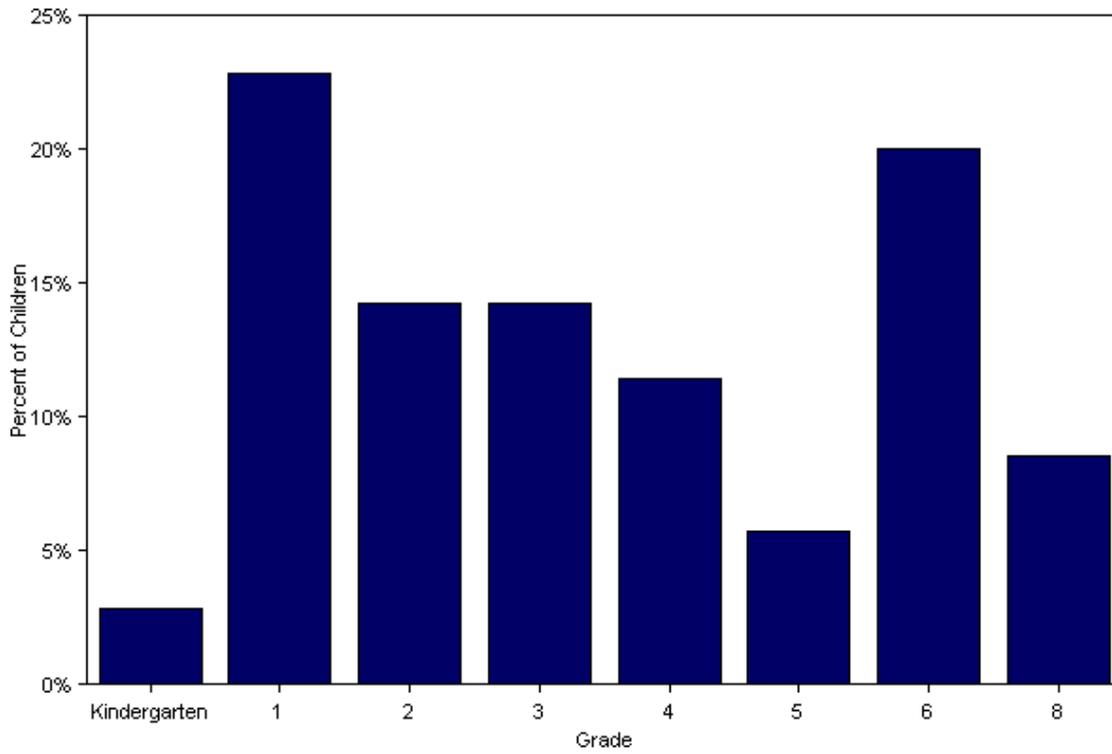
Program Name:	Local Motion	Month and Year Collected:	Spring 2009
School Name:	Westford Elementary	Set ID:	2197
School Enrollment:	249	Date Report Generated:	12/16/2010
Enrollment within Grades Targeted by SRTS Program:	249	Number of Questionnaires Analyzed for Report:	37
Number of Questionnaires Distributed:	180		

This report contains information from parents about their children's trip to and from school. The report also reflects parents' perceptions regarding whether walking and bicycling to school is appropriate for their child. The data used in this report were collected using the Survey about Walking and Biking to School for Parents form from the National Center for Safe Routes to School.

Sex of children for parents that provided information



Grade levels of children represented in survey



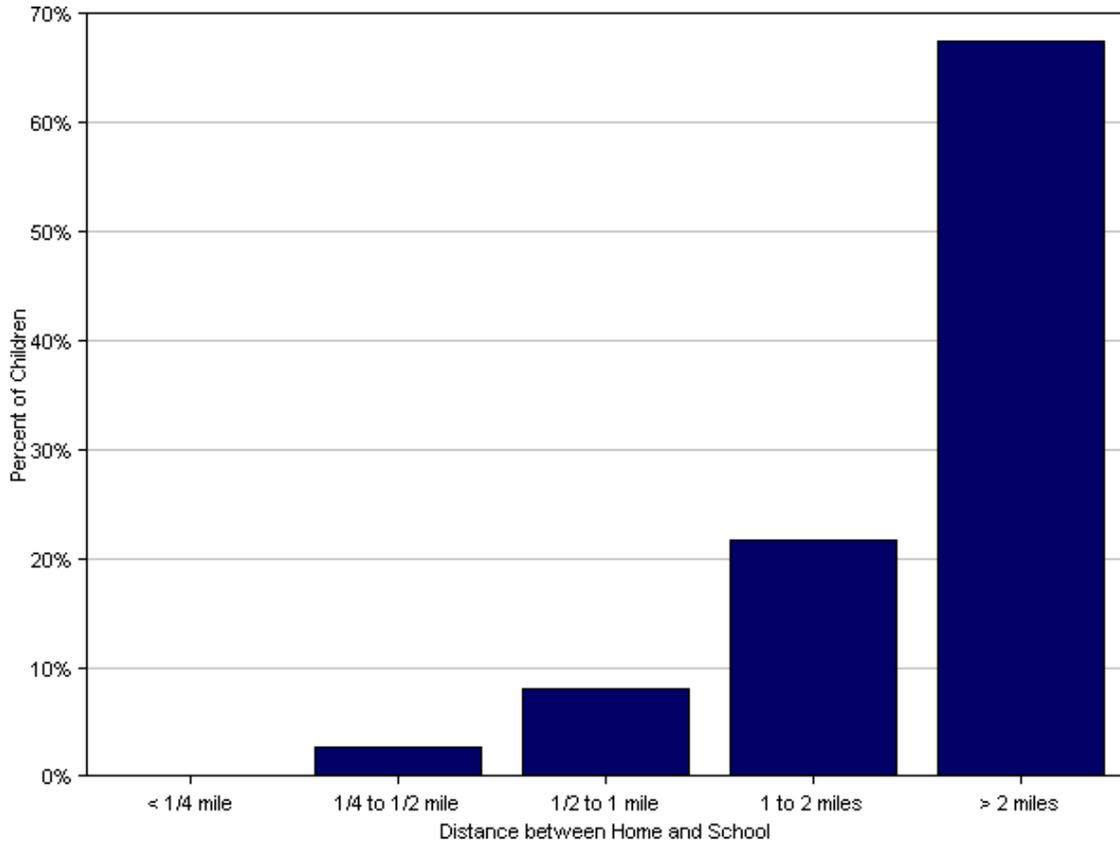
Grade levels of children represented in survey

Grade in School	Responses per grade	
	Number	Percent
Kindergarten	1	3%
1	8	23%
2	5	14%
3	5	14%
4	4	11%
5	2	6%
6	7	20%
8	3	9%

No response: 2

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Parent estimate of distance from child's home to school

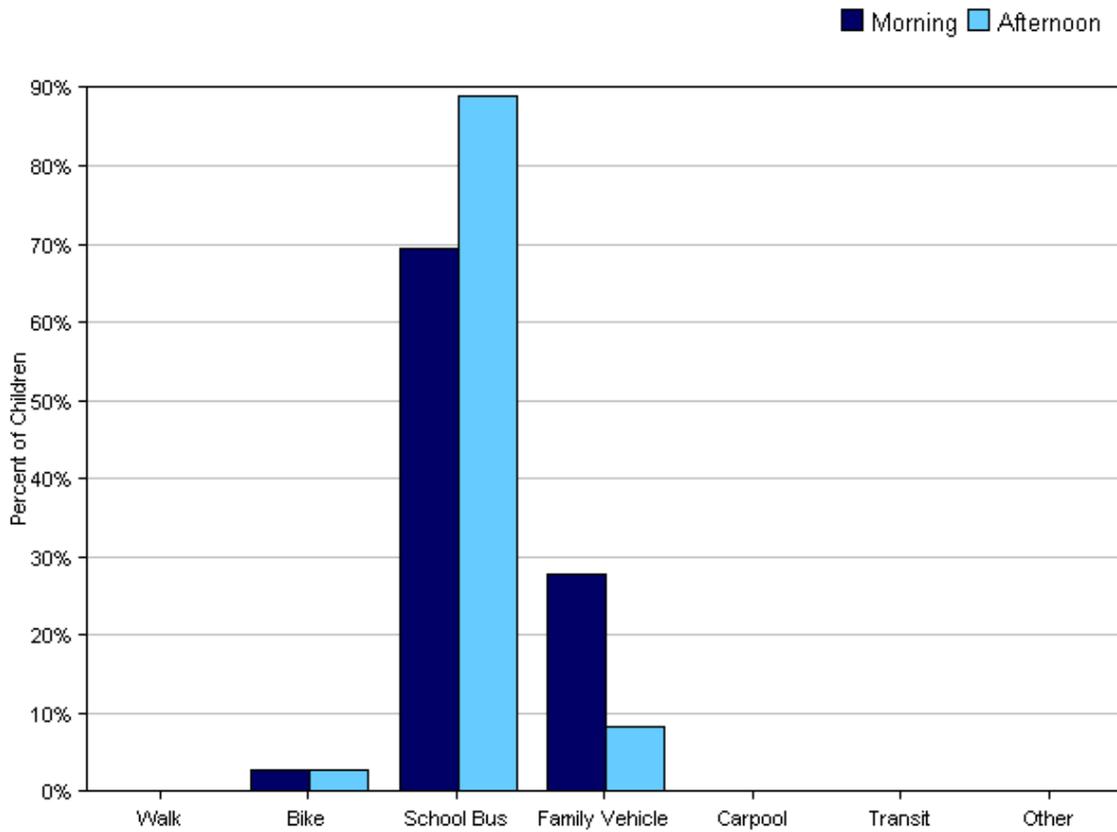


Parent estimate of distance from child's home to school

Distance between home and school	Number of children	Percent
Less than 1/4 mile	0	0%
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	1	3%
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	3	8%
1 mile up to 2 miles	8	22%
More than 2 miles	25	68%

Don't know or No response: 0
 Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Typical mode of arrival at and departure from school



Typical mode of arrival at and departure from school

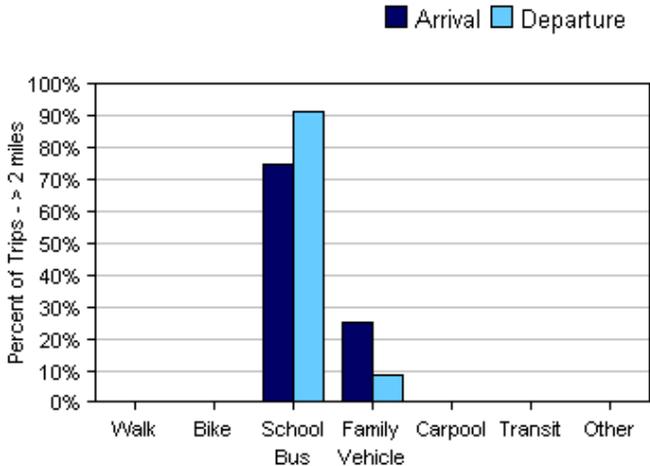
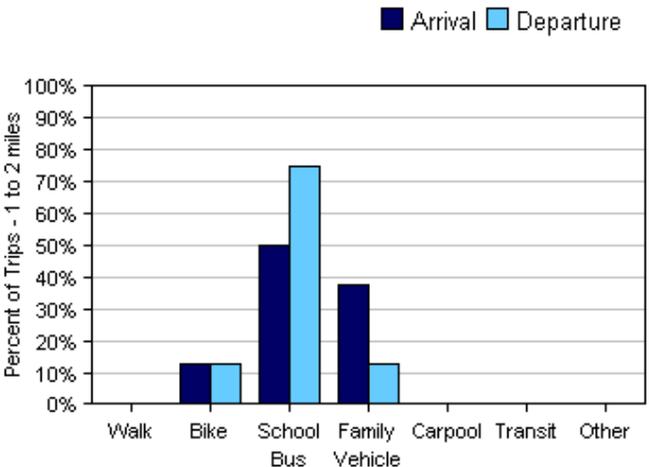
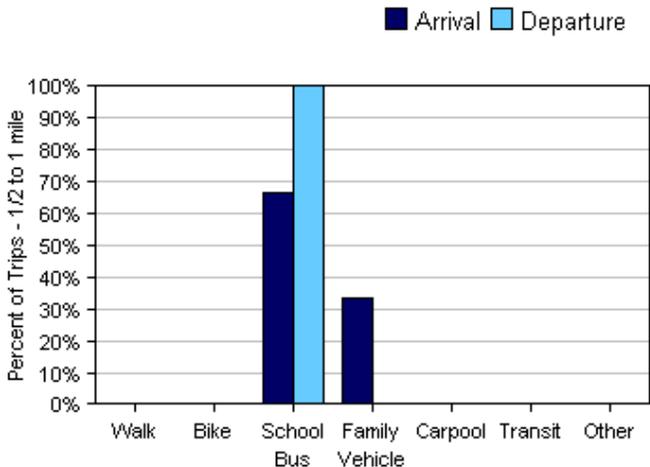
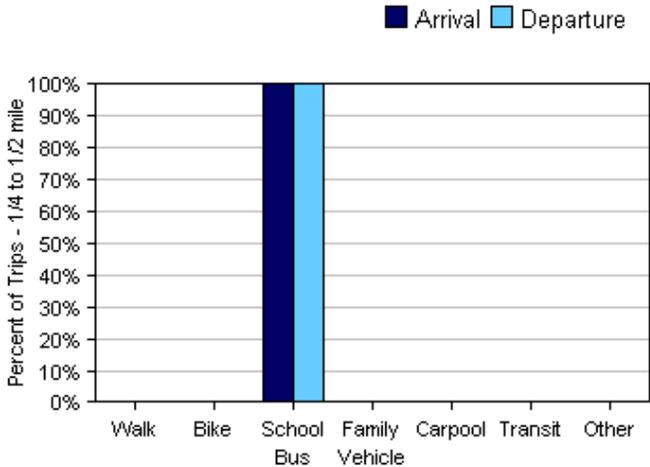
Time of Trip	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Morning	36	0%	3%	69%	28%	0%	0%	0%
Afternoon	36	0%	3%	89%	8%	0%	0%	0%

No Response Morning: 1

No Response Afternoon: 1

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Typical mode of school arrival and departure by distance child lives from school



Typical mode of school arrival and departure by distance child lives from school

School Arrival

Distance	Number within Distance	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Less than 1/4 mile	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	1	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	3	0%	0%	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%
1 mile up to 2 miles	8	0%	13%	50%	38%	0%	0%	0%
More than 2 miles	24	0%	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%

Don't know or No response: 1

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

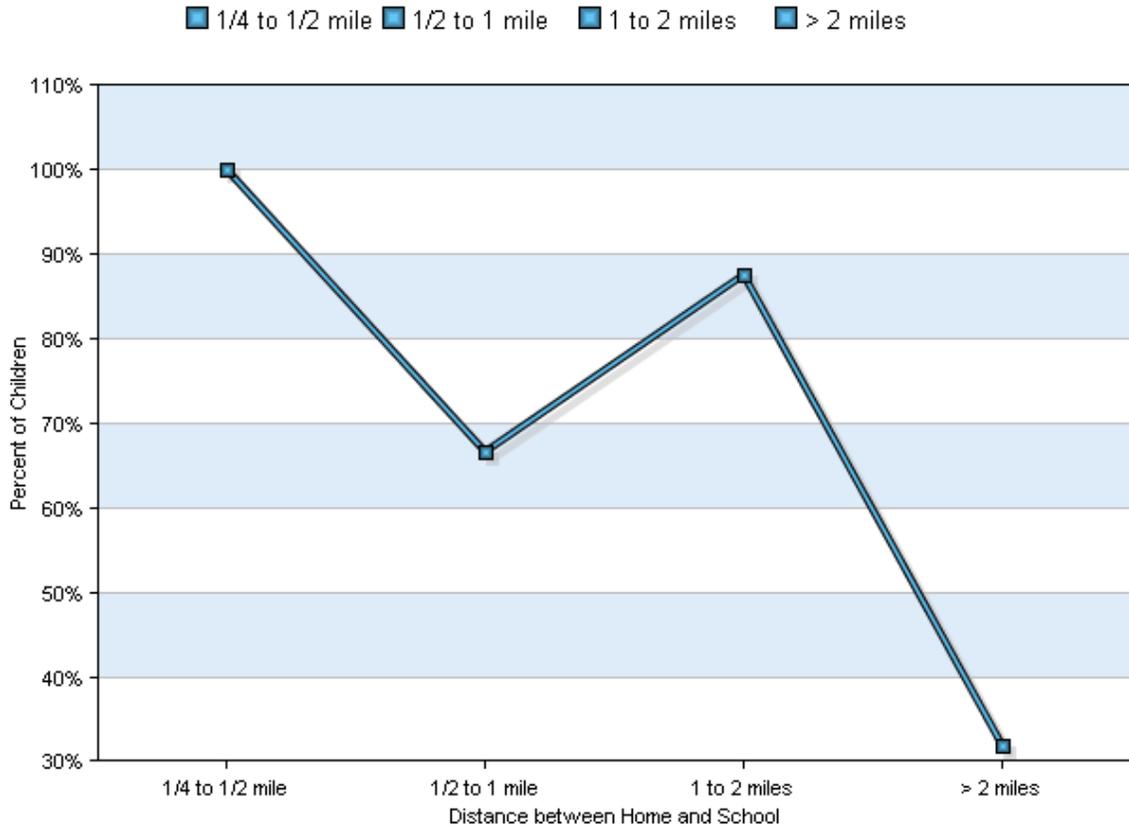
School Departure

Distance	Number within Distance	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Less than 1/4 mile	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	1	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	3	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1 mile up to 2 miles	8	0%	13%	75%	13%	0%	0%	0%
More than 2 miles	24	0%	0%	92%	8%	0%	0%	0%

Don't know or No response: 1

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Percent of children who have asked for permission to walk or bike to/from school by distance they live from school

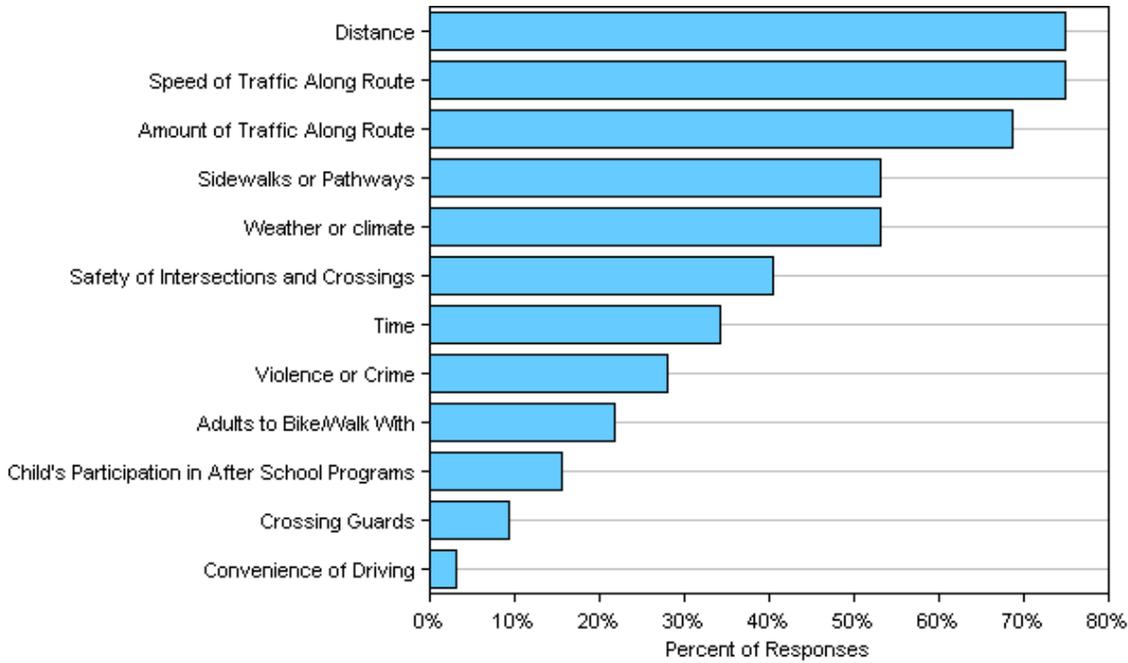


Percent of children who have asked for permission to walk or bike to/from school by distance they live from school

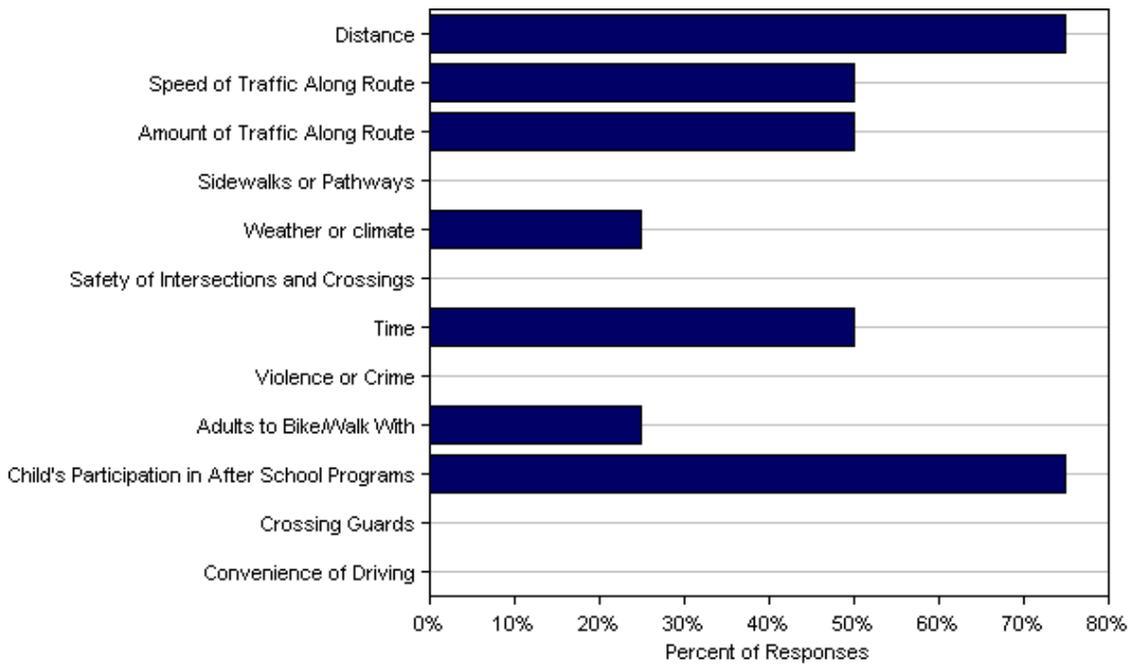
Asked Permission?	Number of Children	Less than 1/4 mile	1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	1/2 mile up to 1 mile	1 mile up to 2 miles	More than 2 miles
Yes	18	0%	100%	67%	88%	32%
No	19	0%	0%	33%	13%	68%

Don't know or No response: 0
 Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Issues reported to affect the decision to not allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who do not walk or bike to/from school



Issues reported to affect the decision to allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who already walk or bike to/from school



Issues reported to affect the decision to allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who already walk or bike to/from school

Issue	Child does not walk/bike to school	Child walks/bikes to school
Distance	75%	75%
Speed of Traffic Along Route	75%	50%
Amount of Traffic Along Route	69%	50%
Sidewalks or Pathways	53%	0%
Weather or climate	53%	25%
Safety of Intersections and Crossings	41%	0%
Time	34%	50%
Violence or Crime	28%	0%
Adults to Bike/Walk With	22%	25%
Child's Participation in After School Programs	16%	75%
Crossing Guards	9%	0%
Convenience of Driving	3%	0%
Number of Respondents per Category	32	4

No response: 1

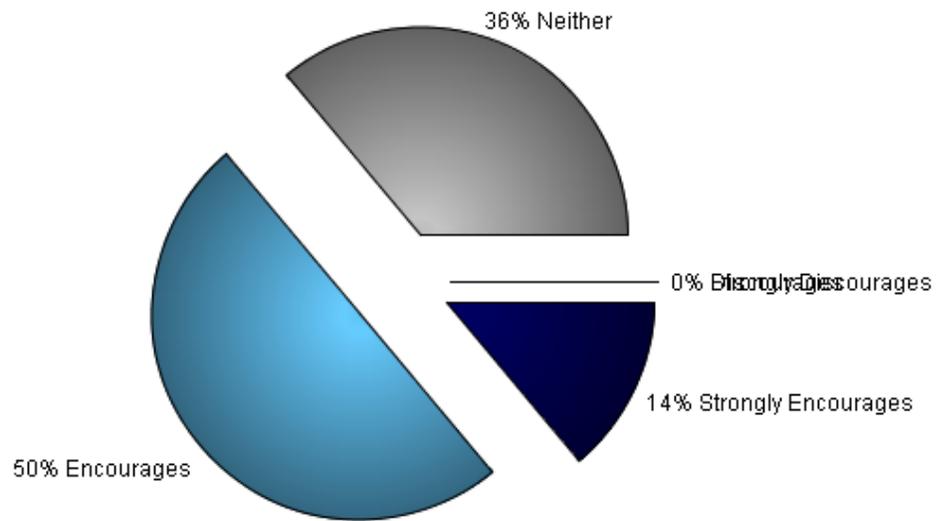
Note:

--Factors are listed from most to least influential for the 'Child does not walk/bike to school' group.

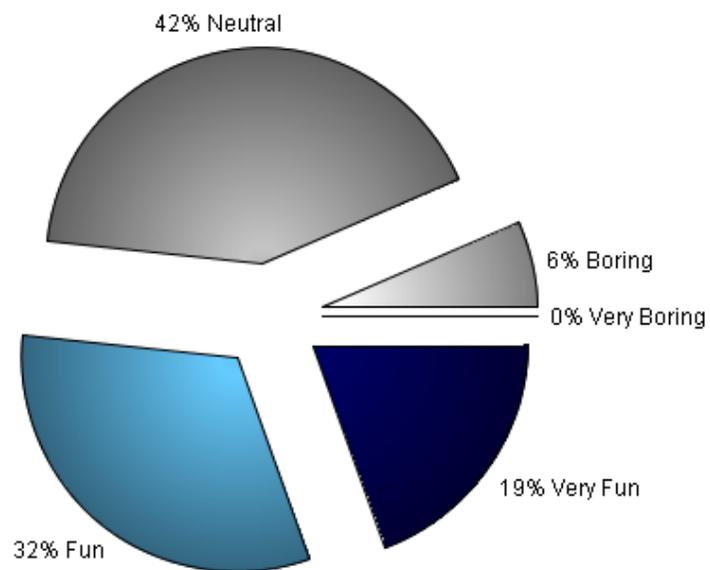
--Each column may sum to > 100% because respondent could select more than issue

--The calculation used to determine the percentage for each issue is based on the 'Number of Respondents per Category' within the respective columns (Child does not walk/bike to school and Child walks/bikes to school.) If comparing percentages between the two columns, please pay particular attention to each column's number of respondents because the two numbers can differ dramatically.

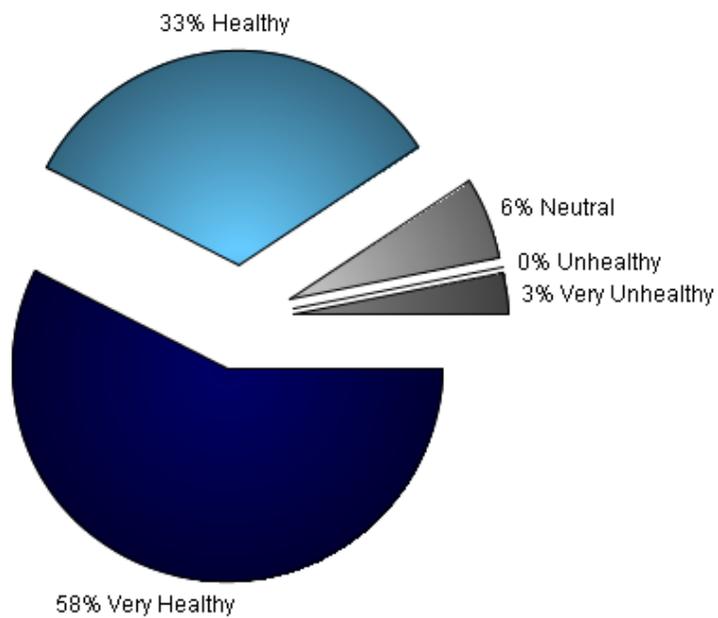
Parents' opinions about how much their child's school encourages or discourages walking and biking to/from school



Parents' opinions about how much fun walking and biking to/from school is for their child



Parents' opinions about how healthy walking and biking to/from school is for their child



Comments Section

SurveyID	Comment
241696	SHE DOES HOWEVER LOVE WALKING/BIKING FROM THE VILLAGE GREEN
241722	DISTANCE MAKES IMPOSSIBLE FOR MY CHILDREN TO WALK TO SCHOOL
241710	THIS IS A RURAL AREA THE ROAD IS VERY BUSY AND UNSAFE IN THE MORNING
241720	ONE DAY PER MONTH BUSES SHOULD PARK AT COMMON AND EVERYONE SHOULD WALK THE REST OF THE WAY.
241729	IT IS THE SAME DISTANCE FROM OUR HOUSE TO THE BUS AS THE WALKING ROUTE
241725	QUESTION #11-BECAUSE OF AGE
241724	THE ROAD TO SCHOOL HAS NO SIDEWALKS OR SHOULDER ONE OF OUR CHILDREN BIKES FREQUENTLY TO SCHOOL BUT ROAD SAFETY IS A SERIOUS CONCERN.